

The Philosophy of Kant: Kant's Practical Philosophy

PHI 502/GER502/CHV502/REL547

Mondays, 1:30-4:20

201 Wooten Hall

The seminar examines Kant's main ideas in practical philosophy. The goal is to understand Kant's ethical thought generally, but in this edition we pay particular attention to the accounts of moral motivation, practical belief, moral argument, and the Highest Good.

Instructors: Andrew Chignell and Alexander Englert

Office Hours:

Chignell - Tuesday, 3:30-4:30 PM (or by appt.): 232 1879 Hall

Englert - Friday, 1:00-2:00 PM (or by appt.): Green Hall 3N21

Books:

Required (available at Labyrinth):

Kant, *Practical Philosophy* [PP]

Kant, *Religion and Rational Theology* [RRT]

Recommended:

Owen Ware, *Kant's Justification of Ethics* (OUP 2021)

Thomas Höwing (ed), *The Highest Good in Kant's Philosophy* (DeGruyter 2016)

Other Resources

Other articles or chapters we assign (required as well as recommended) will be available on the course Canvas site. The best place to start your own secondary source research is in the "Kant" section of Philpapers.org. [Immanuel Kant - Bibliography - PhilPapers](https://www.philpapers.org/kant/).

Work

1. Four 2-3 page critical response papers (upload to canvas by 11:59 pm on Sunday night before the seminar), OR Two 2-3 page response papers + a presentation OR Two 2-3 page response papers + a recorded dialogue (we'll explain this third option in class)
2. Seminar Paper (18-25 pages)

Schedule (subject to adjustment):

0. Introduction

Sept 12 - Transcendental Idealism and Kant's Practical Philosophy

Primary Readings

- Canon of Pure Reason (*KrV*, A797/B825 - A819/B847)
- Architectonic of Pure Reason (*KrV*, A832/B860-A841/B869)

Secondary Reading

- Nicholas Stang, "Transcendental Idealism" (SEP):
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-transcendental-idealism/>

Optional further readings

- Ideas in General (*KrV*, A310/B367 - A332/B389)
- Ideals in General (*KrV*, A567/B595 - A571/B599)
- John Callanan, 2019, "Transcendental Idealism: Kant" (*A Companion to 19th Century Philosophy*, OUP)
- Andrew Chignell, 2022, "One World Phenomenalism: How the Moral Features Appear" (*The Sensible and Intelligible Worlds*, Stang and Schafer, eds. OUP)
- Alexander Englert, 2022, "How a Kantian Ideal Can Be Practical," *Inquiry*
- Lea Ypi, Ch. 6 "The Role of Ideas from a Practical Perspective" *The Architectonic of Reason*

I: Ethics, Moral Psychology, Race, Virtue

Sept 19 - Ethics, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals (GMS)*: Section I

Primary

- *GMS*, Preface + Section I (4:387- 405 / PP 43-60)

Secondary

- Stephen Engstrom, "The Determination of the Concept of the Highest Good," in *The Highest Good in Kant's Philosophy* (pp. 89-108)

Optional

- Owen Ware, Chapter 1: "Moral Skepticism" (pp. 16-27)

Sept 26 - Ethics, *GMS*: Section II

Primary

- GMS: Section II (4:406 - 445 / PP 61-93)

Secondary

- Onora O'Neill, "Applying the Categorical Imperative," in *Acting on Principle* (136-193)
- Christine Korsgaard, "Creating the Kingdom of Ends: Reciprocity and responsibility in personal relations," in *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (188-221)

Optional

- Owen Ware, Chapter 1: "Moral Skepticism" (cont.) (pp. 27-34)

Oct 3 - Ethics, GMS: Section III

Primary

- GMS: Section III (4:446-463 / PP 94-108)

Secondary

- Henry Allison, "The Deduction in the *Groundwork* III," in *Kant's Theory of Freedom* (214-229)
- Jeanine Grenberg, "The Phenomenological Failure of the *Groundwork* III," in *Kant's Defense of Common Moral Experience* (106-134)

Optional

- Owen Ware, Chapter 1: "Moral Skepticism" (cont.) (pp. 34-43).
- Joe Saunders, "Some Hope for Kant's *Groundwork* III," *Inquiry* 2021

Oct 10 - Ethics, Race, Virtue

Guest: Elvira Basevich (UC-Davis/Princeton)

Primary

- *Metaphysics of Morals (MS)*: Part II, Doctrine of Virtue, Preface + Intro. (6:375-413 / PP 509-540)
- *MS*: On Duties to Oneself, §§1-4 (6:417-420, pp. 543-545); §§13-22 (6:437-447 / PP 559 - 567).
- *MS*: On Duties to Others, §§23-48 (6:448-474 / PP 568-588)

Secondary

- Elvira Basevich, tbd
- Mavis Biss, "Friendship, Trust, and Moral Self-Perfection," *Philosopher's Imprint*

Optional

- Owen Ware, Chapter 5: "Self-Knowledge and Despair"
- Anne Margaret Baxley, "Kantian Virtue," *Philosophy Compass*

[Oct 17 - FALL BREAK]

II: Practical Metaphysics: Freedom and the Highest Good

Oct 24 - Freedom as a Fact in the *Critique of Practical Reason* (KpV)

Guest: Wolfgang Ertl (Keio University)

Primary

- KpV, Preface + Introduction (5:3-16 / PP 139-149)
- KpV, Principles of Practical Reason (5:19-41 / PP 153-173)

Secondary

- Wolfgang Ertl, "'Ludewig' Molina and Kant's Libertarian Compatibilism," in *A Companion to Luis de Molina* (2014)
- Allen Wood, "Kant's Compatibilism," in *Self and Nature in Kant's Philosophy* (1984)

Oct 31 - The Concept of an Object of Pure Practical Reason

Primary

- KpV, Concept of an Object (5:57-106 / PP 186-225)

Secondary

- Andrew Chignell, selections from *Knowledge and Belief in Kant: Making Room for Practical Metaphysics* (in progress)
- Pauline Kleingeld, "Kant on 'Good,' the Good, and the Duty to Promote the Highest Good," in *The Highest Good in Kant's Philosophy*

Nov 7 - Morality's Highest Object: Belief and the Highest Good

Primary

- KpV, Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason (5:107-119 / PP 226-236)

Secondary

- Andrews Reath, "Two Conceptions of the Highest Good"
- Lawrence Pasternack, "Restoring Kant's Conception of the Highest Good"

Optional

- Ralf Bader, "Kant's Theory of the Highest Good," in *The Highest Good in Aristotle and Kant* (2015)

Nov 14 - Morality's Highest Object: Postulates of God and Immortality

Primary

- *KpV*, Primacy of Practical Reason and Postulates (5:119-163 / PP 236-271)

Secondary

- Mark Johnston, "Is Hope for Another Life Rational?" in *Current Controversies in Philosophy of Religion* (2019)
- Jessica Tizzard, "Why Does Kant Think We Must Believe in an Immortal Soul?" *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* (2019)

Optional

- Rachel Barney, "The Inner Voice: Kant on Conditionality and God as Cause," in *The Highest Good in Aristotle and Kant* (2015)

III: Religion, Hope, and History

Nov 21 - Moral Arguments in *Religion* and other texts

Primary

- "What is Called Orientation in Thinking?" (1784) (8: 132-147 / RRT 1-18)
- *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (1790) (KU) - §79 (5:416-417 / pp. 285-286), §§82-87 (5: 453-425 / pp. 293 - 318) (on Canvas)
- *Religion within the Bounds of Reason Alone* (1793) (RGV) Preface to 1st Ed. (6:3-11 / RRT 57-63)
- *RGV*, Part III, Victory of the Good Principle (6:93-102 / RRT 129-136)

Secondary

- Alexander Englert, "Kant's Favored Argument for Our Immortality: The Teleological Argument" (in progress)
- Andrew Chignell, "Three Varieties of Moral Argument in Kant," *Monist* (2022)

Nov 28 - Moral Progress & the Early Reception of Kant's Practical Philosophy in Prussia/Russia

Guest: Nina Dmitrieva (Immanuel Kant Baltic University/Princeton)

Primary

- *Idea for a Universal History* (1784)
- *Conflict of the Faculties*, Part 2: "An Old Question Raised Again: Is the Human Race Constantly Progressing?" (1794) (7:79-94 / RRT 297-309)

Secondary

- Nina Dmitrieva, "Early Reception of Kant's Practical Philosophy: F.W.D. Snell (1761-1827), A. Lubkin (1770/1-1815) and P.S. Kondyrev (1789- after 1823)"
- Susan Meld Shell, "Kant as Soothsayer: The Problem of Progress and the "Signs" of History," in *Kant and the Possibility of Progress* (2021)

Dec 5 - The Moral Psychology of Hope and Despair

Guest: Kyla Ebels Duggan (Northwestern University)

Primary

- "On the Miscarriage of All Philosophical Trials in Theodicy" (1791) (8:253-271/ RRT 19-38)
- Kant, "The End of All Things" (1794) [8:327-339 / RRT 217-232]

Secondary

- Kyla Ebels Duggan, "The Right, the Good, and the Threat of Despair: (Kantian) Ethics and the Need for Hope in God," in *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion* (2016)

Optional

- Andrew Chignell, "Hopeful Pessimism: The Kantian Mind at the End of All Things" (forthcoming)
- *Conflict of the Faculties*, Part 1: "The Conflict of the Philosophy Faculty with the Theological Faculty" [written 1794, published 1798] (7:17-74 / RRT 239-293)