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Assignment 1

A utilitarian perspective is based on the notion that the correct thing to do is the thing which benefits the most and harms the least in the end. This involves considering the outcome of one's actions and quantifying the consequences: if doing something will harm more people than it will help people, it is unethical. If more people benefit than hurt from something, it is the ethical choice. For example, suppose someone is riding a bicycle on CU campus and is rapidly approaching a large pothole. The cyclist can either swerve to the right to avoid the pothole and instead collide with three pedestrians, or hit the pothole and injure themselves. A utilitarian would choose the pothole route, harming the least amount of people. When considering Clearview technology, there are many more complicated factors to consider. While there are people who do not want their faces in a database due to a violation of privacy, they are not being directly harmed by this application. The article mentions that many criminals have been identified through Clearview, which benefits public safety, impacting the masses. While it is true that someone could be misidentified due to the imperfections of the technology including a potential racial bias, the accuracy of Clearview is 75% according to the article. A utilitarian would likely deem Clearview ethical because it benefits the safety of more people than it harms.

Deontology is an ethical standard based on a set of rules for oneself rather than considering consequences for each situation. People often associate deontology with commonly known moral rules, like those within a certain religion for example. Deontologists believe that one's actions outweigh the consequences without exception. Living with a specific set of ethical rules to follow makes decision-making very simple; there is no outcome to consider, a

deontologist already knows the "right" thing to do in the situation. Lying is a good example to demonstrate deontology- lying is unethical and therefore a deontologist will not ever lie, even if lying may have a better outcome than the truth in a specific case. A deontologist would consider Clearview as a privacy breach and deem it unethical. We are assuming that the terms of Service on multiple sites were violated by Clearview to collect images for their library, which is unethical in this case, because breaking rules is bad. Even if people are being incarcerated and public safety is increasing, the initial act of violating the terms of Service in order to gather the data needed for Clearview to work makes it unethical from a deontologist standpoint.

Virtue ethics is based on the intentions of one's actions. If someone is trying to do the right thing is what matters and is what decides if an action is ethical. To contrast deontology and utilitarianism with virtue ethics, let us consider lying once more. While we established that a deontologist would never lie because lying is always unethical from their point of view, a utilitarian would look at the consequences of lying, and choose to lie or not to lie based on the amount of good vs. bad caused by each option. Someone who practices virtue ethics would instead choose to lie or not to lie based on what they think is right in that situation, and choose the option that had good intentions behind it. In the case of deciding whether or not the creation and dissemination of Clearview is ethical, a virtue ethics minded being would consider the intentions of the creators and users of the technology. Based on the article, Ton-That's background seems to indicate that his intentions behind creating this app were to be a success in the technology industry. This slightly selfish intention would probably be deemed unethical under the terms of virtue ethics. That being said, the law enforcement using the technology seem to have good intentions of identifying and punishing criminals, which would be considered

ethical. Considering virtue ethics would therefore consider the creation of Clearview unethical, but the use of Clearview would be considered ethical.

During our class discussion on each ethical standard I decided that I do not fall under any of these ethical labels because I see flaws in each of them. I suppose I practice a mix of all of these ethical frameworks in my own life and choose them on a case-by-case basis. Personally I value privacy over many other things, so my initial reaction to learning about Clearview was that it was unethical and upsetting. I think my strong value of privacy would align most with deontology. I am naturally a rule follower, so I really cannot consider violating Terms of Service to create a product for a large amount of people to use, because the initial act of breaking a rule then falls onto all the users of the technology in my eyes. To make a decision on the ethics of the use of the technology I would like to know if every investigator/officer/law enforcer using the technology knows why and how the technology was created.