**Chapter Summary**

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Chapter 8: Consequentialism – Rule Utilitarianism

Act utilitarianism has several serious objections, especially involving justice and rights. But that needn’t do away with utilitarianism entirely. Rule utilitarianism better addresses justice and rights than act utilitarianism. It also can accommodate moral rules and practices like promise-making. After providing some illustrations, Chapter 8 offers the two defining principles of rule utilitarianism for establishing right rules and defining right acts. The next section compares rule and act utilitarianism, showing how rule utilitarianism handles several of the objections to act utilitarianism. Nevertheless, rule utilitarianism also has its difficulties, which the authors discuss next. Although it creates dilemmas, resolving these is done easily enough. It has also been challenged because it does not necessarily maximize utility in every situation. But it does greatly promote overall utility by the rules and practices it supports. It can further promote utility by fine-tuning its rules. That may lead to another problem: unrestrained fine-tuning threatens to collapse rule utilitarianism into act utilitarianism. Rule utilitarianism might be able to avoid this collapse, however. In any case, the theory does remain susceptible to some ongoing worries involving justice and rights.