

SEP 25 2000

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE

PHILOSOPHY 1010  
INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY: VALUES AND SOCIETY

Fall Term 2000

Instructor: Tom Enders  
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Office hours:

Room: J226  
Meets: T/Th 4-5:20 p.m.

Course description:

This course is designed to introduce you to the study of philosophy through examination of notable works of classical and modern philosophical thought. We will focus on questions of good and bad, and right and wrong, which people face as members of societies. What are our duties and entitlements? We will consider issues that are commonly thought of as moral issues, as well as matters of economic justice, and questions of political obligation and liberty.

After contemplation of the nature of morality, and examination of different moral theories or approaches, we will discuss a number of issues. These may include: animal rights, rape and date rape, affirmative action, abortion, surrogate motherhood, euthanasia, capital punishment, just economic distribution, war, obligation to obey the law, smoking, legalization of drugs, and pornography.

Course objectives:

The main objective of this course is to introduce you to important ideas and arguments in areas of social philosophy and to help you to begin to understand and evaluate them. By the end of this course you should be able to think more precisely, systematically and judiciously about some significant questions in moral, economic and political philosophy. Successful completion of this course should also prepare you for further study in philosophy.

Course requirements:

Short essay.....	15%
First exam.....	25%
Term paper.....	30%
Final exam.....	30%

### Required texts:

Thomas Hurka, Principles: Short Essays on Ethics, 2nd edition.  
Toronto: Harcourt Brace Canada, 1999.

John Arthur, editor, Morality and Moral Controversies, 5th  
edition. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1999.

### Topics:

- I. A brief introduction to philosophy. What is philosophy?
- II. Moral philosophy - main questions. The nature of morality.
  1. Relativism and objectivism.
  2. Religion and morality.
- III. The value of life and moral theories or approaches.
  1. Consequentialism vs. nonconsequentialism. Utilitarianism and rights.
  2. People, animals and the environment.
  3. Natural law theory.
  4. Kant and the primacy of rationality and autonomy.  
Comparison with Aristotle.
  5. Feminist ethics.
- IV. Moral issues (NOTE: only some of the following will be  
addressed, depending upon time availability and interest)
  1. Men and women and sexual relationships. Rape and date rape.
  2. Affirmative action
  3. Abortion
  4. Capital punishment
  5. Euthanasia
  6. Parenting and surrogacy
- V. Economic issues
  1. Justifications of capitalism. Virtue and vice.
  2. Obligations to the needy
  3. What is a just distribution of income?
- VI. Political philosophy
  1. War and patriotism
  2. Obligation to obey the law and social contract theories
  3. The scope of individual liberty. Smoking. Other drugs.
  4. Freedom of speech. Pornography.

### READINGS:

Hurka, "If You Want to Stop Procrastinating, Don't Put it Off  
until Tomorrow" Pp. 275-8

- I. Introduction. What is philosophy?

Hurka, Introduction. Pp. 1-5 ("... a whole range of ethical issues.")  
Hurka, "Slim Pickings in a Society of Choosers" Pp. 279-82  
Hurka, "Was Socrates Right that Philosophy is the Ultimate Pursuit?" Pp. 171-4  
Hurka, "The Alluring Contours of a Well-Rounded Life" Pp. 179-82  
Hurka, "Modesty is a Mistake, but at least Modest People Do Us a Favour" Pp. 267-9  
Hurka, "Why Intellectuals Care About the Flintstones" Pp. 295-8  
Hurka, "How to Get to the Top: Study Philosophy" Pp. 161-4

## II. Moral philosophy - main questions. The nature of morality.

### 1. Relativism and objectivism.

Hurka, "Values are Not Relative" Pp. 111-14  
Mary Midgley, "Trying Out One's New Sword" (JA) Pp. 85-8  
Hurka, "Why Study Different Cultures?" Pp. 45-50

### 2. Religion and morality.

Hurka, "Why God is Irrelevant to Morality" Pp. 119-22  
Hurka, "The Problem of Evil" Pp. 123-6  
John Arthur, "Morality, Religion & Conscience" (JA) Pp. 77-84

## III. The value of life and moral theories or approaches.

### Preliminary readings -

"Killing on a Lifeboat: Queen v. Dudley & Stephens" (JA) Pp. 2-6  
William Godwin, "Comparing Human Lives: The Archbishop & the Chambermaid" (JA) Pp. 218-19

### 1. Consequentialism vs. nonconsequentialism. Utilitarianism and rights.

#### Instructor's Introduction to Moral Theories.

John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism" (JA) Pp. 34-40  
Hurka, "Pleasure Alone Won't Make You Happy" Pp. 167-70  
Hurka, "Is It Wrong to Lie About Santa Claus?" Pp. 237-40  
Hurka, "Do Children Have Rights?" Pp. 233-6

#### Recommended:

Hurka, "Pleasure is Fleeting, but Achievements Live On" Pp. 183-6  
Ronald Dworkin, "Taking Rights Seriously" (JA) Pp. 247-53

### 2. People, animals, and the environment.

Hurka, "Why Many Find Meat-Eating Hard to Digest" Pp. 93-6  
Hurka, "If Human Life is a Good Thing, Why Worry About the Population Explosion?" Pp. 101-4  
Hurka, "Should We Implant Life on Mars?" Pp. 105-8  
Peter Singer, "All Animals Are Equal" (JA) Pp. 131-41  
Bonnie Steinbock, "Speciesism & the Idea of Equality" (JA) Pp. 141-7  
William Baxter, "People or Penguins" (JA) Pp. 148-52  
J. Baird Callicott, "The Land Ethic" (JA) Pp. 152-64

recommended:

Hurka, "Should the West Pay for China's Fridges?" Pp. 97-100

### 3. Natural law theory.

#### 4. Kant and the primacy of rationality and autonomy

Comparison with Aristotle.

Immanuel Kant, The Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals (JA) Pp. 24-33

Onora O'Neill, "Kant & Utilitarianism Contrasted" (JA) Pp. 47-52

Hurka, "Should Morality Be a Struggle?" Pp. 115-18

Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics (JA) Pp. 11-13 (Book II)

#### 5. Feminist ethics.

V. Held, "Feminist Transformations of Moral Theory" (JA) Pp. 60-65

Hurka, "Gossip: Curtailing the Telling of Tales" Pp. 221-4

### IV. Moral issues (only some of the following will be addressed, depending upon time availability and interest)

#### 1. Men and women and sexual relationships. Rape and date rape.

Lois Pineau, "Date Rape: A Feminist Analysis" (JA) Pp. 493-500

Camille Paglia, "An Interview About Date Rape" (JA) Pp. 501-4

Robert Wright, "Feminists, Meet Mr. Darwin" (JA) Pp. 469-79

#### 2. Affirmative action

Hurka, "Affirmative Action: Giving Women an Even Break at Work" Pp. 189-92

Hurka, "Affirmative Action: More Radical Arguments" Pp. 193-7

Hurka, "Why Equality Doesn't Mean Treating Everyone the Same" Pp. 211-14

Hurka, "Should Whites Write about Minorities?" Pp. 51-4

Charles Murray, "Affirmative Racism" (JA) Pp. 403-10

James Rachels, "Reverse Discrimination" (JA) Pp. 410-13

Ronald Dworkin, "The Rights of Allan Bakke" (JA) Pp. 395-402

John Stuart Mill & Harriet Taylor, "The Subjection of Women" (JA) Pp. 442-9

#### 3. Abortion

Hurka, "Abortion & the Moral Standing of the Petus" Pp. 67-70

Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion" (JA) Pp. 171-9

Mary Anne Warren, "On the Moral & Legal Status of Abortion" (JA) Pp. 180-6

Don Marquis, "An Argument That Abortion is Wrong" (JA) Pp. 187-95

Susan Sherwin, "Feminism and Abortion" (JA) Pp. 196-202

George Harris, "Fathers and Fetuses" (JA) Pp. 203-10

#### 4. Punishment and capital punishment

Hurka, "Is There Such a Thing as Moral Luck?" Pp. 131-4

Hurka, "Is the Death Penalty Cruel & Unusual?" Pp. 261-4

Jonathan Glover, "Executions" (JA) Pp. 116-22

Martin Perlmutter, "Desert & Capital Punishment" (JA) Pp. 122-30

## 5. Euthanasia

- Hurka, "Is Death Really All That Bad for You?" Pp. 71-4  
Hurka, "Euthanasia: Dr. Kevorkian's Suicide Machine" Pp. 75-8  
Arthur Dyck, "An Alternative to the Ethic of Euthanasia" (JA)  
Pp. 219-23  
James Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia" (JA) Pp. 223-7  
Richard Brandt, "Defective Newborns & the Morality of Termination"  
(JA) Pp. 228-34

## 6. Parenting and surrogacy

- Hurka, "Does Surrogate Motherhood Treat Babies & Women as  
Commodities?" Pp. 79-82  
Bonnie Steinbock, "Surrogate Motherhood as Prenatal Adoption" (JA)  
Pp. 508-16  
Hugh LaFollette, "Licensing Parents" (JA) Pp. 522-9

## V. Economic issues

1. Justifications of capitalism. Virtue and vice.  
Hurka, "Why the Rich Don't Shovel Sidewalks" Pp. 145-8  
Hurka, "If Scrooge Had Been a Nicer Person..." Pp. 157-60  
Hurka, "A Market Economy Makes Us Better People" Pp. 149-52  
Hurka, "Competitiveness: Should We Play for Love or Play to Win"  
Pp. 291-4  
Hurka, "Why Envy is the Ugliest of the Seven Deadly Sins" Pp. 271-  
4  
Hurka, "Why There are Some Things Money Shouldn't Buy" Pp. 229-31  
John Locke, "Of Property" (JA) Pp. 241-2
2. Obligations to the needy  
Charles Murray, "A Proposal for Public Welfare" (JA) Pp. 298-302  
Peter Singer, "Rich and Poor" (JA) Pp. 273-9  
Hurka, "Some Taxing Questions About Wealth" Pp. 141-4
3. What is a just distribution of income?  
John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (JA) Pp. 253-63  
Robert Nozick, "The Entitlement Theory" (JA) Pp. 264-73  
James Rachels, "What People Deserve" (JA) Pp. 303-9

## VI. Political philosophy

### 1. War and patriotism

- Hurka, "Philosophy, Morality and the English Patient" Pp. 55-63  
Hurka, "Patriotism: Like Family Love or Racism?" Pp. 33-7  
Hurka, "Going Too Far in Self-Defence" Pp. 243-6  
Hurka, "Morality and War: Cause and Intent" Pp. 247-50  
Hurka, "Morality and War: Effects" Pp. 251-4  
Hurka, "Morality and War: How to Fight" Pp. 255-9  
Hurka, "Partial Failure is Also Partial Success" Pp. 135-8 [Rec]  
William James, "The Moral Equivalent of War" (JA) Pp. 94-99  
Richard Wasserstrom, "On the Morality of War" (JA) Pp. 100-108

2. Obligation to obey the law and social contract theories.  
Plato, "Crito" (JA) Pp. 414-19  
John Rawls, "Civil Disobedience and the Social Contract" (JA) 419-28  
Ronald Dworkin, "On Not Prosecuting Civil Disobedience" (JA) 428-34  
Hurka, "Is It Wrong to Cheat on Your Income Tax if Everyone Else Does?" Pp. 153-6  
Jane English, "What Do Grown Children Owe Their Parents?" (JA) 533-7  
Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan (JA) Pp. 14-20  
John Locke, Second Treatise of Government (JA) Pp. 238-41; 242-4

Recommended:

Lon Fuller, "The Problem of the Grudge Informer" (JA) Pp. 435-9

3. The scope of individual liberty. Smoking. Other drugs.

John Stuart Mill, "On Liberty" (JA) Pp. 323-32  
Thomas Szasz, "The Ethics of Addiction: An Argument in Favor of Letting Americans Take Any Drug They Want" (JA) Pp. 335-42  
Robert Goodin, "The Ethics of Smoking" (JA) Pp. 343-52  
Daniel Shapiro, "Addiction and Drug Policy" (JA) Pp. 353-8

4. Freedom of speech. Pornography.

Mill, "Of the Liberty of Thought & Discussion" (JA) Pp. 359-62  
Helen Longino, "Pornography, Oppression, & Freedom" (JA) Pp. 375-81  
Mark Wicclair, "Feminism, Pornography, & Censorship" (JA) Pp. 381-6  
Hurka, "Is It Bad to Think Bad Thoughts?" Pp. 283-6

From John Thomas and Wilfrid Waluchow, well and good: A Case Study Approach to Biomedical Ethics, 3rd edition (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 1998) - page 2:

... The moral philosopher will often seek to defend or justify the obvious... At other times, the moral philosopher will offer arguments which question the obvious... The main reason for these strange activities of the moral philosopher lies in his chief motivation, expressed in a maxim propounded by the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates. According to Socrates, the unexamined life is not worth living. Socrates and other moral philosophers always want to know *why* we should believe the things we do, even those things which we firmly and passionately believe to be true.

From "The Apology" (trans. By Jowett, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1896)

... Perhaps someone will say, "Why cannot you withdraw from Athens, Socrates, and hold your peace?" It is the most difficult thing in the world to make you understand why I cannot do that. If I say that I cannot hold my peace because that would be to disobey the god, you will think that I am not in earnest and will not believe me. And if I tell you that no better thing can happen to a man than to discuss virtue every day and the other matters about which you have heard me arguing and examining myself and others, and that an unexamined life is not worth living, then you will believe me still less. But that is so, my friends, though it is not easy to persuade you.