I value morality. To understand a handgun ban first requires understanding human decision-making, which only makes sense within a collective community. **Gobsch:**

To exist as a **human being** is to **engage in the activity of free choice**. In this activity, **reason is employed theoretically, but above all it is, if all goes well, of itself practical. Reason** is the capacity to **explain why a thing is determined the way it is** through its own activity according to the laws that relate it to the activities of all other things. But the law of pure practical reason is law in virtue of no other. So **in** the eyes of **a subject** of the power of free choice, **this single** categorical **law is** to be conceived as the **supreme principle** of all laws that can be cognized theoretically. Hence **human beings are as such, in their activity of free choice, necessarily out to validate the moral law’s supremacy in the world. And this would be impossible, unless they are, in this activity, out to grasp all laws, unless, that is, they are out to understand the activities of all things in the world through the laws under which they fall in virtue of their definitions**. Now, **there is more than one human** being. On condition of this fact we can **therefore** say that **human beings are**, as such, **also out to understand the activities of all other human beings through the laws under which** they **fall in virtue of their definition**, and that is: as human beings. As human beings, these others, too, exist through their activity of free choice. So **on condition of a multiplicity of human beings, every human being is, as such, i.e. in its activity of free choice, – out to be – related to every other human being as a subject of free choice. Subjects of free choice are called *persons*.** So we can rephrase: **given a multiplicity of human beings, to exist as a human being is to** – be out to – **exist as a person in relation to every other human being as a person**. But this is to say that, given a plurality of human beings, the notion of relationality, the second of **the two sides of the idea of an ethical community,** does indeed **bring in**to view **an essential aspect of the practical activity** characteristic of human beings: the personhood in which such a being rationally displays its sensible nature: the individuality and finitude that make it an animal

Precludes your framework: a) textual prerequisite - I locate a feature necessary in making the US an ethical community, so it’s more germane to the resolution, b) consilience, my standard agrees that oppression bad but answers questions about what to do about it. Even if resisting oppression is good, we don’t know whether to evaluate that through minimizing oppression’s badness or avoiding harm to others. Means the aff framework is independently a bad guide to action since it can’t provide answers in concrete moral situations. c) Frameworks that can’t explain moral agency should be rejected since ethical theories judge free action, only after recognizing our agency are other ethical questions relevant.

Decisions situated in communal interaction require an ethical community. Even if the current ethical community is flawed, that doesn’t imply reject the *concept* of community, rather it implies the community has a duty to improve its principles. Practical reason, which applies universal laws to particular cases, is alone capable of creating this improvement since it creates a binding standard on all decision-making. Gobsch 2:

But Kant does believe, as we saw, that the idea of an **ethical community constitutes a duty that announces itself a priori to every human being**. So he believes that this idea necessarily merits discussion in a *metaphysical enquiry of the ethical implications of our freedom we cannot know to reside in its power*. He presents this enquiry in section 3 of the *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*. **The only way for us to conceive of an ethical community, he explains there, is in the guise of the idea of a *church*,** as **the idea of an ethical community founded by the infinite rational being** necessarily **thought to know the establishment of** **such a community** to lie within its power: “an ethical community is conceivable only as a Kant’s doctrine that as human beings **we know that we ought to build an ethical community,** **yet** precisely as human beings **we are also incapable of knowing whether we can**, so that the idea of such a community cannot be the topic of a metaphysics of morals but it must be relegated to moral theology, has as one of its consequences the most characteristic – and most often criticized – element of Kant’s practical philosophy: his doctrine that the moral law can never be more than an imperative for us human beings, that, for us, practical necessity consists in practical necessitation. In our practical activity, **pure reason is of itself practical**, if all goes well, **but only through our pursuit of happiness**, **so** that pure reason, **the moral law, must be conceived of as extending itself to include among its ends the highest good**, i.e. the ethical community of human beings. But if, as Kant has it, we cannot know whether we can accomplish this end, then we can never know the moral law to be the principle from consciousness of which alone we *do* act. In effect, Kant is adding to our claim that reason is of itself practical in us, *if all goes well*, the disappointing disclaimer: *and for all we know it will never go well*. The only way Kant can prevent this disclaimer from destroying our knowledge that, if all goes well, **reason is of itself practical in us – i.e. that we are human beings, subjects of free choice – is to restrict the modality of our grasp of the moral law to the modality of the grasp of an imperative; it is to say that our knowledge of the practical law,** though never knowledge of that from consciousness of which alone we *do* act, **is knowledge of that from consciousness of which alone we *ought* to act**.39

That pre-empts your framework interaction and precludes: my standard is about the *application* of universal rules to particular cases, meaning its conclusions are active resistance against dominant structures. My standard also hijacks the epistemology arguments since they incorporate the viewpoints of marginalized groups and situate them within a coherent community. Further, only a *distortion* of reason rejects the notion of equality all frameworks suppose, so reason is independently necessary to rectify them.

Lastly, reason mandates respect for the ethical community since in willing any decision, you hold your self to take the means to bring it about, which can only occur within a community that upholds universal laws.

Thus, the standard is respecting decisions consistent with the ethical community.

*Thus the role of the ballot is do your role of the ballot starting with the ethical community. Must look to material world and abstraction but only abstraction is contradictory because we need to abstract to see abstraction in a vacuum.*

Contention:

I contend that a ban on the private ownership of handguns does not respect multiplicity of actors within a community and does not treat people as rational agents.

1) The costs of banning private ownership of handguns outweighs any tangible benefits to the community **Kopel:** David B. Kopel & Christopher C. Little. *Communitarians, Neorepublicans, and Guns: Assessing the Case for Firearm Prohibition*. 1997.

Criminologist Don Kates observes that even **if** only **half of all handgun owners defied a confiscation law, the c**riminal **j**ustice **s**ystem **would** simply **not be able to cope**: **Terrorizing** [tens of millions ofhandgunowners] into **compliance would require catching, trying and jailing large numbers of them. But to jail just one percent of probable violators would fill all the cells in our present federal, state and local jail system**. **We would have to either free all the murderers, robbers, and rapists now serving time or build a brand new prison system doubling our combined national capacity**—just to hold one percent of all probable gun law violators. **Comparable expansion would be required for our courts, prosecutors and police.** Effective enforcement of national gun legislation would require an expenditure **equal to the cost of catching, trying and punishing every other kind of federal, state, and local criminal combined.** I cannot do better than to quote the question with which [a University of] Wisconsin study ends: "Are we willing to make sociological and economic investments of such a tremendous nature in a social experiment for which there is no empirical support?"128 Add to a handgun ban the attempt to enforce a law banning all firearms, or virtually all firearms, and enforceability problems become immense. Just as alcohol prohibition in the 1920s and drug prohibition in modern times have spawned vast increases in federal power, as well as (pg.461) vast infringements on the Bill of Rights, another national war against the millions of Americans who are determined to possess a product that is very important to them is almost certain to cause tremendous additional erosion of constitutional freedom and traditional liberty. **Legal and customary protections** against unreasonable searches and seizures, invasion of privacy, selective enforcement of laws, and harsh and punitive statutes **would** all **suffer**.129 **Attempting to disarm Americans would** likely **result in widespread police corruption, increased wiretaps, and other evils** associated with enforcement of laws against consensual possessory offenses,130 thus encouraging public contempt for the law. Of course, the problem of citizen noncompliance could be partially avoided by simply banning the production of new firearms or by adopting a Morton Grove-type "honor system"131 to enforcement of a law against gun possession. These vanilla-pale approaches, however, would leave most of America's 200 million guns in private hands, hardly domestic disarmament.

**2)** Private ownership of handguns has been proven to deter crime within the community. Kopel (3): David B. Kopel & Christopher C. Little. *Communitarians, Neorepublicans, and Guns: Assessing the Case for Firearm Prohibition*. 1997.

There is copious evidence that a significant number of crimes are deterred every year by gun-wielding Americans. One of the first measurable pieces of evidence that criminals are deterred by the mere perception that potential victims may be armed dates back to the late 1960s, when the Orlando Police Department sponsored firearms safety training for women.345 The police instituted this program when it became evident that many women were arming themselves in response to a dramatic increase in sexual assaults in the **[in] Orlando** area in (pg.505) 1966.346 The year **following** the well-publicized safety **training program[s] [we]** **witnessed an 88% drop in** the number of **rapes** in Orlando.347 As Gary Kleck and David Bordua note: "It cannot be claimed that this was merely part of a general downward trend in rape, since the national rate was increasing at the time. No other U.S. city with a population over 100,000 experienced so large a percentage decrease in the number of rapes from 1966 to 1967 ...."348 Furthermore, that same year, rape increased by 5% in Florida and by 7% on the national level.349 According to Kleck and Bordua, the gun training program "affected the behavior of potential rapists primarily because it served to inform or remind them of widespread gun ownership among women, and thereby increased the perceived riskiness of sexual assaults."350 The rape rate, after plummeting, did increase during the next five years, but this may be because the safety training courses no longer received the same degree of media attention as when first initiated.351 Nonetheless, at the end of that five year period, the Orlando rape rate was still 13% below the 1966 level, when the classes were first publicized.352 The rate of sexual assault increased 96.1% in Florida and 64% nationwide during that same five-year period.353 It is also interesting that rape in the area immediately surrounding Orlando increased by 308% during the same period.354 Having heard about the Orlando experience, Detroit Chief of Police Bill Stephens began a similar program in 1967, in the face of an epidemic of armed robberies.355 Within months of the Detroit program's initiation, which like the Orlando program was widely publicized, the rate of armed robberies had dropped by 90%.356 In 1982, the **Atlanta** exurb of Kennesaw passed an ordinance—in symbolic response to the handgun ban of Morton Grove, Illinois—**require[ed] all residents** (with certain exceptions, including conscientious (pg.506) objectors) **to keep firearms in their homes**.357 **In** the **seven months following enactment** of the ordinance **there were only five burglaries, compared to forty-five in the same period the preceding year**, constituting an 89% decrease in residential burglary.358 Kleck and Bordua maintain that "the publicized passage of the ordinance may have served to remind potential burglars in the area of the fact of widespread gun ownership, thereby heightening their perception of the risks of burglary."359 Studies of prison inmates confirm that criminals are deterred when they believe their potential victims are armed. Criminologists James Wright and Peter Rossi, who at one time had been proponents of severe gun control, concluded that an armed citizenry functions as an important deterrent to crime.360 **Of** the **prison inmates interviewed**, nearly 37% had encountered an armed victim during their criminal careers.361 Approximately the same percentage (**40%**) **reported** that they **had not committed a particular crime because they feared their potential victims were armed**.362 One form of deterrence is termed "confrontation deterrence," whereby a criminal actually confronts a potential victim and is thwarted by that victim. Gary Kleck has conducted the most thorough criminological studies regarding confrontation deterrence. Dr. Kleck's initial research, based upon a 1981 Peter Hart survey conducted for a gun control group, suggested that **there are** roughly **645,000** instances of confrontation **deterrence[s] involving handgun-wielding citizens every** **year.**363 That figure climbs to about 740,000 when all types of firearms are considered.364 The figures are broadly consistent with data from several other state and national surveys.365 As Kleck stated: Much of the social order in America may depend on the fact that millions of people are armed and dangerous to each other. The availability of deadly weapons to the violence-prone may well contribute to violence by increasing the (pg.507) probability of a fatal outcome of combat. However, it may also be that this very fact raises the stakes in disputes to the point where only the most incensed or intoxicated disputants resort to physical conflict, with the risks of armed retaliation deterring attack and coercing minimal courtesy among otherwise hostile parties. Likewise, rates of commercial robbery, residential burglary injury, and rape might be still higher than their already high levels were it not for the dangerousness of the prospective victim population. Gun ownership among prospective victims may well have as large a crime-inhibiting effect as the crime-generating effects of gun possession among prospective criminals .... [T]he two effects may roughly cancel each other out.366 "The failure to fully acknowledge this reality," Kleck concluded, "can lead to grave errors in devising public policy to minimize violence through gun control."367 If Kleck is correct, and if attempts to implement drastic gun control policies, such as domestic disarmament, are ever successful, the result will likely only harm America's communities. Although Kleck's research was consistent with nine other studies of the same topic,368 he was subjected to intense attack by gun control proponents.369 Kleck responded by conducting a much more thorough survey that took into account every criticism directed at his finding of 645,000 instances of confrontation deterrence involving armed citizens per year. For example, respondents who indicated that they had used a gun for self-defense were queried in detail about the actual use in order to sort out persons who might label as self-defense merely grabbing a gun when something went bump in the night, even if there were no confrontation with a criminal. The new survey did show that Kleck had been wrong. The most thorough study of defensive gun use found that **firearms are used for protection approximately 2.5 million times a year**.370 Shots were usually (pg.508) not fired; merely drawing the gun apparently drove off many would-be assailants.371 Notably, Marvin E. Wolfgang, one of the most eminent criminologists of the twentieth century, and a strong supporter of gun control, reviewed Kleck's findings. Announcing that he found Kleck's implications disturbing, Wolfgang wrote that he could find no methodological flaw, nor any other reason to doubt the correctness of Kleck's figure.372 One public policy aimed at crime control that an increasing number of states are exploring and adopting is the liberalization of concealed carry laws.373 Data suggest that concealed carry laws may reduce homicide and aggravated assault rates.374 The data are clear that liberalized concealed carry does not lead to gunfights on the streets between licensees.375 This is because those who go through the rigorous background check[s] usually required under the liberalized law are precisely those most apt to use guns responsibly in the first place. The predictions of those who oppose concealed carry have been proven false in every state where the law has been liberalized: concealed carry does not a John Rambo make.376 Because many criminals avoid victimizing people they think may be armed, what might happen to the violent crime rate if more people were armed and possibly carrying a firearm under their coat or in their purse as they walked down the street? Domestic violence would not likely be affected by concealed carry reform (except for stalking cases), but the incidence of "outdoor" crime would likely diminish. In (pg.509) situations in which a high fraction of the population is armed (in contrast to the one to four percent typical today in states that issue concealed handgun permits), predatory crime is virtually nonexistent.377 **Gun ownership provides a crime-inhibiting force** of some magnitude, although the exact size is subject to legitimate dispute. **If domestic disarmament is adopted** and is largely obeyed, **it will destroy** that socially beneficialforce. Criminals will generally not disarm, and the perception will be created among them that there is less of a chance of encountering an armed victim. This will embolden many criminals to commit crimes they would have been deterred from committing when gun ownership was legal. Accompanying the plainly false presumption of Domestic Disarmament that guns in the right hands make absolutely no positive contribution to public safety is the assumption that "all people"—not just people with felony records, or alcoholics, or other troubled individuals—"kill and are much more likely to do so when armed than when disarmed."378 There exists thorough criminological refutation of this assumption that the average citizen is a walking time-bomb, a potential murderer kept in check only by the absence of a firearm.379 In (pg.510) truth, the vast majority of gun owners handle their firearms responsibly.380 If, on the other hand, Etzioni is right, and a huge fraction of the American population would commit murder at some point—given the combination of an upsetting event and a murder instrument—it is hard to imagine how such a population could be considered fit for self-government. The argument that Americans (or people in general) are too hot-tempered, clumsy, and potentially murderous to be trusted with dangerous objects such as firearms might be a good argument for an elitist (of the left-wing or right-wing variety) who believes that "the masses" need to be controlled by the firm hand of a powerful government of their betters. Whatever else might be said about that type of argument, it is thoroughly out-of-place coming from a **communitarian**, whose philosophy presumes that the American people are fully capable of **virtue, responsibility, and self-government**.

3) Bans don’t respect agency. **Ripstein (3):** Arthur Ripstein [Professor of Law and Philosophy at University of Toronto] “Beyond the Harm Principle” http://ssrn.com/abstract=1138439

**Forcing someone** with whom **you cannot avoid interacting to enter a rightful condition with you is consistent with that person’s freedom** because it secures his or her rights. The person who resists wrongs you. By contrast, those who choose to remain outside a rightful condition “do each other no wrong” by feuding among themselves. **There is no material wrong in interfering with each other’s goods outside of a rightful condition** because nobody has a right to exclude others, so there can be no wrong against persons. Instead, the wrong is formal, “wrong in the high- est degree,”31 because **remaining in such a condition is inconsistent with anyone’s having rights to external objects of choice.** Thus everyone can be compelled to enter a condition in which rights are secure.

Also, abstraction is key to stopping oppression: five reasons

1) All theories are subject to potential malpractice; however, ideal theory at its core is better for evaluating human action **WOOD**[[1]](#footnote-1)**:**

There is no plausibility at all, for example, in the suggestion that **such** Kantian **principles as** human **equality**, rationalism, **[and]** **universalism**, and cosmopolitanism **are [not]** in their content **favorable to racism**, sexism, **or** other forms of **oppression**, and such a thesis needs only to be stated explicitly to discredit itself. But this highly implausible thesis may be put forward by implication if it can be associated with the quite distinct but correct point that *even* a cosmopolitan and universalistic ethical theory, such as Kant’s, can be combined with racist or male-supremacist views in its application. It is also true that **[these principles]** egalitarianism, rationalism, universalism, and cosmopolitanism **are** especially **liable to rhetorical** **abuse** by those who advocate policies in direct violation of them, because subscribing to the correct principles at an abstract level is often enough a shabby ploy used to protect contrary policies from criticism. **The thought that this point has [no] any *philosophical* significance**, however, **rests on an error** of abysmal proportions **about philosophy** and its relation to human practices. **If someone thinks there is a** philosophical **theory** of morality **whose uncritical adoption** and mechanical application **would** suffice to **protect us from evil,** then **that person is looking for something that could never exist. The correct standard for an ethic**al theory **is whether it** gets things **[is] right at the level of basic** principles and **values, not whether it contains some** **magical property that protects us**, in the application of the theory, **from every perversion** or abuse through the influence of tradition and prejudice or the infinite human ingenuity of rationalization. **All theories are** about **equally subject to such abuse**, and no theory is immune to it. In fact, if we **[To] think** that the adoption of **a certain philosoph[y]**ical theory, or a certain set of religious dogmas, **will protect us from all** **moral error**, that way of thinking itself **is** extremely dangerous, quite irrespective of the content of the theory or dogma with which we associate it. That thought itself is actually **responsible for** a lot of **the evil** that **people do.**

Means that every ethical theory can be misused – but that isn’t a problem with ethical principles, that is a problem with us – also means we should reclaim the true function of these ethical concepts in places like debate to challenge the way they are misunderstood; our depravity is a reason we need them now more than ever. Your argument is only uniqueness for mine.

2) The philosophy debate is key to critical thinking because **a)** it forces us to understand and be able to defend complex arguments, **b)** it allows us to measure pros and cons and thus compare competing scenarios, **c)** it makes us better people because we learn what it means to generally be a better person and thus we are more understanding of anti-oppression movements

3) Abstraction is necessary to have a full comprehension of specific instances of oppression. Understanding marginalization without a general context, and without first piecing together the puzzle of society as a whole is impossible.

**Mills:** C. Wright Mills, *Sociological Imagination*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1959.

Under various topics in your file there are ideas, personal notes, excerpts from books, bibliographical items and outlines of projects. It is, I suppose, a matter of arbitrary habit, but I think you will find it well to sort all these items into a master file of `projects,' with many subdivisions. The topics, of course, change, sometimes quite frequently. For instance, as a student working toward the preliminary examination, writing a thesis, and, at the same time, doing term papers, your files will be arranged in those three areas of endeavor: But after a year or so of graduate work, you will begin to re-organize the whole file in relation to the main project of your thesis. Then as you pursue your work you will notice that no one project ever dominates it, or sets the master categories in which it is arranged. In fact, the use of the file encourages expansion of the categories which you use in your thinking. And the way in which these categories change, some being dropped and others being added-is an index of your intellectual progress and breadth. Eventually, the files will come to be arranged according to several large projects, having many sub-projects that change from year to year. All this involves the taking of notes. You will have to acquire the habit of taking a large volume of notes from any worth-while book you read-although, I have to say, you may get better work out of yourself when you read really bad books. **The first step in translating experience**, either of other men's writing, or of your own life, **into the intellectual sphere, is to give it form**. Merely to name an item of experience often invites you to explain it; the mere taking of a note from a book is often a prod to reflection. At the same time, of course, the taking of a note is a great aid in comprehending what you are reading. Your notes may turn out, as mine do, to be of two sorts: in reading certain very important books you try to grasp the structure of the writer's argument, and take notes accordingly; but more frequently, and after a few years of independent work, rather than read entire books, you will very often read parts of many books from the point of view of some particular theme or topic in which you are interested and concerning which you have plans in your file. Therefore, **you will** take notes which do **not fairly represent** the books you read. You are using this **particular idea[s]**, this particular fact, for the realization of your own projects. 2 But how is this file-which so far must seem to you more like a curious sort of `literary' journal-used in intellectual production? The maintenance of such a file is intellectual production. **It is** a **continually** **growing** store of facts and ideas, **from** the most **vague to** the most **finished**. For example, the first thing I did upon deciding on a study of the elite was to make a crude outline based on a listing of the types of people that I wished to understand. Just how and why I decided to do such a study may suggest one way in which one's life experiences feed one's intellectual work. I forget just when I became technically concerned with `stratification,' but I think it must have been on first reading Veblen. He had always seemed to me very loose, even vague, about his `business' and `industrial' employments, which are a kind of translation of Marx for the academic American public. At any rate, I wrote a book on labor organizations and labor leaders-a politically motivated task; then a book on the middle classes-a task primarily motivated by the desire to articulate my own experience in New York City since 1945. It was thereupon suggested by friends that I round out a trilogy by writing a book on the upper classes. I think the possibility had been in my mind; I had read Balzac off and on especially during the 'forties, and had been much taken with his self-appointed task of `covering all the major classes and types in the society of the era he wished to make his own. I had also written a paper on `The Business Elite,' and had collected and arranged statistics about the careers of the topmost men in American politics since the Constitution. These two tasks were primarily inspired by seminar work in American history. In doing these several articles and books and in preparing courses in stratification, there was of course a residue of ideas and facts about the upper classes. Especially **in the study of social stratification is it difficult to avoid going beyond one's immediate subject, because the reality of any one stratum is in large part its relations to the rest**. Accordingly, I began to think of a book on the elite.

He continues:

From what I have said, you will understand that in practice you never `start working on a project'; you are already `working,' either in a personal vein, in the files, in taking notes after browsing, or in guided endeavors. Following this way of living and working, you will always have many topics that you want to work out further. After you decide on some 'release,' you will try to use your entire file, your browsing in libraries, your conversation, your selections of people-all for this topic or theme. **You** are **try**ing **to build a** little **world containing** all **the key elements** which enter into the work at hand, **to put each in its place in a systematic way**, **continually** to **readjust[ing] this framework** around developments in each part of it. Merely **to live in such a constructed world is to know what is needed: ideas**, facts, ideas, figures, ideas. So you will discover and describe, setting up types for the ordering of what you have found out, focusing and organizing experience by distinguishing items by name. This search for order will cause you to seek patterns and trends, to find relations that may be typical and causal. **You** will **search**, in short, for the meanings of what you come upon, **for** what may be interpreted as **a visible token of something else that is not visible**. You will make an inventory of everything that seems involved in **whatever** **you are trying to understand; you will pare it down to essentials; then carefully and systematically** you will **relate** these **items to one another in order to form a** sort of **working model**. And then you will relate this model to whatever it is you are trying to explain. Sometimes it is that easy; often it just will not come. But always, among all the details, you will be searching for indicators that might point to the main drift, to the underlying forms and tendencies of the range of society in the middle of the twentieth century. For, in the end, it is this-the human variety-that you are always writing about. **Thinking is a struggle for order and** at the same time for **comprehensiveness**. You must not stop thinking too soon-or you will fail to know all that you should; you cannot leave it to go on forever, or you yourself will burst. It is this dilemma, I suppose, that makes reflection, on those rare occasions when it is more or less successful, the most passionate endeavor of which the human being is capable.

4) Ideal theory provides us with standards to follow for our actions, which is the only way to achieve moral progress. If we continually change our goals due to a lack of a rubric, we will continually erase our progress and thus never move toward liberation.

5) The project of ethics or science is not to prove the obvious. We know an apple falls, but we want to know how the force of gravity interacts with the rest of the universe. In the same way, we know oppression is bad, but interrogating the normative reasons behind those claims is the only way to understand complexly related issues in the real world. I do not have a different goal than you, I just provide a necessary methodology for achieving that goal.

1. Kantian Ethics ALLEN W. WOOD Stanford University [↑](#footnote-ref-1)