

PHIL 480: Moral Psychology

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University of the Fraser Valley
Dr Carl Hildebrand
Summer 2020

Course Description

This course is a study of moral psychology. The field of moral psychology covers a wide variety of topics. It can be approached with at least two distinct emphases, one more empirical and the other more a priori or traditionally philosophical in nature. Understanding that they are not mutually exclusive, this course takes the latter emphasis and approaches moral psychology as a field within philosophy where questions of morality, action, mind, and metaphysics converge. Both historical and contemporary arguments will be explored, equipping the student to understand key contemporary debates as well as their historical precedents and formation. As this is a directed study, teaching will follow a tutorial format and students will be expected to arrive already having read and digested the material, prepared to discuss it with the instructor and their peers. Evaluation will be on the basis of one presentation and three short papers (with the option of doing one short and one long paper instead of the three). Further instructions on assignments will be provided in class. Minor adjustments to the syllabus may be made along the way.

Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate knowledge of key concepts and arguments in contemporary moral psychology.
- Demonstrate knowledge of key concepts and arguments in the history of moral psychology.
- Ability to form an independent evaluation of the merits and deficiencies of key arguments.
- Ability to engage peers and instructor constructively, presenting one's own views/arguments and the views/arguments of others accurately and persuasively in speech and in writing.

Evaluation

Paper 1	25%
Paper 2	25%
Paper 3	25%
Presentation	15%
Participation	10%

Grading

A+	90-100%	C+	67-69%
A	85-89%	C	63-66%
A-	80-84%	C-	60-62%
B+	77-79%	D	50-59%
B	73-76%	F	0-49%
B-	70-72%		

Tentative Reading List and References

Week 1:

Introduction and Methodology

- Bernard Williams, "Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline" in *Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline* ed. Adrian Moore (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).
- John Doris et. al., "Moral Psychology: Empirical Approaches" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/moral-psych-emp/>, introduction: What is Moral Psychology?
- Rebecca Goldstein, "The Role of Intuition in Philosophy: Full Interview," published March 2019 by the Institute of Art and Ideas, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSFHoiW6_5M.

Week 2:

Hume, Practical Reason, and Moral Motivation

- David Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, book 2, part 3, section 3.
- Peter Railton, "Humean Theory of Practical Rationality" in *Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (Oxford: OUP, 2006).
- Bernard Williams, "Internal and External Reasons" in *Moral Luck* (Cambridge: CUP, 1981).

Week 3:

Introduction to Kantian Ethics

- Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, preface and sections I and II.
- Thomas Hill, "Kantian Normative Ethics" in *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Week 4:

Kant, Practical Reason, and Moral Motivation

- Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, section I.
- Christine Korsgaard, "Skepticism About Practical Reason" in *The Journal of Philosophy* 83:1 (1986): 5-25.
- Marcia Baron, "On the Alleged Repugnance of Acting from the Motive of Duty" in *The Journal of Philosophy* 81:4 (1984): 197-220.

Week 5:

Aristotle, Virtue, and Moral Character

- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, books I, II, VI, and X.6-9.
- Roger Crisp, "Modern Moral Philosophy and the Virtues" in *How Should One Live* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996).

Week 6:

Virtue and Moral Character

Bernard Williams, "Persons, Character, and Morality" in *Moral Luck* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

Susan Wolf, "Moral Saints" in *Journal of Philosophy* 79 (1982): 419-439.

Week 7:

The Vice Tradition

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologicae*, Part II-II, Questions 162-163.

Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, *Glittering Vices* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2009), chapter 1.

Quassim Cassam, *Vices of the Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), chapter 2: A Question of Character.

Week 8:

Egoism: Some Historical Views

Plato, *Republic*, Book II (-367e).

David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, sections 5 and 9: Appendix 2.

Joseph Butler, *Sermons at the Chapel of Rolls*, sermons 1 and 11.

Week 9:

Egoism: Contemporary Arguments

J.L. Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong* (London: Penguin, 1977), chapter 5: The Object of Morality.

Alison Hills, *The Beloved Self: Morality and the Challenge from Egoism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), chapter 11: Against Egoism.

Week 10:

Weakness of Will: Three Views

Plato, *Protagoras*, 352a1-360e5.

*Bonus reading: R.M. Hare, *Freedom and Reason* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), chapter 5: Backsliding.

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, books I.13 and VII.2-3.

*Bonus reading: Donald Davidson, "How is Weakness of the Will Possible" in *Essays on Actions and Events* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

Richard Holton, "Intention and Weakness of Will" in *The Journal of Philosophy* 96:5 (1999): 241-262.

*Bonus reading: Michael Bratman, "Toxin, Temptation, and the Stability of Intention" in *Faces of Intention* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999).

Week 11:
Conscience, Guilt, and Shame

Joseph Butler, *Sermons at the Chapel of Rolls*, sermons 1-3.
Jennifer Herdt, "Guilt and Shame in the Development of Virtue" in *Developing the Virtues* eds.
Julia Annas, Darcia Narvaez, Nancy Snow (Oxford: OUP, 2016).

Week 12:
Conscience, Guilt, and Shame contd.

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, essay 2: Guilt, Bad Conscience, and Related Matters.
Bernard Williams, *Shame and Necessity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), chapter
4: Shame and Autonomy.

Week 13:
Conscience, Cognition, and Moral Worth

Jonathan Bennett, "The conscience of Huckleberry Finn" in *Philosophy* 49 (1974): 123-134.
Nomy Arpaly, *Unprincipled Virtue* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), chapter 3: Moral Worth.
Carl Hildebrand, *Kant and Moral Character* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Oxford, 2017),
chapter 3: Moral Worth.