**Chapter Summary**

*Ethical Choices*, Third Edition

Richard Burnor and Yvonne Raley

Chapter 11: Social Contracts and Rights

Chapter 11 opens by identifying key components of most social contracts and distinguishing between those that are morally based and those that are not. §II presents Locke’s morally based account, where the state of nature, rights, and Locke’s right to property are introduced. Next is Hobbes’s non-moral account, emphasizing his “time of war,” the importance of liberty**,** and the need for a powerful state. The authors then proceed to Rawls’s morally-based theoretical contract negotiated in the original position and under a veil of ignorance**.** Rawls’s contractyields his equality principle, his difference principle, and two kinds of rights. Questions and problems with social contract theory are introduced regarding who can consent, who belongs among the contract negotiators, and whether the interests of the vulnerable can be adequately represented. §VI further explores rights, defining inalienable rights and positive/negative rights; it then discusses a couple problems with rights. The optional final section takes up the concept of structural violence. Since these severe oppressions are fostered by a society’s structures, we consider whether structural violence is something that a Rawlsian system might create or at least allow.