

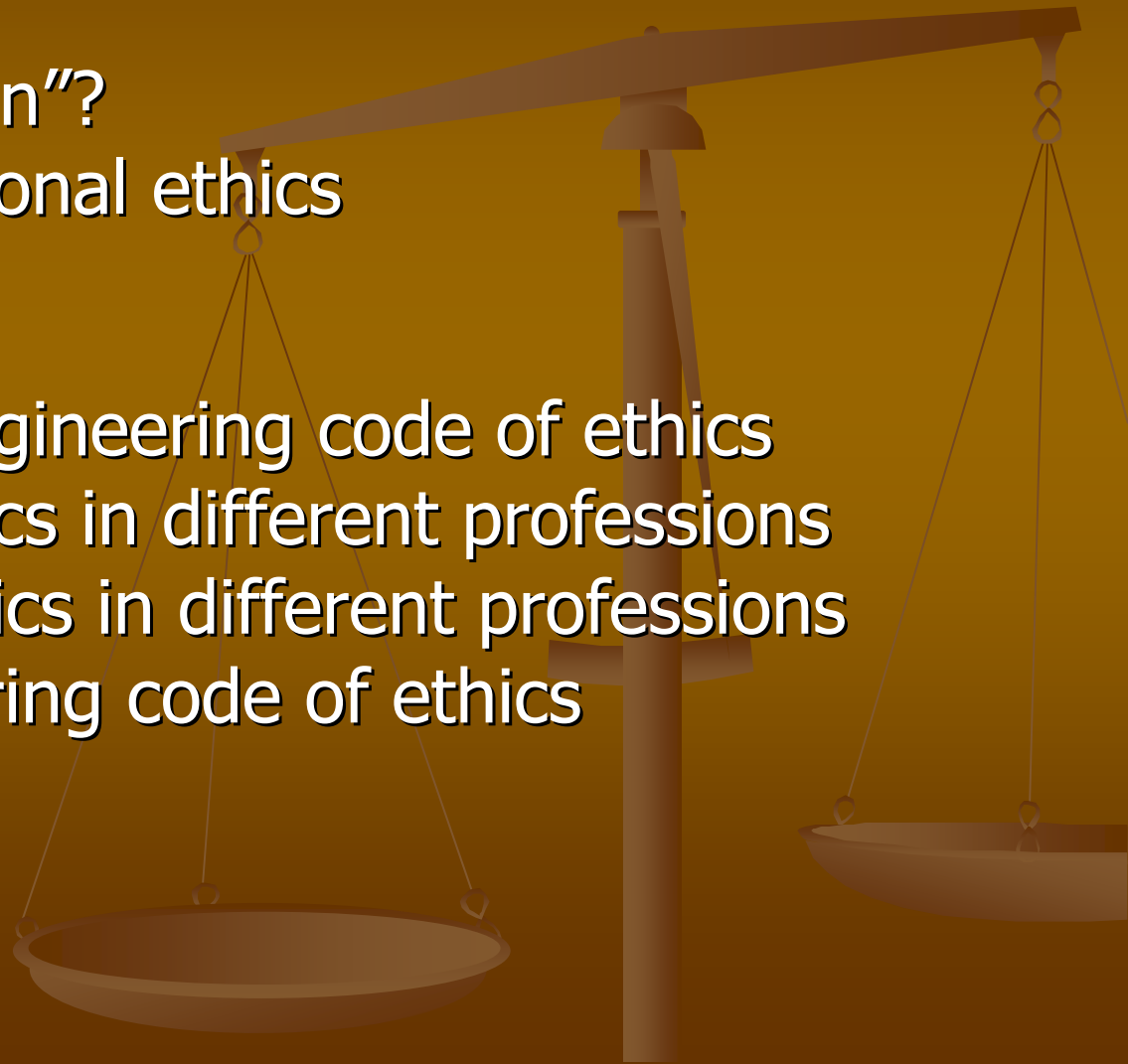
ORIGINS OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS



Presenter: YUAN FANG

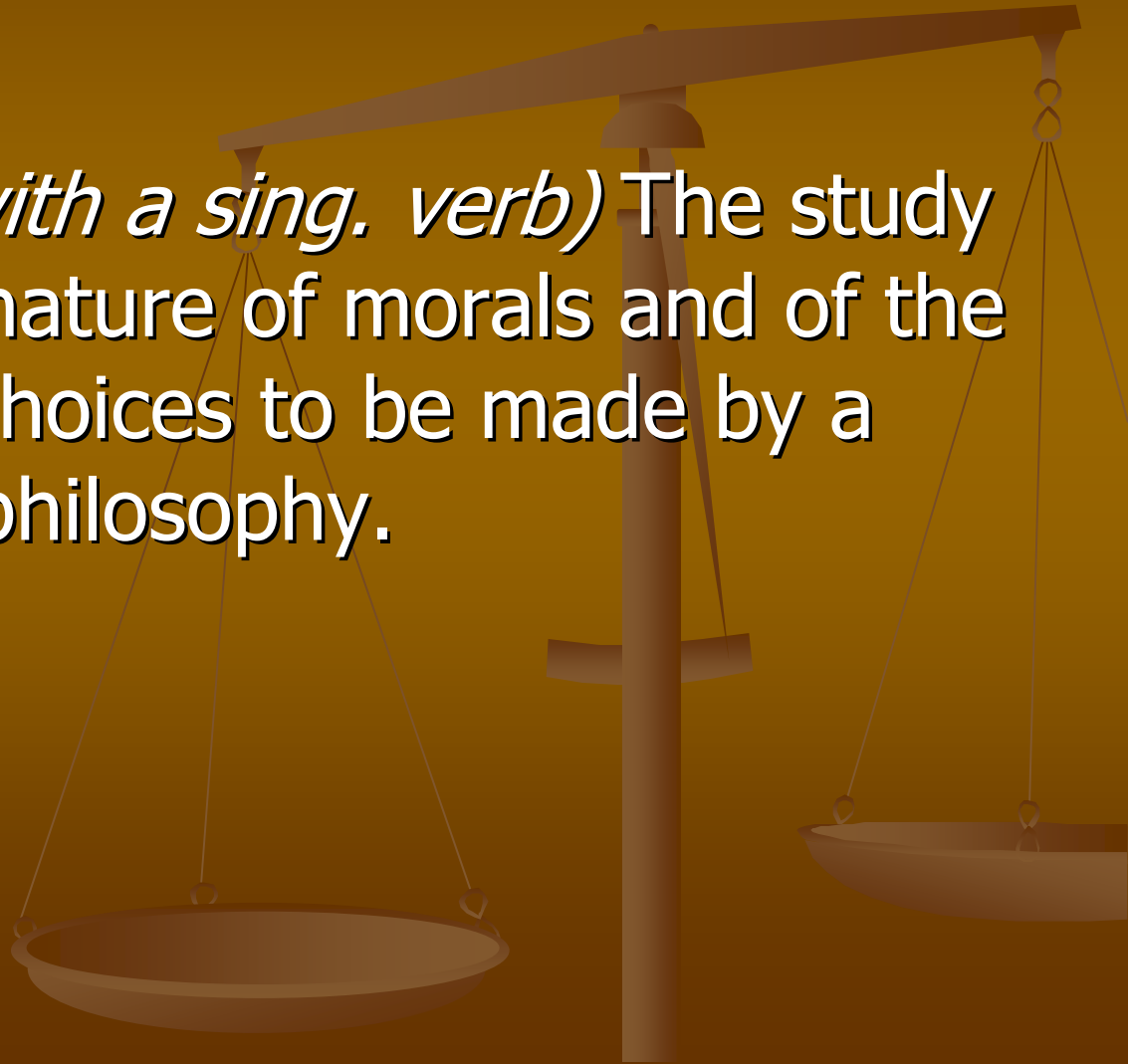
Outline

- What is ethics?
- What is “profession”?
- history of professional ethics
 - Oaths
 - Code of ethics
- Brief history of engineering code of ethics
- Similarities of ethics in different professions
- Differences of ethics in different professions
- Software engineering code of ethics
- Conclusion



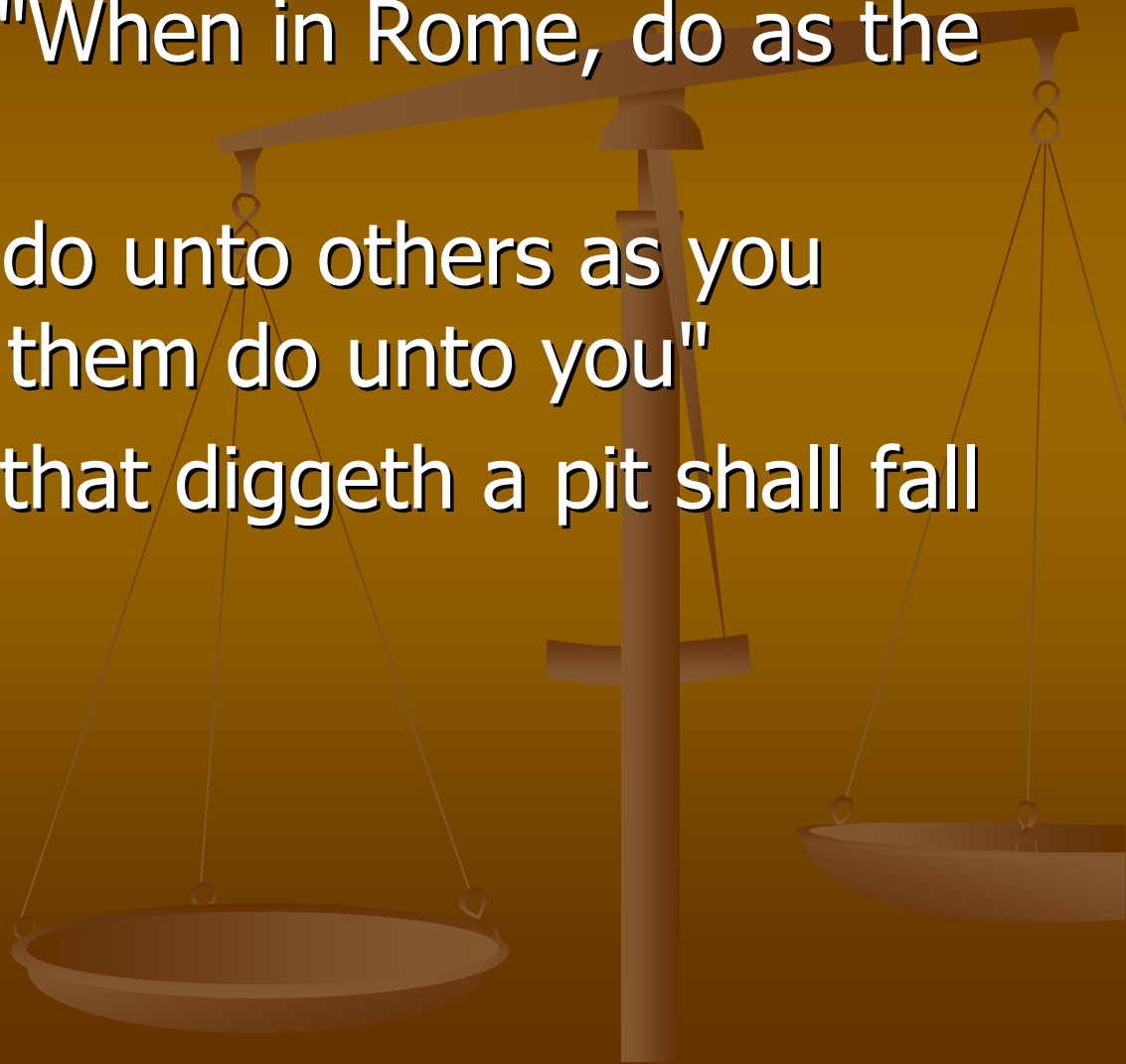
What's ethics?

- **ethics** (*used with a sing. verb*) The study of the general nature of morals and of the specific moral choices to be made by a person; moral philosophy.



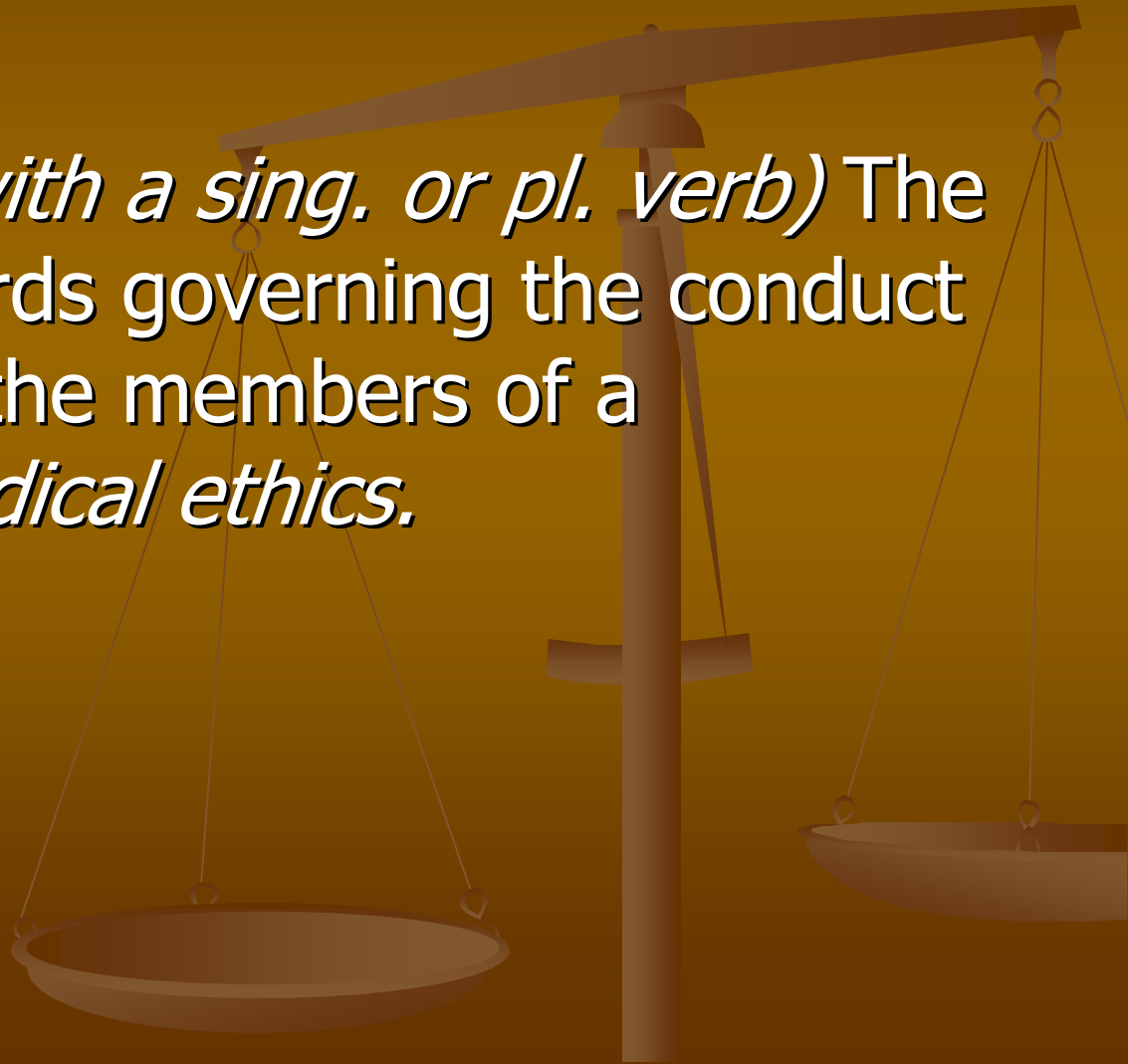
“I say”

- Shakespeare -- "When in Rome, do as the Romans do"
- Kant -- "Do not do unto others as you would not have them do unto you"
- the Bible -- "he that diggeth a pit shall fall into it"



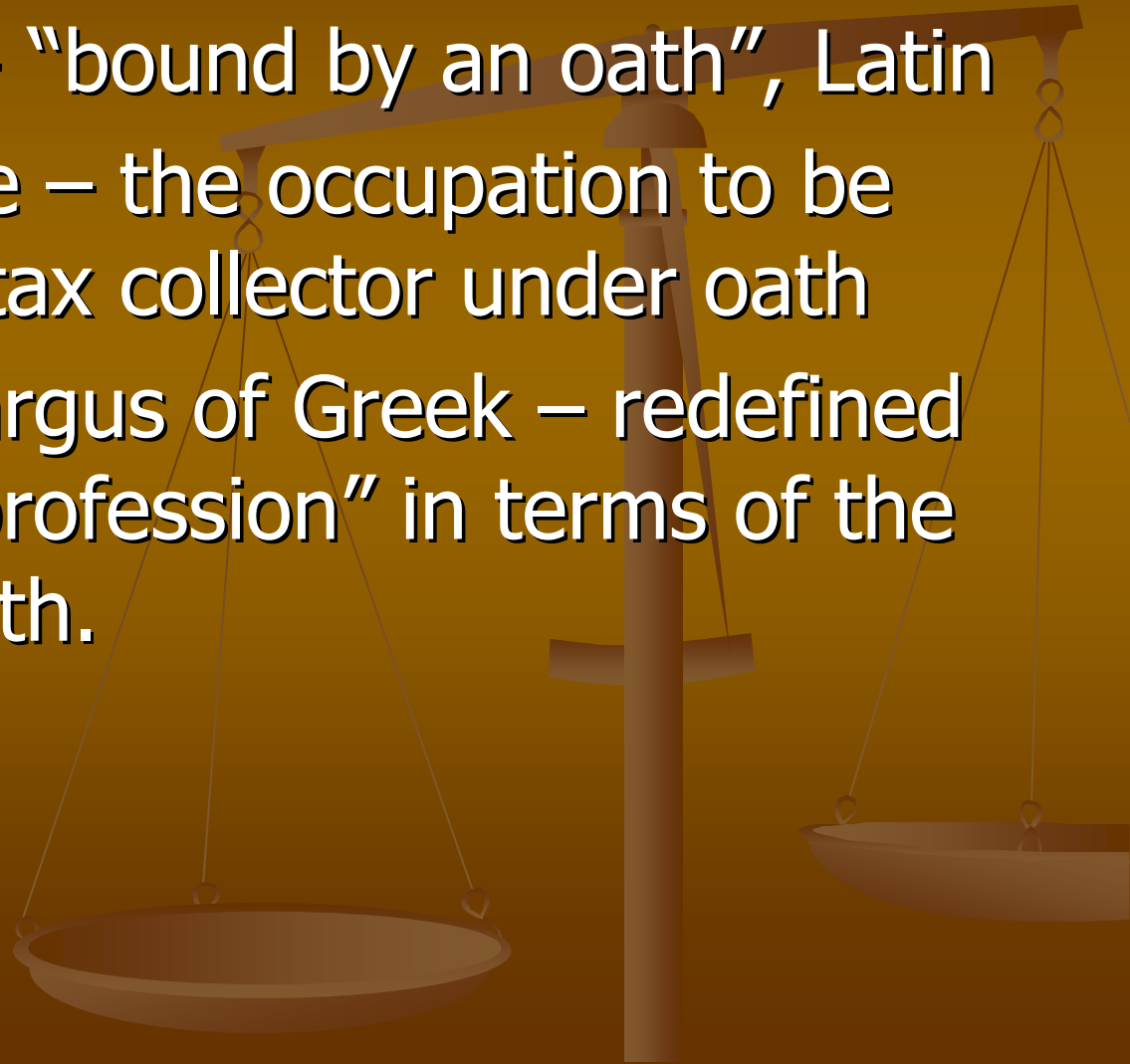
What's ethics?

- **ethics** (*used with a sing. or pl. verb*) The rules or standards governing the conduct of a person or the members of a profession: *medical ethics*.



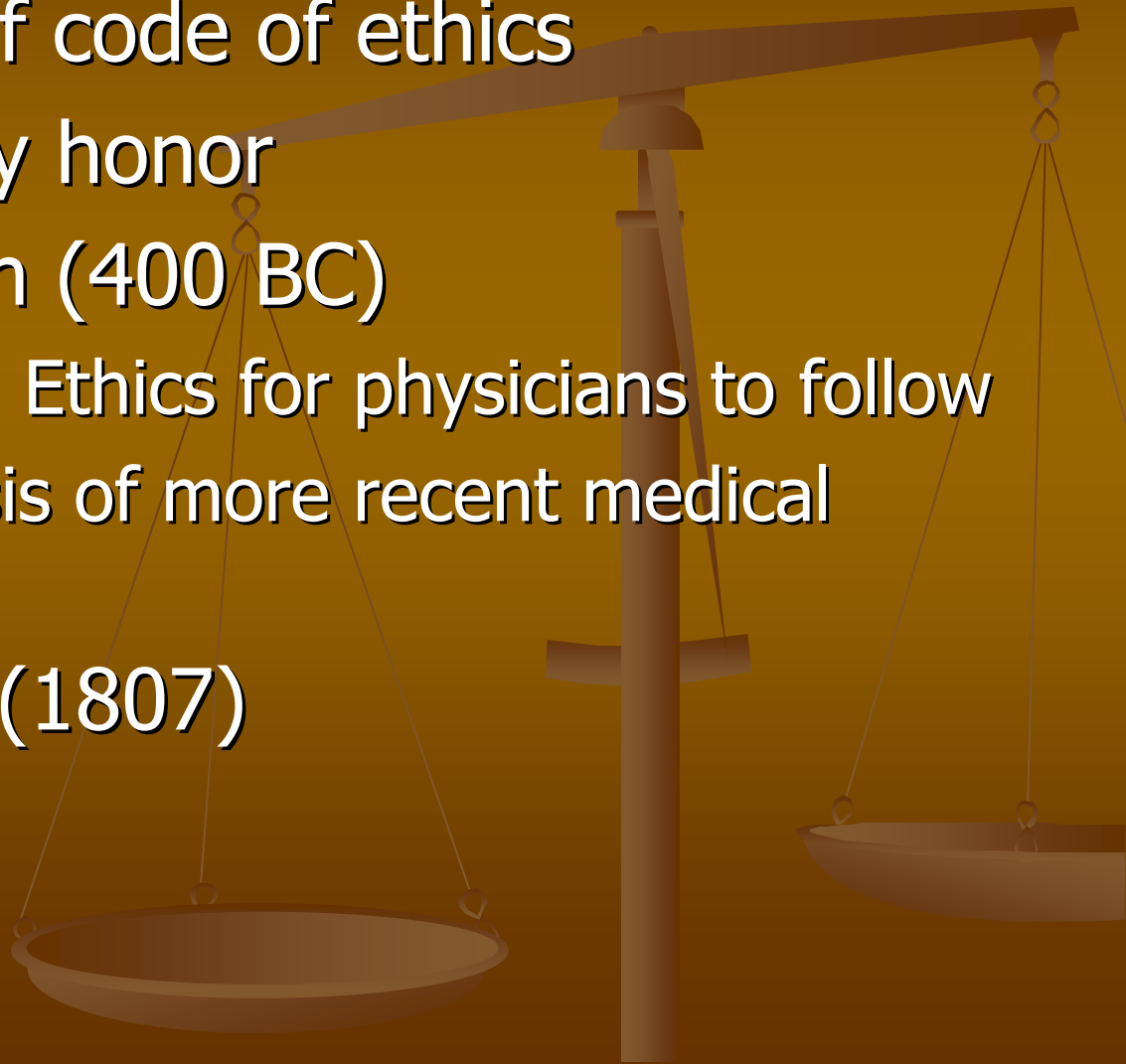
What's profession?

- “profession” -- “bound by an oath”, Latin
- In Roman time – the occupation to be declared to a tax collector under oath
- Scribonious Largus of Greek – redefined the “medical profession” in terms of the Hippocratic oath.



Oaths

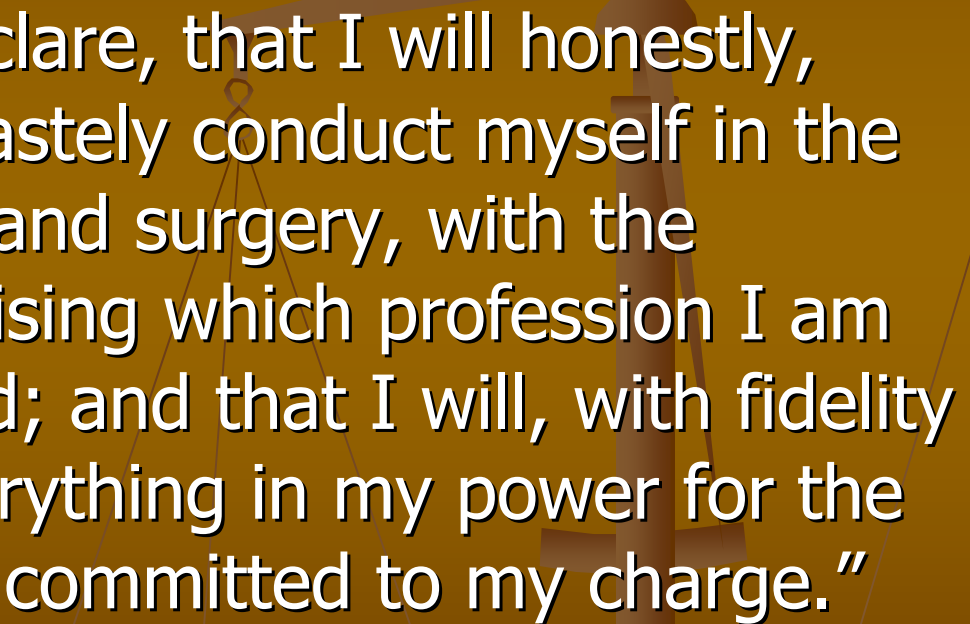
- The precursor of code of ethics
- The gentlemanly honor
- Hippocratic Oath (400 BC)
 - Oath of Medical Ethics for physicians to follow
 - Formed the basis of more recent medical oaths
- New York Oath (1807)



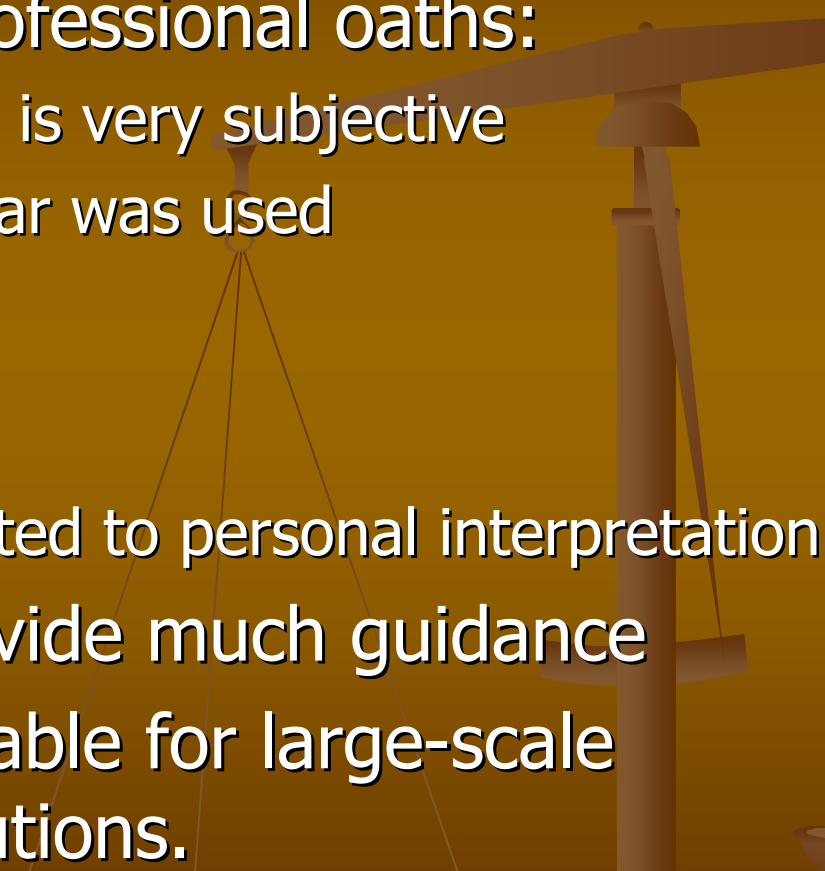
Oaths (continue)

- New York Oaths:

“I do solemnly declare, that I will honestly, virtuously, and chastely conduct myself in the practice of physic and surgery, with the privileges of exercising which profession I am now to be invested; and that I will, with fidelity and honor, do everything in my power for the benefit of the sick committed to my charge.”



Oaths (continue)

- a closer look at professional oaths:
 - the language used is very subjective
 - First person singular was used
 - "I swear"
 - "I declare"
 - "I shall"
 - The oath is subjected to personal interpretation
 - too general to provide much guidance
 - Oaths are not suitable for large-scale professional institutions.
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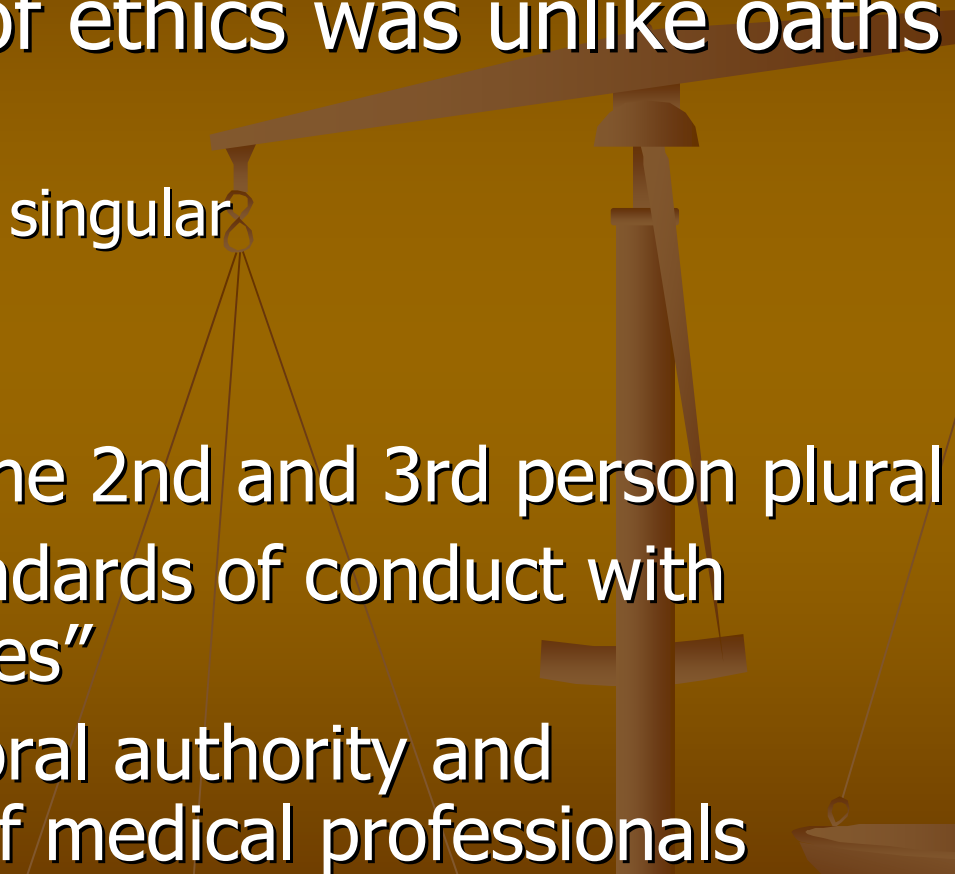
Code of ethics



Thomas Percival (1740-1804)

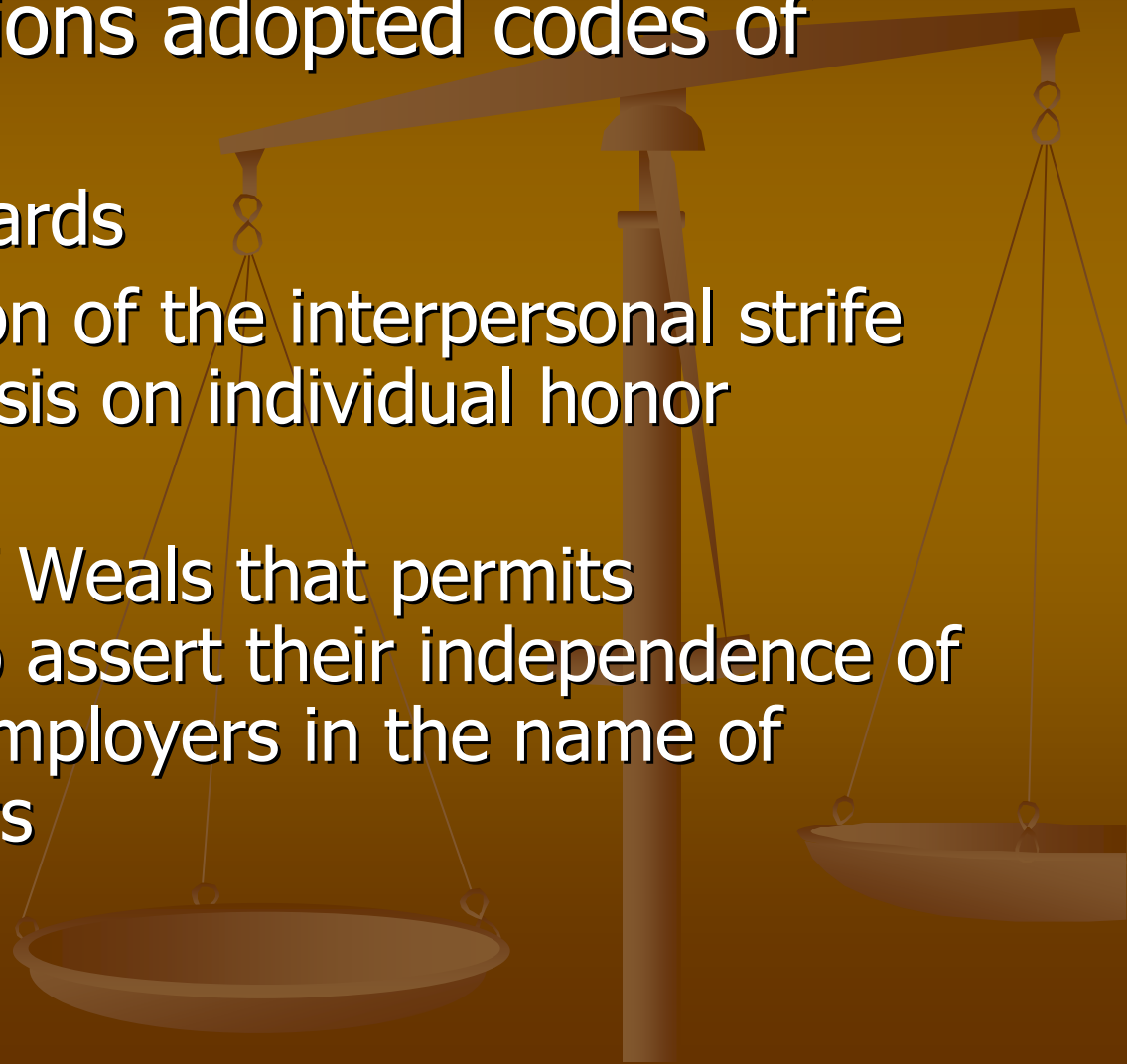
- Published a code of medical ethics for physicians in 1794
- First code of ethics for professional ethics
- First code of ethics to be adopted by a professional organization, AMA

Code of Ethics (continue)

- Percival's code of ethics was unlike oaths
 - Banished
 - the first person singular
 - Subjectivity
 - Idiosyncrasy
 - Replaced with the 2nd and 3rd person plural
 - Formulated standards of conduct with numbered "duties"
 - Inserted the moral authority and independence of medical professionals
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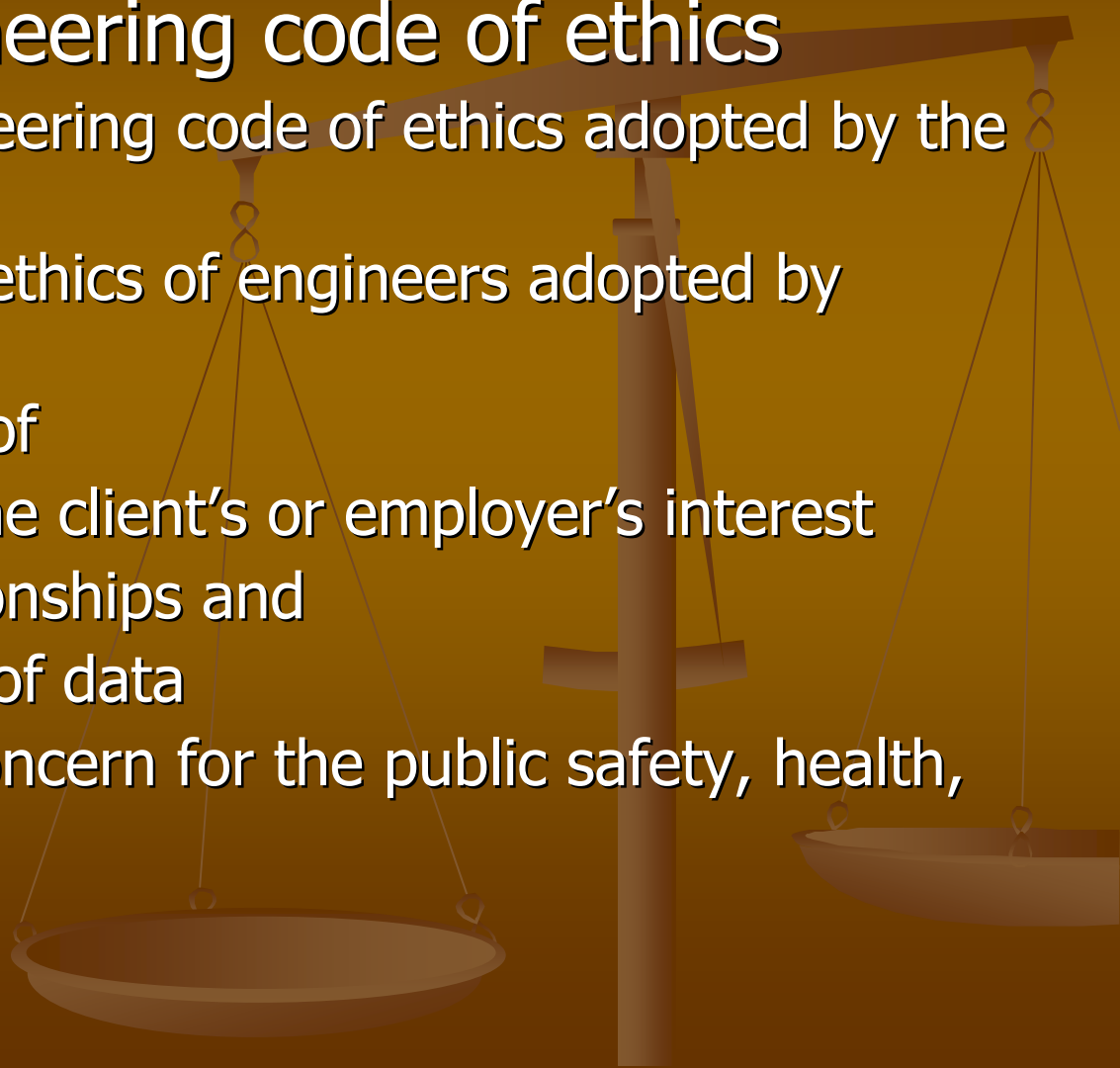
Code of ethics (continue)

- Modern professions adopted codes of ethics because:
 - Common standards
 - The minimization of the interpersonal strife that the emphasis on individual honor encourages
 - A framework of Weals that permits professionals to assert their independence of their nominal employers in the name of service to others



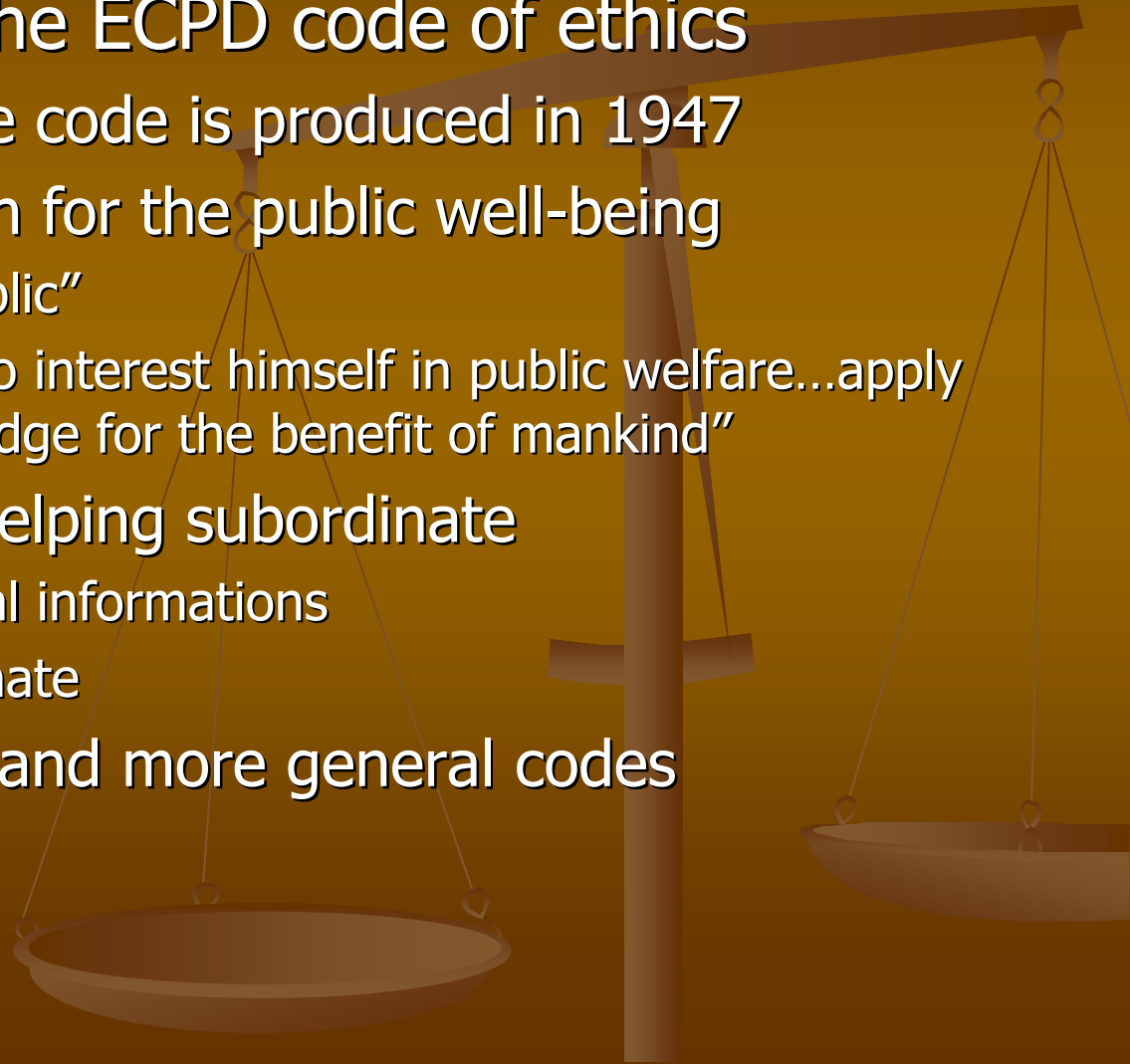
Engineering code of ethics

- Two early engineering code of ethics
 - 1912 – first engineering code of ethics adopted by the AIEE
 - 1914 – a code of ethics of engineers adopted by ASME
 - Said a great deal of
 - protection of the client's or employer's interest
 - business relationships and
 - the ownership of data
 - Had no general concern for the public safety, health, or welfare



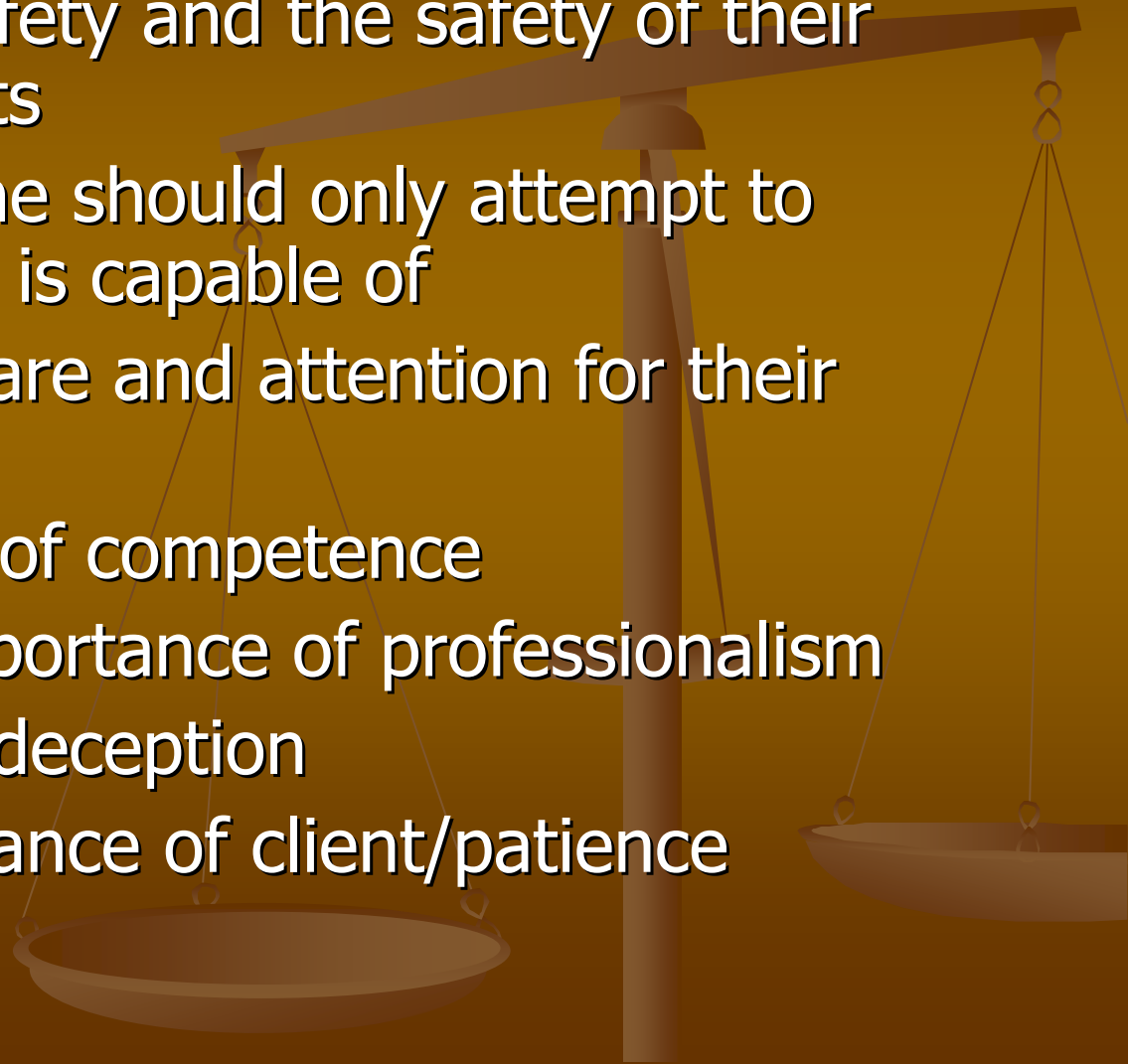
Engineering code of ethics (cont)

- The evolution of the ECPD code of ethics
 - First version of the code is produced in 1947
 - Increasing concern for the public well-being
 - “fidelity to the public”
 - Engineer’s “duty to interest himself in public welfare...apply his special knowledge for the benefit of mankind”
 - Society support, helping subordinate
 - Exchange technical informations
 - Be fair to subordinate
 - Specialized codes and more general codes



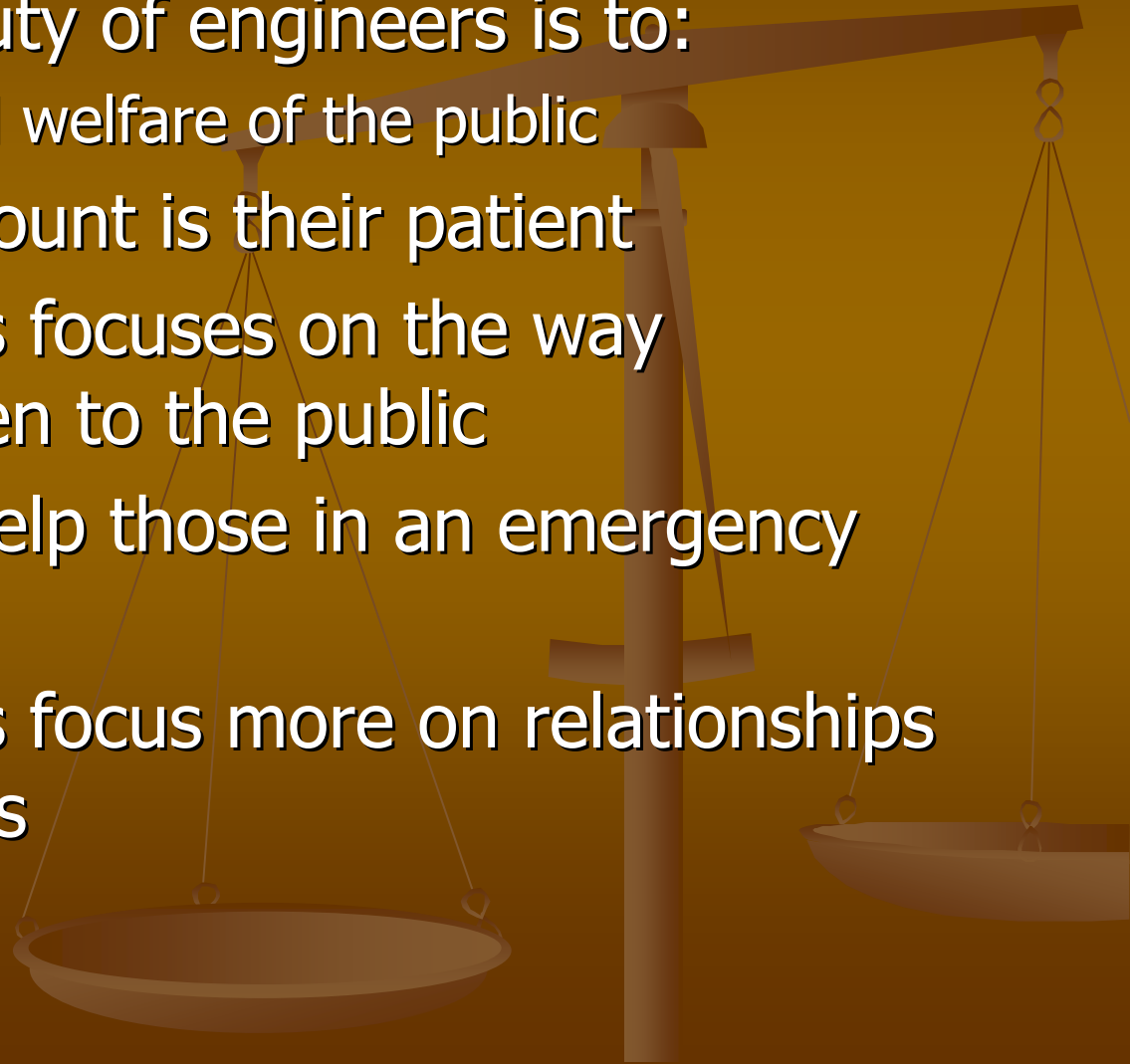
Similarities in different professional fields

- focus on public safety and the safety of their patients and clients
- emphasize that one should only attempt to perform what one is capable of
- focus on special care and attention for their clients or patients
- Keep up the level of competence
- emphasize the importance of professionalism
- denounce acts of deception
- emphasize importance of client/patience confidentiality



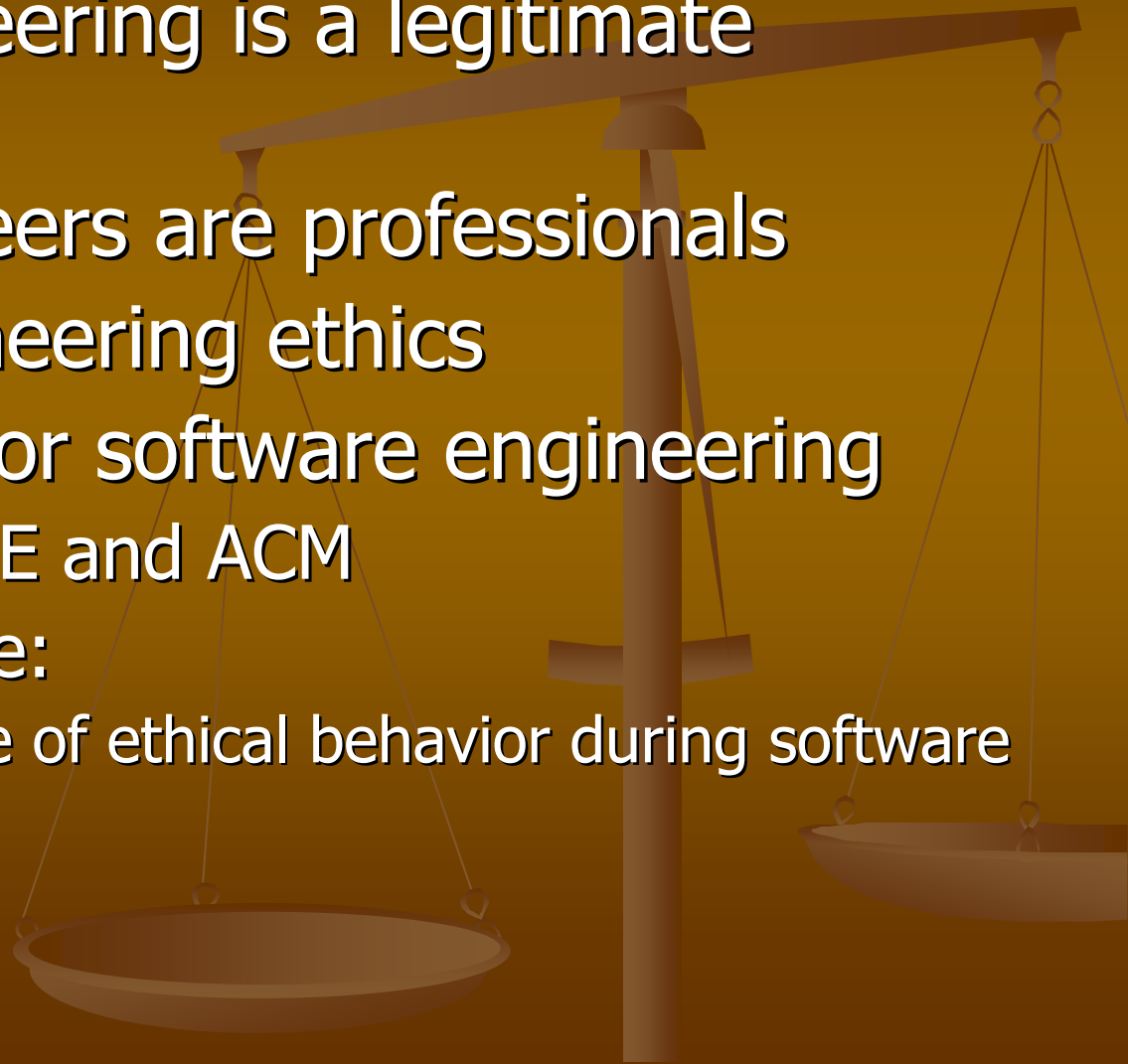
Differences in different professional fields

- The paramount duty of engineers is to:
 - Safety, health and welfare of the public
- Physicians' paramount is their patient
- Engineering ethics focuses on the way information is given to the public
- Physicians must help those in an emergency situation
- Engineering ethics focus more on relationships between engineers



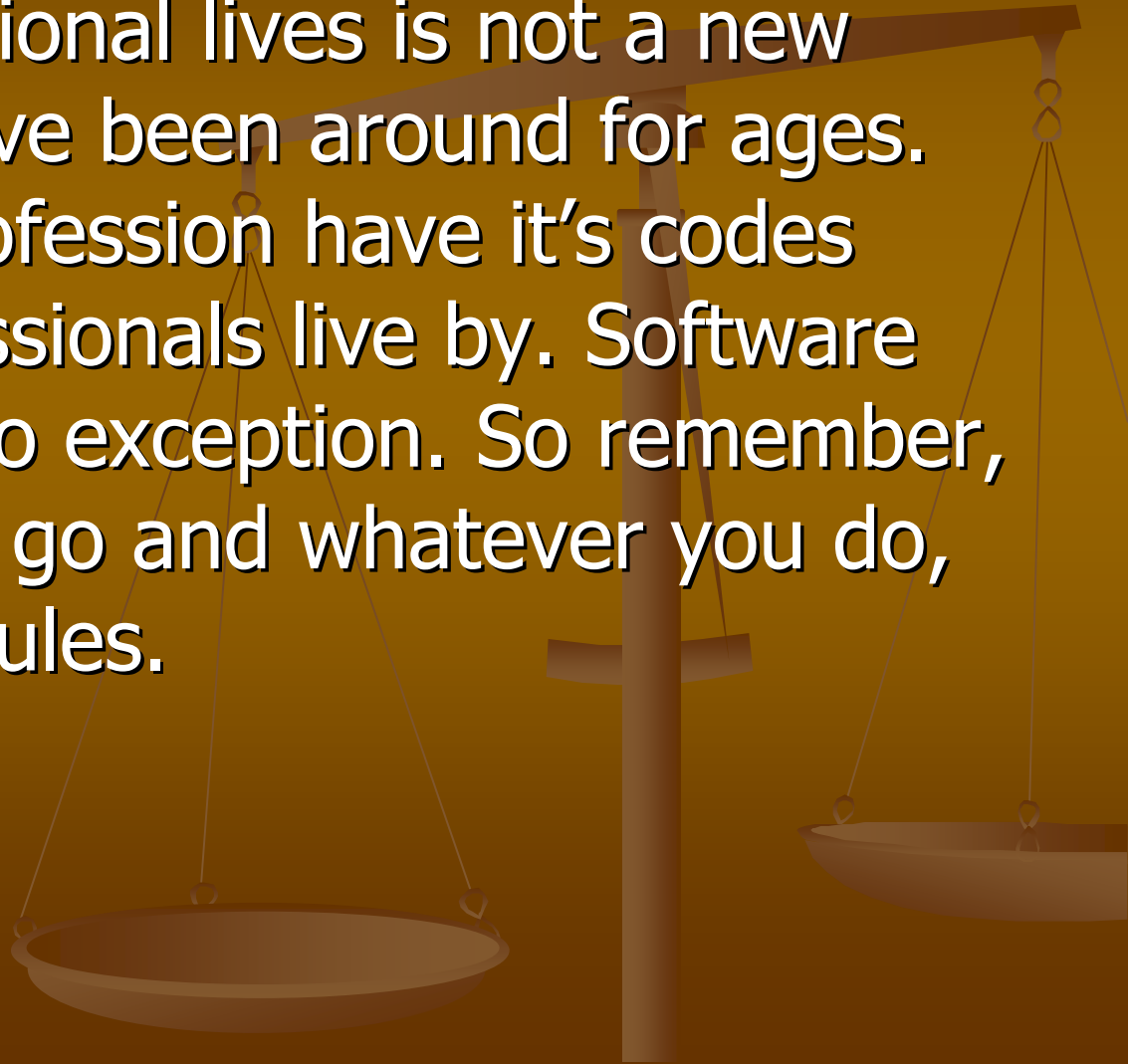
Software Engineering Ethics

- Software engineering is a legitimate profession
- Software engineers are professionals
- It fits into engineering ethics
- Code of ethics for software engineering
 - Adopted by IEEE and ACM
 - Specialized code:
 - The importance of ethical behavior during software maintenance.



Conclusion

Ethics in professional lives is not a new thing. Ethics have been around for ages. Today every profession have it's codes that their professionals live by. Software Engineers are no exception. So remember, where ever you go and whatever you do, remember the rules.



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