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| **Human Flourishment**   * Finnis accepts the idea that there is a natural justice, that is applicable to all humanity. However, unlike Aquinas, he argues that Natural Law's purpose is to ensure a person is able to live a worthwhile life and to 'flourish' i.e. to establish what is really 'good' for humankind. * Therefore, a little like Aristotle’s Virtue Theory, Finnis is trying to develop an ethic that enables humans to flourish in the present and is not based on rewards in in post-mortem existence (like Aquinas’ Natural Law) | **Secular Society:**   * Sociologists argue we live in a secular society (this means that we live in a society where there is declining interest in religion) e.g. in 2010 research suggested that only 6% of the population attended church services regularly * Therefore, Finnis’ Natural Law has the potential to work in contemporary (modern) society because it is an explicitly religious ethic unlike Aquinas’ version of Natural Law. |
| **Finnis’ Natural Law offers little guidance**   * It is not obvious how according to Finnis’ Natural Law how we should go about deciding what to do in a specific ethical situation. Instead it only offers guidelines – which are open to interpretation.   Therefore, Finnis’ Natural Law does not offer precise criteria on how to judge a specific moral event e.g. whether society should or shouldn’t endorse capital punishment. Therefore, it is incapable of providing guidance about specific ethical problems. | **Based on Practical reason only:**   * Finnis argues that his ‘basic goods’ are based on practical reason, which only describes how to act. * However, practical reasoning cannot be proved in an empirical sense. Therefore, Finnis’ theory lacks a substantial foundation. Unlike Aquinas’ Natural Law which is based the theoretical reason of God’s law, |
| **Finnis’ Natural Law is Universal**   * Finnis argues that to flourish humans need the seven basic goods which are self-evident, universal goods, which apply equally to everyone at all times. | **Finnis’ Natural Law is Elitist**   * Finnis’ Natural Law can be seen as elitist i.e. it favours one group of people above another. * Finnis’ Natural Law is elitist because it favours the educated and mature above others. This is because Finnis argues the seven basic goods are only known to those people who are educated and mature. |

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| **Finnis’ Natural Law is flexible:**   * There is plenty of scope for discretion in Finnis' version of Natural Law. This is because the seven basic goods are all equally fundamental, and do not exist in a hierarchy. Therefore, although some acts are wrong (because they do not participate in a basic good), there is no single correct act. * Therefore, Finnis’ Natural Law does not have a single monist approach to ethics, unlike Aquinas’ Natura Law, but a flexible approach. This could appeal to post-modernists. Sociologists claim we live in a Post-Modern Society (society has rejected traditional fixed values like the deontological commandments/rules of the Bible or Aquinas’ Natural Law). * Finnis’ Natural Law would potentially work better in a Post-Modern Society because it rejects the traditional monist deontological fixed rules of Aquinas’ Natural Law | **Finnis’ Natural Law encourages community**  Finnis’ Natural Law is a community orientated ethic, which can only be good for a society i.e. in Finnis’ Natural Law one of the nine requirements of practical reason is ‘You should foster the common good of the community.’ |
| **Finnis is misguided on human motivation:**   * Finnis argues that motivations for action, such as the pursuit of pleasure or material gain, are misguided. * However, it could be argued that Finnis is misjudging human nature. Maybe pleasure and greed are the natural and dominant human emotions. * This was certainly the belief of Jeremy Bentham when he created Act utilitarianism and Max Stirner’s Ethical Egoism. | **Finnis’ Natural Law could encourage a totalitarian state**   * Finnis’ Natural Law could be seen to encourage a totalitarian state – where the state tries to control every aspect of private and public life. * This is because Finnis believe that state authority is the best way to achieve a stable society in which the basic goods can flourish. |