# Essentialism NC

**Being begins with a major premise, as in x has the property of x – the resolution questions the essential property of reporters since it asks whether they ought to have a certain right. What they ought to do with that right is a byproduct of this action, for example, reporters may not always grant confidentiality even if it were permissible – so the resolution questions whether reporters are agents that require possessing a certain right. Essentialism formulates a conception of ethics that is necessary to formulate a coherent account of a moral duty.**

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Fortunately, this is a false dilemma. There is another option and this is essentialism, suitably understood. I say ‘suitably understood’ because, of course, many possible-worlds theorists will happily describe themselves as essentialists and propose and defend what they call essentialist claims, formulated in terms of the language of possible worlds. They will say, for instance, that an essential property of an object is one that that object possesses in every possible world in which it exists, or, alternatively, that is possessed by the ‘counterpart(s)’ of that object in every possible world in which that object has a ‘counterpart’. And they will claim that some, but not all, of an object’s actual properties are essential to it in this sense. But this is not serious essentialism, as I understand the latter. It is at best ersatz essentialism. So what is serious essentialism? To begin to answer this, we need to ask what essences are. But this question is potentially misleading, for it invites the reply that essences are entities of some special sort. As we shall see, however, it is incoherent to suppose that essences are entities. According to serious essentialism, as I understand it, all entities have essences, but their essences are not further entities related to them in some special way. So, what do we, or rather what should we, mean by the ‘essence’ of a thing – where by ‘thing’, in this context, I mean any sort of entity whatever? As I remarked in Chapter 6, we can, I think, do no better than to begin with John Locke’s words on the matter, which go right to its heart. To recall: essence, Locke said, in the ‘proper original signiﬁcation’ of the word, is ‘the very being of anything, where by it is, what it is’.7 In short, the essence of something, X, is what X is, or what it is to be X. In another locution, X’s essence is the very identity of X. But here it is appropriate and important to draw a distinction between general and individual essences. Any individual thing, X, must be a thing of some general kind – because, not least, it must belong to some ontological category. Remember that by ‘thing’ here I just mean ‘entity’. So, for example, X might be a material object, or a person, or a property, or a set, or a number, or a proposition, or ... the list goes on, in a manner that depends on what ontological categories one thinks should be included in it.8 If X is something of kind K, then, X’s general essence is what it is to be a K, while X’s individual essence is what it is to be the individual of kind K that X is, as opposed to any other individual of that kind. So suppose, for example, that X is a particular cat. Then X’s general essence is what it is to be a cat and X’s individual essence is what it is to be this particular cat, X. But why suppose that things must [things] have ‘essences’ in this sense? First of all, because otherwise it surely makes no sense to suppose that we can really talk or think comprehendingly about things at all. If we do not know what a thing is, how can we talk or think comprehendingly about it? How, for instance, can I talk or think comprehendingly about Tom, a particular cat, if I don’t know what cats are and which cat, in particular, Tom is? Of course, I am not saying that I must know everything about Tom in order to be able to talk or think comprehendingly about him. But I must surely know enough to distinguish the kind of thing that Tom is from other kinds of things, and enough to distinguish Tom in particular from other individual things of Tom’s kind. Otherwise, it would seem that my talk and thought – assuming it to be comprehending, rather than a mere parroting of other people’s opinions – cannot really fasten upon Tom, as opposed to something else.9 However, denying the reality of essences doesn’t only create an epistemological or semantic problem, it also creates an ontological problem. Unless Tom has an ‘identity’–whether or not anyone is acquainted with it – there is nothing to make Tom the particular thing that he is, as opposed to any other thing. Anti-essentialism commit us to anti-realism, and indeed to an anti-realism so global that it is surely incoherent. It will not do, for instance, to try to restrict one’s anti-essentialism to ‘the external world’, somehow privileging us and our language and thought. How could it be that there is a fact of the matter as to our identities, and the identities of our words and thoughts, but not as to the identities of the mind-independent entities that we try to represent in language and thought? On the other hand, how could there not be any fact of the matter as to our identities and the identities of our words and thoughts? Everything is, in Joseph Butler’s memorable phrase, what it is and not another thing. That has sounded to many people like a mere truism without signiﬁcant content, as though it were just an aﬃrmation of the reﬂexivity of the identity relation. But, in fact, Butler’s dictum does not merely concern the identity relation but also identity in the sense of essence. It implies that there is a fact of the matter as to what any particular thing is, its ‘very being’, in Locke’s phrase. Its very being – its identity – is what makes it the thing that it is and thereby distinct from any other thing.

#### Thus, the standard is consistency with the essence of agents.

#### Prefer:

#### [1] Obligations are created from essence. For instance, we derive what we say an object or individual must do from their fundamental essence (ie we say a clock has an obligation to tell us what time it is, because telling time is its fundamental essence).

#### [2] Action Theory: All theories must give an account of how to take an action – only essence answers this question since it fundamentally derives obligations from the ability to take whatever action that object or agent is designed to take, which not only enables action, but also answers the question of why we ought to take the action in the first place which is a precondition to ethics.

#### [3] Inescapability: If reality or a particular object had the characteristic of not having an essential property, that itself would be an essential property to the existence of such an entity which means even an attempt to escape essence concedes its authority.

#### [4] Ontology: Only an essential account of an agent accounts for the existence of the subject – thus every account of the subject requires an account of its essence since essence necessarily defines the subject and constrains its very existence, making its denial impossible without contradiction since you rely on its existence for any account of the subject.

#### Ought implies a normative and binding correlation, so the only property a reporter ought to have is one essential to its essence.

#### Impact Calc: Reduction Test – This carried out by removing the essence from the entity and determining if it is still the same in terms of its essence. For example, if removed the quality of having paint from a house it would still be a house but if I removed the quality of having walls and a roof it would be a fundamentally different object.

**Now Negate:**

**[1] There is a distinction between a human right and a group right. Things like freedom of speech is the former while the resolution is the latter – only the former is essential since absent the freedom to express yourself as an agent, you lack agential properties. The ability to provide confidentiality is not essential since it is a right added to the identity of a reporter after it is already considered a reporter.**

**[2] The resolution is an active action – indicating that a state of affairs ought to occur rather than has occurred. This necessitates that since the statement identifies reporters as possessing the necessary components of a reporter, the resolution tautologically proves that the right is incapable of being the end-all-be-all of the identity of a reporter.**

**[3] Confidentiality undermines the fundamental essence of a reporter since the essence of a reporter requires the ability to provide credible information which is impossible without the ability to provide a credible source – anonymity structurally prevents credibility since it is impossible to determine the legitimacy of information, as conceded by the ACs inclusion of citations for their evidence.**

# Extras

## Frontlines

### Hijack Oppression

#### All condemnations of oppression presuppose and devolve down to essentialism.

Card doesn’t say that but the hijack wouldsay that saying oppression is bad supposes the form of oppression has an essential characteristic of being bad.

http://www.abolitionistapproach.com/essentialism-intersectionality-and-veganism-as-a-moral-baseline-black-vegans-rock-and-the-humane-society-of-the-united-states/

Racism and sexism represent moral evil. Racism and sexism involve a societal acceptance of essentialism, or the idea that biology or some other personal characteristic alone determines moral value. A good definition of essentialism appears here: Essentialism is the idea that there exists some detectible and objective core quality of particular groups of people that is inherent, eternal, and unalterable; groupings can be categorized according to these qualities of essence, which are based on such problematic criteria as gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, and class. Racism says that white people have greater moral worth than people of color because white people are white. Sexism says that men have greater moral worth than women just because they are men. Because this essentialism is the dominant paradigm, those in the favored groups acquire institutional power to adversely affect the lives of those in the disfavored groups. All forms of discrimination involve essentialism. Heterosexism says that those who identify as heterosexuals are morally more worthy than others just because they are heterosexual. Ableism says that those who are conventionally-abled have greater value than those who are not, based simply on ability alone. In all cases of discrimination, some characteristic is said to describe a person’s “essence” and it is this essence—and not what they say or do—that determines their moral worth.

# Framework explanation IE template

#### Prefer:

#### [1] Infinite worlds means that the only way to have consistent forms of meaning is to have something be an unchanging ontological property, if this wasn’t the case this would devolve to modal realism which is the idea that morality boils down to irreducible facts so everything is true and false in multiple worlds means negate on permissilbity/presumption.

#### [2] Stuff only has meaning insofar as it is related to essential properties, 7 has the essence of being greater tha n6 if this was not true nothing could mean anything. Add additional hidden warrant for performativity, the only way we can coherently distinguish something from something else and coherently talk about it is because it A) has an essence and B) we have experienced that essence.

#### [3] The only reason action works is because of essentialism, IE the only reason my stove boils is because water moelcules universally have certain properies, in the same way the only way I am able to act on my means is baecuase all the necessary steps have essential preconditions.

#### [4] Ontology the only reason individuals exist is because there is some essential component of our subjectities.

#### [5] Inescapability, something not having an essential property is an essential property.

#### [6] APostirori, we only know what essenses a dog has once we experience a dog. Also the only coherent way to derive essentialism, because our ability to perform the reduction test is based on our expierences of what consstiutes the essence, its meaningless to take something away from man if I don’t know what man is.

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#### When the res says: In the United States, reporters ought to have the right to protect the identity of confidential sources.

#### Oderburgs test, Make analytically to sound like it actually negates. [Maybe autonegates because a reporter will always have an essential quality of being a reporter but questionable.] actually it would negate insofar as a reporter is someone who is employed to report and absent ahaving a right to do shit they are still a reporter

#### [1] The world around us is constantly influx over time; this is the same reason why I am not the same person as I was 5 years ago and why government entities interpret laws and rules differently as per their subjective conception. Only a standard that accounts for the descriptive and consistent form is epistemically valuable – this means to accept the existence of an unchanging ontological property. Absent this, the world dissolves to descriptive facts that fail to prescribe action to agents.

We are then able to use our reason and our common experience to ask ourselves various questions, of which the most important is: if I took away this or that quality of the thing in question, would its nature remain the same? Would it continue to display the characteristic properties, functions, operations and behaviour that it does when it possesses the quality that I remove in thought? If so, the quality is no part of the essence. If, on the other hand, removal of the quality would cause a general disturbance or radical change in the thing’s operations, functions, and so on – then the quality would be part of the essence. (Or it might be a property that ﬂows from and is explained by the essence rather than part of the essence itself – but more about this in Chapter 7 and elsewhere.)