

- a. It is election time, and state S has an important referendum on the ballot. If this passes, it will drastically reduce the rights of certain minority groups in state S. Jean, who is opposed to this referendum but has been working very hard recently, skips out on voting and spends a relaxing day in bed.  
Is this morally wrong? Does your response change if the referendum passes, or fails?
- b. California is experiencing a severe drought. Because California gets much of its water from other parts of the country, this causes water shortages in many states. To deal with the drought, residents are asked to reduce their water usage. Pat lives in California. His lawn is important to him, and he waters it twice a day in order to keep it luxurious and green. Worrying about his lawn is exhausting, so he also takes a daily bubble bath, followed by a long shower to wash off the soap residue. He gets great pleasure from this bath.  
Is Pat doing something morally wrong?

**Some vocabulary**

collective action: in order to bring about some worthwhile *goal*, many people need to *participate*

goal [of collective action]: the good which is pursued, or the bad which is to be avoided, via *collective action*

participation [in collective action]: activity that leads\* toward the *goal* of *collective action*

free riding: failing to *participate* in *collective action*, when the *goal* is achieved anyway

being complicit in the failure of collective action: not *participating* in *collective action*, when the *goal* is not achieved [“being complicit” also refers to a more general type of moral failing]

- c. Elizabeth and Carl, who run the local homeless shelter, are getting married, and the community is getting together to build them a new house as a surprise. Building the house takes a lot of hard work. Julia loves building houses, gets nothing but joy out of helping Elizabeth and Carl, who are her best friends, and has nothing going on the day the house is going to be built. Morally speaking, should Julia help build the house?
- d. A meteor has fallen on the orphanage, and all the orphans are trapped beneath. They will all die soon if the meteor is not moved. Fortunately, there are exactly enough people nearby to move the meteor, as long as every single one of the lifts at exactly the same time. However, the lifting is hard, and there's a good chance it will significantly chip one's fingernails. Max has just had his nails done. Morally speaking, should Max help lift the meteor?

moral collective action puzzle (MCAP): person A is in an MCAP whenever there is collective action, and it is reasonable to expect that it is overall bad for A to participate

- e. Lizzy and Chuck, who run the local homeless shelter, are getting married, and the community is getting together to build them a new house as a surprise. Building the house takes a lot of hard work. Jack would have to take a day off work to help with the house (although his job would not be in danger if he did), and he knows that other people will show up to build the house if he is not there. Morally speaking, should Jack help build the house?
- f. A meteor has fallen on the orphanage, and all the orphans are trapped beneath. They will all die soon if the meteor is not moved. Fortunately, there are enough people nearby to move the meteor. Unfortunately, it is almost definitely the case that not enough people will actually help out, and if not enough help, the meteor won't move. What's more, the lifting is hard and the people who lift run a very serious risk of permanent back injury. Marcy knows all of this. Morally speaking, should Marcy help lift the meteor?

*How might climate change put you in an MCAP?*