



November 13, 2007, Convo Hour
UNH ECC 1762AB

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To Tell the Truth

Is there ever a time in which one is morally allowed to not tell the truth? Along with Kant, I will argue that it is always morally wrong to tell a lie, or, as far as that goes, to speak untruthfully in order to obtain some particular end. Untruthful speech, regardless of how much "truth" is in it, is morally forbidden. It is perhaps the case that one is tempted into believing that lies are allowed in certain dire situations (e.g., when the Gestapo comes for the Jews you are hiding in your house), but I will refute such claims by showing that telling the truth in these dire situations demonstrates what is morally most significant in truth-telling: the freedom to tell the truth, even when it produces negative consequences. To help defend Kant, I will incorporate Michel Foucault's account of PARRHESIA, the ancient art of "telling all." Our ability to "tell all" even in the face of danger is what makes truthfulness one of the fundamental human moral possibilities.

Please

RSVP

by Nov 6, 07

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