

Fall 2015
PHIL 2222, Section 01
Second Paper Assignment
Prof. Douglas Ficek

Write a paper, at least six pages in length, on one of the following topics – preferably the one that you find the most interesting. Revise your work carefully, and remember to cite your sources correctly using APA, MLA, or Chicago guidelines. Your typed and stapled essay is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, November 24th.

1. In Plato's *Euthyphro*, Socrates debates the merits of the Divine Command Theory (as we now call it) with Euthyphro. Why does Socrates reject this ethical theory, and do you think, given its popularity, that there is a way to save it?
2. As an Ethical Egoist, Ayn Rand rejects altruism and defends selfishness. What is her argument for this controversial-though-influential ethical theory, and what, given its many criticisms, do you make of it?
3. Virtue Ethics is one of the “big three” ethical theories, and nobody is associated with it more than Aristotle. How does he develop this ethical theory in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and what do you make of it?
4. Deontology is one of the “big three” ethical theories, and nobody is associated with it more than Immanuel Kant. How does this ethical theory work, and what do you make of the Categorical Imperative?
5. Utilitarianism is one of the “big three” ethical theories, and nobody is associated with it more than John Stuart Mill. What is this ethical theory, and what, given its many criticisms, do you make of it?
6. As an Existentialist, Simone de Beauvoir argues that we, as human beings, are free and thus radically responsible. What are the ethical implications of this position, and what do you make of her critique of “seriousness”?
7. Martin Buber describes human reality in terms of the I-It experience and the I-You relation. What are the ethical implications of this description, and how do you think it could be applied in everyday life?
8. Care Ethics is a relatively new approach to ethical theory, and Nel Noddings has defended it in her philosophical work. What is this ethical theory, and what do you make of her presentation of it?
9. Ubuntuism represents a uniquely African approach to ethical theory, and it stresses human community above all else. What do Mluleki Munyaka and Mokgethi Motlhabi say about this theory, and what do you make of it?

10. Write a dialogue – a Socratic dialogue – in which three of the above philosophers debate the merits of their respective ethical theories. Be creative, but not at the expense of thoughtfulness.