rule util NC/off case:

Util collapses to rule util – we can only pursue the good via extremely general rules, and their structure prevents further collapse - both a reason to prefer this position and terminal defense on aff offense:

a) To know what act promotes good requires calculation with an opportunity cost of time and resources. To calculate must be subject to calculation leading to regress. I may not be the best at calculating, so the problem reifies itself in terms of quality of calculation.

b) Every effect has an effect, which cycles infinitely. No finite increase gets one closer to infinite; all attempts to calculate are meaningless. Only by adopting a general policy can you create disposition effects that counteract singular unfortunate situations.

c) Interaction relies on predictive assumptions about how others behave, such as if they will keep their promise. Such coordination preserves massive social good and depends on general rules. If I can break a promise whenever, other people can have no confidence in their ability to predict my behavior and coordinate. The same goes for rules barring murder, theft, or vigilantism.

d) The most comprehensive studies on predictive impacts confirm they are worse than useless. **KAHNEMAN**:[[1]](#footnote-1) Yet the illusion of valid prediction remain ns intact, a fact that is exploited by people whose business is prediction—not only financial experts but pundits in business and politics, too. Television and radio stations and newspapers have their panels of experts whose job it is to comment on the recent past and foretell the future. Viewers and readers have the impression that they are receiving information that is somehow privileged, or at least extremely insightful. And there is no doubt that the pundits and their promoters genuinely believe they are offering such information. Philip Tetlock, a psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania, explored these so-called expert predictions in a landmark twenty-year study, which he published in his 2005 book Expert Political Judgment: How Good Is It? How Can We Know? Tetlock has set the terms for any future discussion of this topic. Tetlock interviewed 284 people who made their living “commenting or offering advice on political and economic trends.” He asked them to assess the probabilities that certain events would occur in the not too distant future, both in areas of the world in which they specialized and in regions about which they had less knowledge. Would Gorbachev be ousted in a coup? Would the United States go to war in the Persian Gulf? Which country would become the next big emerging market? In all, Tetlock gathered more than 80,000 predictions. He also asked the experts how they reached their conclusions, how they reacted when proved wrong, and how they evaluated evidence that did not support their positions. Respondents were asked to rate the probabilities of three alternative outcomes in every case: the persistence of the status quo, more of something such as political freedom or economic growth, or less of that thing. The results were devastating. The experts performed worse than they would have if they had simply assigned equal probabilities to each of the three potential outcomes. In other words, people who spend their time, and earn their living, studying a particular topic produce poorer predictions than dart-throwing monkeys who would have distributed their choices evenly over the options. Even in the region they knew best, experts were not significantly better than nonspecialists. Those who know more forecast very slightly better than those who know less. But those with the most knowledge are often less reliable. The reason is that the person who acquires more knowledge develops an enhanced illusion of her skill and becomes unrealistically overconfident. “We reach the point of diminishing marginal predictive returns for knowledge disconcertingly quickly,” Tetlock writes. “In this age of academic hyperspecialization, there is no reason for supposing that contributors to top journals—distinguished political scientists, area study specialists, economists, and so on—are any better than journalists or attentive readers of The New York Times in ‘reading’ emerging situations.” The more famous the forecaster, Tetlock discovered, the more flamboyant the forecasts. “Experts in demand,” he writes, “were more overconfident than their colleagues who eked out existences far from the limelight.” Tetlock also found that experts resisted admitting that they had been wrong, and when they were compelled to admit error, they had a large collection of excuses: they had been wrong only in their timing, an unforeseeable event had intervened, or they had been wrong but for the right reasons. Experts are just human in the end. They are dazzled by their own brilliance and hate to be wrong. Experts are led astray not by what they believe, but by how they think, says Tetlock. He uses the terminology from Isaiah Berlin’s essay on Tolstoy, “The Hedgehog and the Fox.” Hedgehogs “know one big thing” and have a theory about the world; they account for particular events within a coherent framework, bristle with impatience toward those who don’t see things their way, and are confident in their forecasts. They are also especially reluctant to admit error. For hedgehogs, a failed prediction is almost always “off only on timing” or “very nearly right.” They are opinionated and clear, which is exactly what television producers love to see on programs. Two hedgehogs on different sides of an issue, each attacking the idiotic ideas of the adversary, make for a good show. Foxes, by contrast, are complex thinkers. They don’t believe that one big thing drives the march of history (for example, they are unlikely to accept the view that Ronald Reagan single-handedly ended the cold war by standing tall against the Soviet Union). Instead the foxes recognize that reality emerges from the interactions of many different agents and forces, including blind luck, often producing large and unpredictable outcomes. It was the foxes who scored best in Tetlock’s study, although their performance was still very poor. But they are less likely than hedgehogs to be invited to participate in television debates. It is Not the Experts’ Fault—The World is Difficult The main point of this chapter is not that people who attempt to predict the future make many errors; that goes without saying. The first lesson is that errors of prediction are inevitable because the world is unpredictable. The second is that high subjective confidence is not to be trusted as an indicator of accuracy (low confidence could be more informative).

contention:

We cannot predict the actual effect of our policy; the only rule by which we can reliably pursue any good consequence is one that does not orient towards financial goods and acquiring resources beyond a properly epicurean level. We can only temper desires by adopting a rule of behavior where we do not take new actions to pursue non-survival pleasures. **KONSTAN**[[2]](#footnote-2)**:**

There are also positive states of mind, which Epicurus identifies by the special term khara (joy), as opposed to hêdonê (pleasure, i.e., physical pleasure). These states too depend on belief, whether true or false. But Epicurus does not treat khara as an end, or part of the end for living: rather, he tends to describe the goal by negation, as freedom from bodily pain and mental disturbance (LM 128). However, happiness (eudaimonia), according to Epicurus, is not simply a neutral or privative condition but rather a form of pleasure in its own right — what Epicurus called catastematic or (following Cicero's Latin translation) “static” as opposed to “kinetic” pleasure. Although the precise nature of this distinction is debated, kinetic pleasures seem to be of the non-necessary kind (see below), such as those resulting from agreeable odors or sounds, rather than deriving from replenishment, as in the case of hunger or thirst. The philosophical school known as the Cyrenaics advocated increasing desires and seeking ever new ways of gratifying them. Epicurus objected that such pleasures are necessarily accompanied by distress, for they depend upon a lack that is painful (Plato had demonstrated the problematic nature of this kind of pleasure; see Gorgias 496C–497A, Philebus 31E–32D, 46A–50C). In addition, augmenting desires tends to intensify rather than reduce the mental agitation (a distressful state of mind) that Epicurean philosophy sought to eliminate. Catastematic pleasure, on the contrary, is (or is taken in) a state rather than a process: it is the pleasure that accompanies well-being as such. The Cyrenaics and others, such as Cicero, maintained, in turn, that this condition is not pleasurable but rather neutral — neither pleasurable nor painful.

*You can become content either by satiating material desires like financial goods or by giving up on desire but satiation fails since it’s not reliable long-term and it just makes your desire more ravenous so the only reliable rule of behavior is one where we don’t try to satisfy our desires but instead live without them.*

This outweighs

a) cooption - other rules would be formed based on what goods are worth pursuing while I demonstrate what types of goods one can ever pursue rightly.

b) generality. This rule is sufficiently general to solve back for the framework arguments as the predictive impacts are internal not external.

The tendency for unjust government abuse means there is no trust for government action meaning the best rule for cooperation is to limit material wealth and not expand space for governmental punishment or social conflict. **EPICURUS**[[3]](#footnote-3)**:** This early form of social life had various advantages: among others, the relative scarcity of goods prevented excessive competition (sharing was obligatory for survival) and thereby set limits on those unnatural desires that at a later, richer phase of society would lead to wars and other disturbances. It would appear too that, before language had developed fully, words more or less conformed to their original or primitive objects, and were not yet a source of mental confusion. But thanks to a gradual accumulation of wealth, the struggle over goods came to infect social relations, and there emerged kings or tyrants who ruled over others not by virtue of their physical strength but by dint of gold. These autocrats in turn were overthrown, and after a subsequent period of violent anarchy people finally saw the wisdom of living under the rule of law. This might seem to represent the highest attainment in political organization, but that is not so for the Epicureans. For with law came the generalized fear of punishment that has contaminated the blessings of life (Lucretius 5.1151; cf. [Philodemus] On Choices and Avoidances col. XII). Lucretius at this point gives an acount of the origin of religious superstition and dread of the gods, and although he does not relate this anxiety directly to the fear of punishment under human law, he does state that thunder and lightning are interpreted as signs that the gods are angry at human sins (5.1218–25). While primitive people in the presocial or early communal stages might have been awed by such manifestations of natural power and ascribed them to the action of the gods, they would not necessarily have explained them as chastisement for human crimes before the concept of punishment became familiar under the regime of law. People at an early time knew that gods exist thanks to the simulacra that they give off, although the precise nature of the gods according to Epicurus remains obscure (for contrasting intepretations, see Konstan 2011 and Sedley 2011); but the gods, for him, do not interest themselves in human affairs, since this would compromise their beatitude (see Obbink 1996: 321–23).

more fwk warrants:

Act utilitarian can be counterintuitive. We should use more plausible principles. **HOOKER[[4]](#footnote-4):** Does rule-consequentialism accord with the convictions we share about moral permissibility and requirement? Rule-consequentialism selects rules on the basis of expected value, impartially calculated. Thus the theory is clearly impartial at the level of rule selection. As I shall argue later, the impartial assessment of rules [But this] will favor rules that (a) allow partiality within limits, towards self and (b) require partiality, within limits, towards family, friends, etc. This partiality towards self and loved ones will then be allowed to guide a great number of people’s day to day decisions (not all, of course). Therefore, while rule-consequentialism is purely impartial at the foundational level where a code is selected, the code thus selected makes demands on action that are moderate and intuitively plausible. Rule-consequentialis is fundamentally impartial, but not implausibly demanding. // Rule-consequentialism [It] also [and] accord with common moral beliefs about what we are prohibited from doing to others. As I observed, most of us believe morality prohibits physically attacking innocent people, taking or harming the possessions of others, breaking promises, telling lies, [which]and so on. Rule-consequentialism endorses prohibitions on these kinds of act, since on the whole the consequences, considered impartially, will be better if such prohibitions are widely accepted. (In Chapter 6, I argue that rule-consequentialism’s implications concerning prohibitions and special duties are plausible

Impact calculus - Reflective equilibrium should the meta-standard. This consists in working with intuitive judgments and theoretical considerations. We achieve equilibrium when there is coherence among our beliefs, which must support one another. It’s beneficial since foundationalists assume fixed starting points for ethics, but claims should not be assumed true independently of other beliefs we hold since:

a) all deductive justification devolves into base premises we accept, we need intuitions and coherence to know to what degree we can accept basic assertions

b) moral uncertainty implies no foundational premise can have complete plausibility, so we should compare a wide range of beliefs to reach the best epistemic conclusions and avoid relativism that collapses ethics as a stable guide to action

c) this ensures ethics are internally motivating since it accords with our convictions – otherwise morality wouldn’t be a meaningful guide to action

AT life first rule:

1) Not responsive - life cannot be something we aim for under util, because it is a total lack of experience and thus cannot be a good or bad. Until you determine what rules give experiences value, the life question is completely irrelevant.

2) Keeping people alive means they have more time to be virtuous it also means they have more time to be vicious and thus misses the point – life can be good or bad as an object of pursuit since Hitler or Mao’s life was probably not valuable.

1. Daniel Kanheman. *Thinking Fast and Slow*. October 25, 2011. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Kindle Edition. Nobel Prize winning Psychologist [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. David Konstan. *Epicurus*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/epicurus/#4>. 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. David Konstan. *Epicurus*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/epicurus/#4>. 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Brad Hooker, “Ideal Code Real World.” Oxford: Clarendon Press 2000 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)