**Why Do People Behave Badly?**

In the preface to his book “Ethics, The Big Questions” (other titles are available!), Julian Baggini puts forward his aim to help us develop our ability to think about the dilemmas we face individually and as a society. It seemed a good idea to compile a list of reasons people get this wrong to serve as a background to the book.

This list was kick-started by a catalogue of the doings of our current prime minister: see

<https://www.facebook.com/ledbydonkeys/videos/560420942266948>

So, why do people behave badly? The order may well be improved, but....

* Privilege: they think they are special
* Upbringing: nobody corrected them. Potential cycle of misbehaviour in a (/any) group
* Mischief: to annoy others in society
* Banality: not seeing the consequences of their actions.
* Ignorance: Not knowing the “rules” or custom.
* Amorality: not recognising there are rules
* Loss of control: including temporary loss through e.g. alcohol or drugs
* Illness: mental instability
* Desperation: overruled by circumstances - fear for life, starvation
* Protest: Victimhood or revenge on others. Subgroup protest.
* Rebellion: genuine - against an oppressive regime or dominant class
* Rebellion: as an expression of independence - growing up
* Rebellion: the existing rules are no longer appropriate and a new “rule” is required
* Subgroup culture: at odds with dominant culture (e.g. forced marriage)
* Dominance: demonstration of power - e.g. war crimes such as rape

Excuses:

* Sins of omission seem less serious than sins of commission.
* Everybody does it: “victimless crime”, taking from the stationery cupboard, litter.
* Low risk of being caught or challenged. (Noted need to put in safeguards against fraud)

RB, SC, JL 10 June 2022

Additions?