

PHI 519/CHV 519: Relational and Non-Relational Normativity
Spring Semester 2020
Fridays, 1-3:50pm in Marx Hall 201

Instructor: Johann Frick

Office: 203 Marx Hall

Office Hours: Mondays, 4:30-6pm

Email: jdfrick@princeton.edu

Course description:

This seminar will explore some recent work on relational notions in ethics, e.g. the concepts of *bipolar* obligation and of *wronging* a person. We will also examine the prospects, and limitations, of recent attempts to characterize the domain of interpersonal morality as a whole in relational terms.

Questions we'll investigate will include: What is it to wrong someone? What is the relationship between acting wrongly and wronging a person – can an action be wrong without wronging anyone, and can there be such a thing as permissible wronging? Does the concept of moral obligation have an irreducibly second-person aspect? Does it presuppose our authority to make claims and demands on one another? What role should an ideal of “justifiability to each” play in working out the substantive content of morality? Can we have special obligations to people just in virtue of standing in valuable relationships with them? What are our ‘normative powers’ vis-à-vis other people? By giving commands, or making requests, can we give others moral obligations that they didn’t independently possess? What is it to have, or lack, the ‘standing’, to give others normative directives? And is there any moral reason to refrain from criticizing others, when said criticism would be hypocritical?

Guest speakers: There will be three guest-speakers: Stephen Darwall (Yale) on February 28; Tom Dougherty (UNC-Chapel Hill) on March 27; and Jay Wallace (Berkeley) on May 1.

Course Requirements: Students wishing to take this course for credit (for a unit, in the case of philosophy graduate students; for a letter grade in the case of graduate students from other departments) are required to write a paper of no more than 10,000 words and to give a brief presentation (up to 15 minutes) during one of our seminars. Auditors are welcome but should obtain my permission.

All readings will be posted on Blackboard.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

Feb. 21: **The Second-Person Standpoint**

Stephen Darwall, *The Second-Person Standpoint*, Chapters 1, 2, and 4.

Feb. 28: **Bipolar Obligation and Its Limits (Guest speaker: Stephen Darwall)**

Stephen Darwall, "Bipolar Obligation" (from *Morality, Authority, and Law*) and "Why Obligations Can't Be Bipolar (Relational) All the Way Down" (ms.).

March 6: **Wronging Another**

Michael Thompson: "What is it to Wrong Someone? A Puzzle about Justice"

Nico Cornell: "Wrongs, Rights, and Third Parties"

March 13: **Tragic Choices and Permissible Wronging**

Julia Driver, "Wronging, Blame, and Forgiveness"

Johann Frick: "Dilemmas, Luck, and the Two Faces of Morality"

SPRING BREAK

March 27: **Degrees of Wronging and the Significance of Intent (Guest speaker: Tom Dougherty)**

Tom Dougherty: "Adding Insult to Injury: How Ill-Will Aggravates Wronging" (ms.)

Background reading: T.M. Scanlon, "The Significance of Intent"

April 3: **Associative Duties**

Samuel Scheffler, "Families, Nations, and Strangers"

Johann Frick, "National Partiality, Immigration, and the Problem of Double-Jeopardy"

April 10: **Authority**

David Enoch, "Authority and Reason-Giving"

Daniel Viehoff, "Legitimacy as a Right to Err"

April 17: **Requests**

Geoffrey Cupit, "How Requests (And Promises) Create Obligations"

David Enoch, "Giving Practical Reasons"

April 24: *The Moral Nexus* – **Part I**

Selections from R.J. Wallace, *The Moral Nexus*

Friday, May 1: *The Moral Nexus* – **Part II (Guest speaker: Jay Wallace)**

Selections from R.J. Wallace, *The Moral Nexus*

Tuesday, May 5: **Standing and Hypocrisy**

Ori Herstein, "Understanding Standing: Permission to Deflect Reasons"

Daniela Dover, "The Walk and the Talk"

Optional: Johann Frick: "What We Owe to Hypocrites: Contractualism and the Speaker-Relativity of Justification"

Friday, May 8: **The Person-Affecting View and the Non-Identity Problem**

Derek Parfit, "The Non-Identity Problem"

Elizabeth Harman, "Can We Harm and Benefit in Creating?"

Optional: Caspar Hare, "Voices from Another World: Must We Respect the Interests of People Who Do Not, and Will Never, Exist?"