Assignment 1

My Ethical Situation

This project has several parts, and together they constitute the basis for the next two projects. The assumption is that we cannot be ethical agents without some degree of self-knowledge, and that we cannot have such self-knowledge unless we apply ourselves to self-study. In this project, you study your ethical selfhood.

I don’t want to over-determine what you’ll submit for this. At the very least you’ll turn in

* A **list** of **values** roughly ranked (the hardest portion of the self-study) and typed up. The easiest way to do this is to pay attention to the extremities—those that you value the most and those you value the least. The middle regions are going to be much more roughly ordered.
* A **list** of all **groups** to which you belong, and perhaps what your role is in them. You might identify who have been your ethical teachers from these groups.
* At least one **diagram of values and groups**, drawn from the lists, shoing the most important values in all the groups of your life, how you see them being carried about. The diagrams will be hand-sketched (probably more than once, first in pencil then in pen, or drafted and revised) and well-labeled.
  + Here too you should **identify those laws**, rules, regulations that are brought to bear on the area of life of that group. These are juridics that interfere with being an ethical agent, and every ethical agent should know what they are.
* A **narrative** that might include several things: how you got to be the ethical persona that you are; how your list of values got to be ranked the way it is (at least at its extremities); ethical debates and crises that have defined your life as an ethical agent (it must be an issue in which you have been a real ethical agent, one whose decision counts or counted); a description of defining emotions in ethical debates; an account of the home ethical communities from which you have come and of the ideals that you have been taught by the members of your home ethical community.

Beyond this, be imaginative. While I don’t need to know your deep ethical secrets, once I read this I should have a picture of your current state of ethical understanding, empowerment, and tendencies, as well as of the ethical world that surrounds and conditions your ethical selfhood.

Portion of final grade 35%. Due November 13.