

In this paper, I compare Kant and Lonergan on ethics and propose that their respective worldviews – determinism\* and emergent probability – bear great significance for their ethics and knowing what it means to live a good human life. In short, Lonergan's ethics is different from Kant's because they differ in two fundamental ways: their views on the natural sciences and their positions on human knowing (with the latter shaping their understanding of the former). Thus, Lonergan's ethics are different from Kant's because he differs from Kant when it comes to the natural sciences; and he differs from Kant regarding science because he differs from Kant on human knowing. This will have ramifications on their approaches toward freedom, and subsequently, ethics:

Kant needed to identify an activity of the human being that escaped the inherent determinism of natural science as he understood it. But Lonergan is saying there is not an inherent determinism in natural science in the first place...And that means that the world Kant saw as threatening human freedom and human dignity is for Lonergan not an issue.<sup>1</sup>

Lonergan employs the method of intentionality analysis to discover what scientists are doing when they are doing knowing. Upon examining classical and statistical investigations, Lonergan arrives at a startling conclusion – the universe is not solely composed of systematic processes, but rather, is also full of nonsystematic processes. This ultimately leads to emergent probability (of which I provide images by turning to the graphic novel, *Watchmen*) an explanatory worldview that points to the radical openness and dynamism of our universe. Particularly important to escaping determinism is Lonergan's discovery of statistical residues.

Next, I compare the two thinkers on human freedom, proposing that their worldviews again prove crucial. Lonergan distinguishes between *essential* and *effective* freedom.<sup>2</sup> Kant is concerned with the former while Lonergan focuses on the latter, as essential freedom is of little to no purpose if we are not effectively free. This leads to the problem of liberation. Recognition of this problem is critical for better human living. Precisely because our world is not deterministic and because it is emergent probability that is the intelligibility of our universe, what is of the utmost importance is *effective* freedom. It makes no difference if we are essentially free and leave our history and the

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\* While Kant is not a determinist, he accepted the determinism of the science of his times.

<sup>1</sup> Byrne, Class Lecture, "Kant and Lonergan," April 16, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> B. Lonergan, S.J. *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), 643.

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movement of our history up to mere chance. The universe will continue to move and emerge whether or not we take up our historical vocation of directing it. I conclude by turning to higher integrations as the solution to the problem of liberation, which includes a discussion of God's role and the supernatural solution.