

Phil 465: Kant's Moral Philosophy and its Major Critics

1st paper: due Oct 11. Worth 20% of your final grade.

approximately 1400-1800 words ***[Please give a word count, and number your pages.]***

Kant begins the First Section of the *Groundwork* with this statement: "Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good without qualification, except a good will (p. 55)."

On p. 58 (2nd paragraph), Kant says that the notion of "duty" includes that of the good will, but "implying certain limitations and hindrances."

On p. 58-60, Kant goes on to explain his claim that in order for an action to have moral worth, it must be done from duty [not merely in accordance with duty], illustrating this point with various examples

Write a coherent, clearly expressed, and logically- and well-structured paper, in which you do the following:

1. Explain what Kant means by a "good will."
2. Explain what Kant means by saying that duty includes the idea of the good will, but implying certain limitations and hindrances.
3. Most important, explain what Kant means by saying that an action can have moral worth only if it is done from or out of duty. In doing so, clarify Kant's view about how inclination relates to moral worth, an issue raised in the several examples on 58-60.
 - 3a. In answering this question (3), show that you are aware of different possible interpretations of Kant's view on the relation between duty, inclination, and moral worth. Give some evidence for these different interpretations in the text or in your understanding of different strands in Kant's view.

Back up and argue for your answers to these questions, citing passages from Kant, and giving page numbers and paragraphs to indicate where the point you are making is drawn from or where a specific direct quote is taken. The quotes must all be from the Denis edition of the *Groundwork*, the one we are using in class [see qualification of this below]. The form of reference should be as I have done in this assignment; the paragraph # should be calculated not from full paragraphs, but simply from paragraphs that appear on a certain page (even if most of the paragraph is on the previous page). That is, the citation can go at the end of a sentence or paragraph. It need not be in a footnote or endnote.

You are encouraged but by no means required to consult Barbara Herman's "On the Value of Acting from the Motive of Duty," which I passed out in class 2 weeks ago [you can skip section III, pp. 13-17; though relevant, it does not bear specifically on the assignment]. If you cite or quote her article, use the same form just given; but if you use a passage from Kant that you take from Herman's article, she is using a different translation, so you should use that translation (and also, she occasionally quotes from works other than the *Groundwork*). (The abbreviations of Kant's works that Herman uses are explained on the page before p. 1 of her text.) References to Herman in your paper can just be (Herman, p. 16) or (Kant, *Groundwork* 315, from Herman p. 16) at the end of a sentence or paragraph.

The handout most pertinent to this paper is "moral motivation basics."