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Reflective Writing Assignment

Throughout this semester, I have had the privilege to examine and discuss many ethical dilemmas. PHIL 355E has truly pushed me to review certain topics from other viewpoints. This was thanks to the interesting case studies and ethical tools that I have had the privilege to study and discuss with my fellow classmates. In this reflective writing assignment, I would like to take a minute to highlight some of the topics that stood out to me the most and the topics that required me to search deep within myself to better understand. At first glance, three of these topics stood out the most.

The first topic I would like to highlight is the case analysis I completed on whistleblowing. In this module, we reviewed the actions of Chelsea Manning leaking videos from an incident that occurred in Iraq in 2007. Within these videos, innocent civilians can be seen dying to United States military airstrikes. The case analysis centered around whether Manning’s action of leaking the videos was justified. At first, I was conflicted. By doing this, Manning was taking a stance against the United States military. An entity that she swore to serve loyally. However, the more I thought about the case, the more I started to see the other side of things. Manning swore an oath to the United States and its citizens. By allowing the United States military to deceive its citizens, Manning would be breaking her oath. It was a difficult decision for me. In the end, however, I decided her actions were justified. Through my studies of various ethical tools, I have realized that the concept of ethics is not always clear cut.

Another topic I would like to highlight is the topic of deontological ethics. This ethical tool was especially intriguing to me because it involved elements of free choice. The main component of deontology that I am referring to is the idea that it is unethical to deny someone the opportunity to make the right decision. An example used in the readings was a situation involving your friend being chased by s killer. If your friend hid in your house and the killer came to your door looking for them, it would be unethical to lie to the killer. By lying to the killer and saying that your friend was not there, you would be denying the killer the opportunity to make the right decision. The reading stipulates that physically protecting your friend or calling the police is not unethical. However, denying a person the opportunity to make the right decision would be unethical. This was deeply impactful for me, and I will carry this lesson with me throughout my life. It is important to give people opportunities to make the right choice or make a mistake.

The third and final topic that stood out the most to me was the module on data ethics. This is a topic that I consistently think about and try to stay up to date on. Through this module, I was able to analyze the topic from an ethical perspective using one of the ethical tools that I unlocked. During the case analysis, I stayed true to my original thoughts and opinions. However, I was able to use some of the readings and an ethical tool to back my assertions. In the future, I will be able to make a stronger argument for data security and the way data is used by calling on the information I collected in this module. This is important for my major in cybersecurity because data security is becoming an increasingly important topic in my career field.

Overall, I have genuinely enjoyed this course and all the lessons I have learned. I would recommend any student (especially those seeking a degree in cybersecurity) to take this course. There is quite a bit of work involved in the course, but every piece of work has its purpose. Without completing each part of the module, one cannot fully understand everything each module has to offer. I look forward to carrying all the lessons that I have learned into my career field.