



20th century ethical theory was dominated by approaches concerned exclusively with duty or with utility. In recent years philosophers have evinced a renewed interest in virtue, i.e. character formation, the good life and the like. This entails greater attention to the concrete ways that ethical theory expresses the ideas and ideals of particular cultures. The cogency and relevance of philosophical argument is enhanced by attending carefully to implicit, unacknowledged presuppositions that require an understanding of social, psychological and religious practices and goals, not only as external influences, but as constituents of philosophical positions themselves.

We begin by examining three representative thinkers—Mill, Kant and Aristotle—with special attention to the place of character in their ethics and their cultural context. We then turn to other major thinkers, like Maimonides, Hume, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. The third part of the course introduces the late 20th century debate and, time permitting, interdisciplinary themes relating to ethical emotions like honor, shame, guilt.

For this iteration of the course, I hope to discuss a couple of new topics: In particular, the place of sympathy in ethical philosophy and in life (see in particular Smith); the analysis of anger among philosophers and thinkers (see Rambam, Stoics, Samuel Johnson); the value of truth and lying. I hope you will explore in your independent reading and writing. Given the nature of the study, this should **not** be treated as a passive lecture course. The quality of what we achieve will depend on your involvement.

Background reading: Please familiarize yourself with biography of thinkers discussed. Among several adequate online encyclopedias, I recommend especially the Stanford Online Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

Writing: 3-6 short written assignments during the term. You will be reacting to and commenting on readings. These will combine philosophical articles with historical, literary and legal texts. Please submit by e-mail.

Available: M;W;T;Th before 6:30 5th Floor Library and other haunts. Feel free to reach me by phone **1-718-252-0496 (best time--10-12 P.M.)** to discuss course material or any other constructive matters. Address: 915 E. 17 St. Brooklyn NY 11230. E-mail: carmy@yu.edu As usual, the goal of our working together is our growth as thinking religious individuals.

Tentative Outline: (Most books are available online; articles accessible via Gottesman Library e-journals):

A) Core Positions:

1. J. S. Mill: *Utilitarianism*, ch. 2; *Autobiography*—Mill's crisis. Dickens, *Hard Times*, chapter 1-3.
2. Kant: *Fundamental Principles of Metaphysics of Morals* (=Groundwork) sec. 1; Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, sec 23-24 (pp 131-142).

3. Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*: I (chs. 7-13); II (4-9); IV(2-3);

B) Perspectives in and on history of ethics:

4. Religion and metaethics: Rambam: *Eight Chapters* 6; *Hil. Deot* 1-2; R. Kook: *Orot haKodesh* III, p. 267; Robert Adams, *Finite and infinite goods: a framework for ethics* 249-276; Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, Problema 1.

5. Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Section 1 (= Chapters I-V)

6. Hume: *Enquiry Concerning Principles of Morals*, a) chapter 5 (=Utility); b) Appendix 4.



7. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, sections 599-637.

8. Kierkegaard: *Either/Or* (in Bretall ed. *A Kierkegaard Anthology*): "Rotation Method" (21-35); "Aesthetic Validity of Marriage" (80-97); "Equilibrium" (97-107).

9. Shame and Guilt: K. Greenberg, *Honor & Slavery : lies, duels, noses, masks, dressing as a woman, gifts, strangers, humanitarianism, death, slave rebellions, the proslavery argument, baseball, hunting, and gambling in the Old South*: 3-22; 115-146.

10. Nietzsche: *Beyond Good and Evil* Part 9 (=257-290).

In time remaining:

C) The revival of virtue ethics in 20th century:

From among--Anscombe: "Modern Moral Philosophy" (*Philosophy* 33); A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue* 169-189; Stocker: "The Schizophrenia of Modern Ethical Theories" (*J. of P* 73); Schneewind, "The Misfortunes of Virtue" (*Ethics* 101); [All in Crisp & Slote, *Virtue Ethics*].

D) Moral emotions: Among works consulted will be B. Williams: *Shame and Necessity*; Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*; Max Scheler, *Ressentiment*.