

The Ethics of Memory in Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*

Benjamin Tucker

Many commentators on Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* have sought to explain Hobbes' ethical theory and the implications that his ethical theory has on the whole of *Leviathan*. Much of this commentary places fear and absolute submission to the sovereign at the center of Hobbes' ethical theory. The rationale for such a sovereign-centric reading of *Leviathan* is not altogether inaccurate, but based on my reading, none of these accounts adequately explain why Hobbes believed that a sovereign-centric ethic was the only way to peace. It is my view that memory, a key concept in Hobbes' philosophy that could add a great deal to the current scholarly discussion, has been unjustly left out of a majority, if not all, of the commentaries on Hobbes' ethical theory. In response to what I see as scholarly neglect of a key concept in Hobbes' philosophy, I intend to produce a memory-centric reading of the ethical theory that Hobbes develops in *Leviathan*.

I want to suggest that viewing memory, a concept that Hobbesian scholarship has pushed into the margins of *Leviathan*, as a foundational concept of *Leviathan* can produce new, exciting, and important interpretations of Hobbes' theories of sovereignty, ethics, epistemology, the state of nature, the state of war, the social contract, nominalism, and psychological egoism. The primary focus of this paper and my guiding question will be: Is there an ethics and/or morality of memory in *Leviathan* and, if so, how substantial of role does Hobbes' ethics and/or morality of memory occupy in regards to the main claims *Leviathan*?

The first concept that Hobbes creates and explains in *Leviathan* is imagination. The second concept that Hobbes creates is memory. Hobbes was a stout logician and, I will argue that as most logicians do, Hobbes begins his work by creating and explaining the most basic, foundational concepts of his complex argument. If this claim is true, the failure of Hobbesian scholars to consider memory and imagination as central concepts of Hobbes' ethical theory is quite a serious error.

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Imagination and Memory

A question may arise, if Hobbes' creates imagination before memory, then why am I writing on Hobbes' ethic of memory, rather than his ethic of imagination? The short answer is that Hobbes makes a very small distinction between the two concepts. Hobbes says, "...imagination and memory are but one thing, which for divers considerations hath divers names."¹ Hobbes was a materialist and believed that both imagination and memory were products of past experience. The difference between imagination and memory is that imagination is "...but a fiction of the mind." (L, 24) Hobbes believed that imagination was the combination of various possible experiences into the recollection or imagination of one impossible experience. To illustrate this point, Hobbes gives the example of a man who, through his senses, experienced at different times, a horse and a man. The observer then 'compounded' these two experiences into one creating the imagined experience of a centaur. Hobbes says that the testimony of such an experience is fictional, because the sensual experience of a centaur is an empirical impossibility.

Hobbes contrast imagination to memory, not by saying the memory is nonfictional testimony, but by saying that memory is testimony of an empirically possible experience. Hobbes says, "When we make a general assertion, unless it be a true one, the possibility of it is inconceivable." (L, 43) For Hobbes, then, true assertions are those that are conceivable, but he does not oppose true assertions to false assertions. Rather, Hobbes opposes true assertions to absurd assertions. Hobbes says that when people talk to him about an impossible event that is inconceivable, "I should not say he were in an error, but that his words were without meaning, that is to say, absurd." (L, 43) The individual's words are absurd, because they do not refer to a possible occurrence within the empirical world. Hobbes was an empiricist and considered a statement absurd if it referred

¹ Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997: 24. From here on, this text is referenced parenthetically with the abbreviation: L.

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to anything sensually inconceivable or metaphysical, whether it be centaurs; or, 'a round quadrangle; or, accidents of bread and cheese; or, immaterial substances....' etc. (L, 43)

The most important point to keep in mind is that Hobbes draws no distinction between imagination and memory other than the possibility of the occurrence of the event testified about. What's interesting about this account is that for a memory to be considered true, it does not necessarily have to testify to the actual occurrence of an event. A true memory only has to testify about an empirically possible event. This is primarily because Hobbes distinguishes between two types of truth; knowledge of fact, which he attributes to memory, and knowledge of consequences, which he attributes to science. For Hobbes, the content of memory is derived from sense experience and representative perception. From this perspective, memories amount to opinions and beliefs about the physical world. Hobbes contrasts this to science, which he believes uses the method of ratiocination in order to obtain truth as knowledge or an understanding of the causes and effects of the physical world. (L, 45) From this perspective, the defining difference between memory and imagination is that imagination is an absurd belief in the occurrence of an event that is impossible, whereas memory is a belief in the past occurrence of an event that is possible. Hobbes' ideas about the truth of memories actually coincide with contemporary theories of memory developed in both psychology and cognitive science. Daniel Schacter, a psychologist at Harvard and one of the world's foremost experts on memory, says,

As I showed earlier in my book, *Searching for Memory*, we tend to think of memories as snapshots from family albums that, if stored properly, could be retrieved in precisely the same condition in which they were put away. But we now know that we do not record our experiences the way a camera records them. Our memories work differently. We extract key elements from our experiences and store them. We then recreate or reconstruct our experiences rather than retrieve copies of them. Sometimes, in the

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process of reconstructing we add on feelings, beliefs, or even knowledge we obtained after the experience. In other words, we bias our memories of the past by attributing to them emotions or knowledge we acquired after the event.²

Schacter's scientific observations show that memories are not 'retrieved,' but 'reconstructed.' The theory of reconstruction exposes the idea that memory is the recollection of one's past perception of an event is a utopian impossibility. Schacter's insight means that our memories, as Hobbes has argued, amount to beliefs or opinions that we currently hold about past events. On Hobbes' account, if I tell you, "I went to the beach yesterday," what I am really telling you is, "I believe I went to the beach yesterday." To discover the truth of this statement, the first step involves a careful consideration of whether I could have possibly went to the beach yesterday (Was I in town? Was it raining all day? Do I have transportation to the beach? Etc). The second step, according to Hobbes, involves assessing my reputation. (L, 58) This is a complicated step and to explain what Hobbes means by this we will have to take a minor detour through Hobbes' radical theory of nominalism.

Nominalism

For Hobbes, an individual's name is the signifier of her/his reputation. A reputation is a general understanding of someone's character that is developed over time. The temporal element of a person's reputation is an accumulation of individual or communal memories that others have about a diverse number of the given person's behaviors and actions. A person's reputation always involves what we remember about someone, and not, necessarily, what the person is currently doing in the present (although the present will soon become the past, and, as such, part of her/his reputation). According to Hobbes, the aspect of the individual that is used to refer to her/his character and reputation is the

² Schacter, Daniel L. *The Seven Sins of Memory*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001. 9.

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individual's name. For Hobbes, the name is the essence of all things that are named. In fact, Hobbes goes as far as to say, "that truth consisteth in the right ordering of names in our affirmations, a man that seeketh precise truth had need to remember what every name he uses stands for, and to place it accordingly, or else he will find himself entangled in his words, as a bird in lime twigs, the more he struggles the more belimed." (L, 36) If truth consists in the 'right ordering of names,' this must be the truth of science, because it is not about belief, but proceeds from the definitions of names to their consequences (I.e. My friend Jim has the reputation of being a thief, as a consequence of the definition/reputation of his name, when someone says that Jim is coming over I lock my jewelry cabinet).³

Hobbes makes his nominalism more complex though, he says, "From whence we may infer, that when we believe anything whatsoever it be, to be true, from arguments taken, not from the thing itself, or from the principles of natural reason but from authority, and good opinion we have of him that hath said it; then is the speaker, or person we believe in, or trust in, and whose word we take, the object of our faith, and the honour done in believing is done to him only." (L, 58) So, what happens when we accept someone's testimony is that

³ Some may object to my assertion that assessing someone's reputation is Hobbesian science. To the objection, I would say that it is science because it follows the pattern that Hobbes' assigns to science. "...when the discourse is put into speech, and begins with the definitions of words, and proceeds by connexion of the same into general affirmations, and of these again into syllogisms; the end or last sum is called the conclusion; and the thought of the mind by it signified, is that conditional knowledge, or knowledge of the consequences of words, which is commonly called science." (L, 56) The important point here is that scientific knowledge is conditional, so my ratiocination of 'Jim' may be quite different from someone else who has a different set of individual or communal memories associated with 'Jim.' In this case, I would have my own scientific conclusion about Jim's reputation and someone else may have a completely different scientific conclusion about Jim's reputation, but that doesn't make the knowledge of Jim's reputation any less scientific. It simply situates both my and someone else's conclusions about Jim's reputation as conditional knowledge.

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we go from assessing an assertion about belief, to a science of the person's reputation, back to a present belief in the person that causes us to believe her/his testimony. Avishai Margalit, the only philosopher who has written on ethics and memory, makes a similar assertion when he says, "My attitude towards a potential witness often is prior to my attitude towards her testimony. My belief in (her) is prior to my belief that (what she says is true) and cannot be reduced to the latter. I may in due course change my attitude to my witness, add some, and drop others. But this is a slow and painful process that has as much to do with loyalties as epistemology."⁴ Margalit often chooses to believe or reject the testimony of a witness, because of the reputation of the witness giving the testimony. The less often times that Margalit rejects a testimony on some basis other than the witness' reputation, he probably does so because the event testified about could not have possibly occurred. So, to assess my statement, "I went to the beach yesterday." One must first ask a question about belief, "Is it possible that Ben believes that he went to the beach yesterday?" Secondly, one must ask a scientific question about my reputation that allows you to make a judgment about where I am a believable person or not. Third, one must have coherence between their belief or disbelief in me and their acceptance or rejection of my testimony. The final two steps can be consolidated into a single compound question, "Given Ben's reputation, should I believe Ben's testimony that he went to the beach yesterday?"

This is the first aspect of Hobbes' philosophy in which we can say there is a moral obligation to remember. Within the interpersonal world, we are morally obligated to remember the names of people and the reputation signified by their name. To clarify my use of the term morality and my argument, I would like to draw a distinction between morality and ethics. My use of morality signifies individual obligations that one ought to follow in their personal life when dealing with interpersonal relations in order to maintain both healthy

⁴ Margalit, Avishai. *The Ethics of Memory*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2003. 181. From here on, this text is referenced parenthetically with the abbreviation: EM.

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interpersonal relationships, and a healthy psychological disposition. In the context of remembering proper names, this actually fits quite well with Hobbes' psychological egoism. From a psychological egoist standpoint, the reason why one ought to remember proper names is that remembering people's proper names and consequently their reputation is conducive to healthy relationships and minimizes pain. This moral obligation is not an obligation in the sense of a categorical imperative. The obligation to remember proper names amounts to something more like a hypothetical imperative (I.e. If you don't want to be hurt, then remember that Mike has a reputation of not fulfilling his commitments or If you want to show Alex that you care about her/him, then remember that Alex loves chocolate covered cherries). Margalit actually describes this obligation to remember in a similar manner, comparing the 'ethical ought' to medical advice (I.e. If you want to be healthy, then you ought to stop smoking). (EM, 105) But, I think Hobbes' would say that the fulfillment of this hypothetical obligation to remember is what separates the normal, psychologically healthy individuals from the psychologically ill.

The Ethics of Care

A recent, popular movement in ethical theory has been dubbed the ethics of care.⁵ Theorists working within the ethics of care distinguish between thick and thin relationships. Thick relationships refer to people that we have had long, personal relationships with (our friends, lovers, mothers, fathers, etc.). Thin relationships refer to people that we have impersonal, universal relationships with (humanity in general, Americans, etc.). Ethical care theorists argue that we have stronger moral obligations to those who we have thick relationships with and have weaker ethical obligations to those who we have thin relationships with (moral and ethical are used here based on the distinction I made between morality and ethics above).

⁵ See, for example, Gilligan, Carol. *In a Different Voice*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993 or Held, Virginia. *The Ethics of Care*. New York: Oxford UP, 2007.

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A common example that ethics of care theorists use to prove their point is known as the drowning example. In the drowning example, you are faced with a choice to save only one of two people from drowning. One of the victims is your mother and the other is a complete stranger. Ethics of care theorists argue that you would save your mother, and that it would be the morally right thing to do. This moral obligation that we have to care more about those whom we have thick relationships with is the foundation of almost all ethics of care.

Caring and Remembering

To apply the ethics of care to Hobbes' morality of memory, one is morally obligated to remember the proper names of those that one has thick relationships with. This is of course still a hypothetical imperative and still, in my view, in alignment with psychological egoism and Hobbes' nominalism. In Hobbesian theory, remembering the proper name (which signifies both the person's reputation, as well as your mutual history) of someone that you have a thick relation with is caring about them, as well as yourself. Remembering a person's proper name is a sign that you care about them. Would anyone, especially a nominalist, be convinced that you care about someone if you cannot remember their name? Margalit goes as far as to suggest that forgetting someone's name amounts to killing them. Margalit says, "The idea that the essence of a person is referred to and expressed by a personal name gives the name a particular role in memory. And I believe that the quasi-magical thought of the survival of the name, as the survival of the essence, is what lies behind the doctrine of the double killing: killing the body and killing the name." (EM, 23) Margalit is not even a nominalist, yet he suggests that forgetting a person's name makes their very essence dead to you. From a nominalist's standpoint, the situation is even more drastic. It is not clear that a nominalist would even believe in the possibility of a double kill. A nominalist may hold that killing a person's proper name amounts to killing the person completely or at the very least destroying the thick relation between you two. For a nominalist, a person is nothing, but

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their name and the reputation tied to it. If no one remembers your name, you have no essence or reputation and you are as good as dead. And according to Hobbes, all bodies have one aversion in common, the aversion to death. But, remembering someone's name is also a sign that you care about yourself, because remembering a person's proper name and therefore the history between the two of you provides insights concerning how to behave in order to maintain the friendship or relationship. Hobbes says, "...to have friends is power: for they are strengths united." (L, 72) Power, for Hobbes, is what all people strive for, as well as the value or worth of a person. (L, 73) If the above conception of Hobbes' morality of memory is correct, then we can see that Hobbes' morality of memory, like his scientific knowledge, is not objective, but conditional. We have a moral obligation to remember proper names, on the condition that we have a thick relationship with the individual in question. The reputation that one establishes through remembering her/his friend's proper names and therefore caring about/maintaining the relationship is how one accumulates more power. Maintaining our powerful reputation is completely dependent on others. Hobbes says, "[power] is not absolute; but a thing dependant on the need and judgment of others." (L, 73) Those who are most qualified to judge us and most often need us are people who we have thick relationships with. Thus, we can see that, for Hobbes, in all interpersonal relationships, as well as in the psychological egoist's desire for the accumulation of power, there is a morality of memory that manifests itself as a hypothetical moral imperative to remember the proper names of those with whom we have thick relationships.

An Ethics of Memory

It seems clear to me that there is a morality of memory in *Leviathan*, but what about an ethics of memory? I believe we can begin to answer this question by closely investigating an interesting observation made earlier when dealing with the morality of memory. Hobbes has shown that with his method for judging the validity of interpersonal testimony, we can discover knowledge about the past

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that is not merely reducible opinion or belief. It is the middle, scientific step of Hobbes' method, in which we pay attention to the consequences of the witness' proper name and examine her/his reputation that can give us a clue as to whether or not there is an ethics of memory in *Leviathan*. But, to deal with the question of an ethics of memory in *Leviathan*, I think, it would be most productive to first discuss communal memory or history.

Doing Good History

What happens when we testify about events in the extremely distant past that we never actually experienced? This kind of testimony is what is commonly referred to as history. Hobbes says, "In a good history, the judgment must be eminent; because the goodness consisteth, in the method, in the truth, and in the choice of the actions that are most profitable to be known." (L, 60) It is not insignificant that Hobbes says 'In a good history,' rather than 'In an accurate history.' According to Hobbes, a good history is not necessarily accurate. A good history is one that has the most profitable effects on the contemporary social world. Hobbes' conception of history falls right in line with his theory of truth, which seems to be quite utilitarian in nature. Since we do not, often, have the reputation of the historian to aide us in judging her/his historical testimony, we have to rely on a hybrid of the first and second steps of judging interpersonal testimony as our methodological tool for the evaluation of the truth of a historical testimony. This hybrid amounts to judging whether the event could have possibly occurred by reference to the consequences of universal rather than particular names.

The State of Nature

I would like to explain this hybrid method by examining Hobbes' own historical testimony regarding the state of nature. Hobbes obviously did not live during the state of nature, yet he testifies that his conception of the state of nature is

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‘good history.’ To judge Hobbes’ account of the state of nature, we must examine the consequences of universal names. The universal name that Hobbes employs in his state of nature is the name ‘human.’ Hobbes says,

Of names, some are proper, and singular to one only thing, as *Peter, John, this man, this tree*; and some are *common* to many things *man, horse, tree*; every of which, though but one name, is nevertheless the name of divers particular things; in respect of all which together, it is called an *universal*; there being nothing in the world universal but names; for the things name are every one of them individual and singular. One universal name is imposed on many things, for their similitude in some quality, or other accident; and whereas a proper name bringeth to mind one thing only, universals recall any of those many. (L, 35)

Given the definition that universal things have a similitude in some quality, the method we must use to evaluate Hobbes’ state of nature is a version of his own reductive compositive method. To understand the universal name ‘human,’ we have to break down particular humans to expose their universal commonalities. Luckily, Hobbes, the good scientist that he is, has already done this for us. Hobbes says that the reductive compositive method shows that all humans are naturally driven by an ultimate desire of power and life, have an aversion to death, are psychological egoists, and are naturally equal. Given this definition of the human, if you place a bunch of particular humans that share these universal qualities into a shared territory without a government, with a scarcity of resources, everyone has the right to everything and most particular humans will live ‘brutish and short’ lives. Based on the consequences of names, if Hobbes’ reductive compositive breakdown of the human is correct, then Hobbes’ account of the state of nature seems to be highly plausible. Hobbes idea that the intense fear of death will eventually lead to the creation of the social contract seems like it has a high possibility of occurring as well, given the consequences of the universal name human. But, as noted above, Hobbes is interested in creating a

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'good history,' not an accurate history. So to decide whether this is a good history, we must examine the consequences of a belief in this history.

For Hobbes, good history is utilitarian. The consequence of good utilitarian history will promote the liberation of life and minimize the fear of death. According to this standard of truth, Hobbes' history is an almost unquestionably good history. If we believe that the state of nature has occurred in the past, then we are more likely to live commodiously under the sovereign's rule out of fear of returning to the state of nature in the present. This fear, created by a belief in Hobbes' history, is what is necessary to ensure that we obey the sovereign and live commodiously. Hobbes drives this point home when he says, "For the laws of nature, as justice, equity, modesty, mercy, and, in sum, doing to others, as we would be done to, of themselves, without the terror of some power, to cause them to be observed, are contrary to our natural passions, that use to partiality, pride, revenge, and the like. And covenants, without the sword, are but words, and of no strength to secure men at all." (L, 129) So the fear of returning to the state of nature (the sword), instituted by our acceptance of Hobbes' history, is what makes us give the sovereign our power (the words), which, in turn, creates the security of wo/men and ensures the sustainability of commodious living.

The Social Contract

In the above quotation, Hobbes suggests that "...in sum, doing to others, as we would be done to..." is the hallmark of a peaceful life. Hobbes' assertion is ethical and sounds suspiciously like the categorical imperative or the golden rule. What this Hobbesian categorical imperative amounts to is one half of Hobbes' ethical obligation. However, this imperative cannot be referenced to the universal name (or category) human. As noted above, Hobbes breaks down the universal name human to show that all particular humans left alone will cause a state of war. So, what category does Hobbes use to structure this imperative? The category could not possibly have existed before the social contract,

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otherwise the social contract would not be necessary. It is my contention that the universal name that Hobbes grounds his categorical imperative on is actually created through the social contract. This universal name created through the social contract is called 'subject,' although depending on the location of the people it is often referred to as nationality, such as, European, etc. I wish to argue that remembering the universal name of the people within the commonwealth is the first aspect of Hobbes' ethical obligation to remember. This obligation is ethical because the creation of the universal name 'subject' actually creates a thin relationship of care between all subjects. Unlike, the moral obligation to remember particular names, this obligation is unconditional and objective. You are ethically responsible to remember that everyone who is part of your commonwealth shares the universal name 'subject. And based on this shared universal name, you are ethically responsible to care about all the people in the common wealth as you would care about anyone that you have a thin relationship with. And as both Hobbes and Kant similarly argue, the ethical responsibility we have to people that we are in thin relationships with is that we do unto others as we would have them do unto us. This is the Hobbesian creation and defense of human rights, or perhaps more appropriately subject rights and it relies heavily on an ethical obligation to remember.

The Ethics of Honor

There is, of course, one other name created through the social contract, the sovereign, and that name, I will argue, is tied to the second half of Hobbes' ethical obligation to remember. The sovereign, by definition wields the power of all of the subjects and, as a consequence, has absolute authority. Hobbes says, "For by this authority, given [to the sovereign] by every particular man in the commonwealth, he hath the use of so much power and strength conferred on him, that by terror thereof, he is enabled to form the wills of them all, to peace at home, and mutual aid against their enemies abroad." (L, 132) The sovereign's mighty power is the second source of the fear that is necessary to ensure a

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commodious, peaceful life for the subjects and adherence to the Hobbesian categorical imperative. The relationship between the subject and the sovereign is neither a thick nor thin relationship. Hobbes modeled the commonwealth after the family and the sovereign assumes the rightful place of the father in the commonwealth. The immense debt that is owed to the sovereign for sustaining a state of peace creates a very deep, meaningful relationship, but the sovereign and the subject do not have a long, personal relationship together. The consequence of this unique relationship is that the subject is not expected to care about the sovereign, but to honor him. Hobbes creates a long, extensive list about how one can honor the sovereign. The list includes, prayer, obedience, gifts, to show love or fear, to praise, to believe, to agree with in opinion, etc. (L, 73-75) But Hobbes does not limit the methods of honor, he says, "...in a commonwealth, where he, or they that have the supreme authority, can make whatsoever they please, to stand for signs of honour..." (L, 75) In this relationship, there are several ethical obligations of memory. The subject must remember and respect the laws of the sovereign, remember what the sovereign deems signs of honor and honor her/him, and lastly, in order to carry out the aforementioned ethical obligations, the subject must remember the consequence of the artificial name 'sovereign.' The subject must also remember Hobbes' 'good history' of the state of nature and the process that led to the creation of the sovereign.

In summary, it seems to me that there are three distinct ethical / moral obligations to remember in *Leviathan*. First, there is the moral hypothetical imperative to care about those whom you have a thick relationship with by remembering their proper names. Second, there is the ethical categorical imperative to remember that everyone within the commonwealth shares the universal name of 'subject,' and, as a consequence of the thin relationship established by the distribution of this universal name, you should do unto other subjects as you would have them do unto you. Lastly, there is the ethical obligation to remember the artificial name of the sovereign and by necessary extension the 'good history' of Hobbes' state of nature, and, as a consequence of

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her/his name, the subject has an ethical obligation to honor the sovereign. It seems to me that a reading of *Leviathan* through the central concept of memory greatly explicates and provides an interesting new understanding of almost all of the central concepts of *Leviathan*.

Name Games

If, as I have argued above, Hobbes' philosophy is founded on a science of names and various ethical and/or moral obligations to remember names and 'good history,' then it seems to me that the Hobbesian social world amounts to a sort of Wittgensteinian language game. Jean-Francois Lyotard quite eloquently summarizes Wittgenstein's language games when he says, "What [Wittgenstein] means by this term is that each of the various categories of utterance can be defined in terms of rules specifying their properties and the uses to which they can be put - in exactly the same way as the game of chess is defined by a set of rules determining the properties of each of the pieces, in other words, the proper way to move them."⁶ For Hobbes, language games are less about utterances and more about names, but this description of language games seems to apply quite well to Hobbes' radical nominalism. Each name refers to a different set of rules that govern how the name's referent (the individual) is capable of moving (it is important to remember that Hobbes' defines freedom as movement). It seems that Hobbes, through the social contract, creates a massive language game of names. Lyotard actually backs up my suspicions when he says, "[language games'] rules do not carry within themselves their own legitimation, but are the object of a contract, explicit or not, between players..." (PC, 10) To piece together Lyotard's observation with my suspicion that Hobbes is perhaps one of the greatest inventors and players of language games, it would seem that, through the social contract, the rules of the commonwealth game are created.

⁶ Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Condition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota P, 1984. 10. From here on, this text is referenced parenthetically with the abbreviation: PC.

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Through the social contract, the universal name subject and the artificial name sovereign are given their respective meaning, which includes the rules of their movement.

The next question one must ask is: "Why did Hobbes feel the need to create such a massive language game?" Lyotard refers to these massive language games as 'metanarratives.' Metanarratives are language games that have as their primary rule the intolerance of any other language game that cannot be subsumed under the metanarrative. Metanarratives are the giant stories we tell ourselves to explain the world and to justify action. Lyotard also talks about a second type of smaller narrative that he calls a petit narrative. Petit narratives do not attempt to subsume other petit narratives. Many of the players of these petit language games ignore other petit narratives until there is an issue of conflict, in which case there is a confrontation between players until one language game completely beats out the other. Now, keep in mind that Hobbes modeled the commonwealth after the family, which is a petit language game. In the state of nature, the existence of so many petit narratives within one geographical location caused conflict. Families could not negotiate or talk with each other, because they were all playing by different rules. As an analogy, think of a basketball player trying to play a game with a soccer player. Now, imagine that neither player knows the rules of the other's game. In such a situation, conflict out of frustration would certainly ensue between the basketball player and the soccer player. They cannot play a game together because both players play with a different set of rules. I hope that this simple analogy can help to show why there would be conflict between various individuals and families within the state of nature. This conflict, brought about by an inability of various people located within the same geographic area to understand and play the same game during encounters most often involves resource disputes and is why Hobbes needed to construct a metanarrative that would subsume all the petit narratives of the individuals' families and, as a result, eliminate conflict. It is important to note that the metanarrative does not eliminate other petit narratives but it subsumes them. It makes the rules of the petit narratives fall into

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alignment with the rules of the metanarrative. By virtue of the metanarratives encompassing behavior, families often remain stable, unique games by retaining some of their own rules, but none of the rules of these petit language games will be allowed to conflict with the rules of the metanarrative. It is important to note that even in this Hobbesian metanarrative, families, often, retain or create their own family-specific rules, because the uniqueness of a family's game is part of what allows for the continued existence of thick relationships. It is not only the common experiences that individuals within a family have that makes their relationship thick, but also the common history they share, by which I mean, the shared historical tradition of their own unique language game.

The new game of the commonwealth that Hobbes constructed uses both fear and psychological egoism to ensure that players play according to the rules. In these respects, Hobbes' language game of the commonwealth is not much different from contemporary sports. For example, the game of basketball uses the fear of fouls, ejection, fine, and suspension to ensure that the players play according to the rules. But, basketball players also follow the rules of the game based on their egoistic psychology. A basketball player plays by the rules, because that is what is required to be honored, rewarded, and ultimately, to win the game. In a very similar way, commonwealth players are motivated to follow the rules of the game by fear of a return to the state of nature and the sovereign's mighty power, and by their own desire for honor, peace, rewards, and a good reputation.

But how does Hobbes' language game of names relate to the ethics of memory? Not only does one have an ethical or moral obligation to remember the universal names of those one has a thin relationship with, the particular names of those one has a thick relationship with, and the artificial name of the sovereign, but one is also required to remember the *consequences* of these names. The consequences of these names are the rules of movement that the name applies to the player. We are not just required to remember that 'person x' is a subject. We are required to remember and respect the rights of movement that 'person x' has, by virtue of her/his being a subject. In short, we are required

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to remember because we *care* about ourselves, because we want others to remember our rights of movement. Because we want to escape the state of nature and to live in peace, we have both an ethical and a moral obligation to remember.

Florida Atlantic University
Boca Raton, Florida