

Ethics Reading List

With a Specialty in Normative Moral Theory

The purpose of this list is to inform a graduate student contemplating focusing on normative moral theory as a major or minor area for his or her comprehensive examinations of some basic reading relevant to the subject. A student may use this information for one or more of two purposes: To decide whether to take a comprehensive exam in this area, and if so, to get started early on reading central texts in preparation for a comprehensive exam in this area. Students must also supplement this list with additional readings in the specific areas mentioned below. The supplementary list should make up roughly 15-20% of the total exam reading list and must be approved by the student's normative moral theory examining committee.

The core readings for the major exam in normative moral theory are organized into **A. Historical Sources & Perspective** and **B. Normative Moral Theories**. Core readings for the minor exam in this area include the readings under **A**, plus the starred readings under **B**.

Students who wish to take either their major or their minor exam in this area are strongly encouraged to contact one or more members of the area committee for advice about the area's readings and exam.

A. Historical Sources & Perspectives

Plato, *Euthydemus* 278-282, 288-293; *Apology*, *Gorgias*, *Republic* 1-9, *Philebus*.

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Hume, *Treatise* Book II, part 3, sect. 1-3; Book III, part 1, sect. 1-2; part 2, sect. 1-2; part 3, sect. 1 and 6; *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*.

Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*; *Metaphysics of Morals*, part 2 (Doctrine of Virtue); *Critique of Practical Reason*, Book II, chap. 1-2.

J. S. Mill, *Utilitarianism*.

H. Sidgwick, *Methods of Ethics* Book I, chap. 1; Book IV; Concluding chapter.

Elizabeth Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Theory', *Philosophy* 33 (1958).

Alasdair MacIntyre, 'Why is the Search for the Foundations of Ethics so Frustrating?' *Hastings Center Report* (1979).

J. B. Scheewind, 'No Discipline, No History', Donald R. Kelley (ed.), *History of the Disciplines* (U. of Rochester Press, 1997).

B. Normative Moral Theories:

Virtue Ethics

*Plato and Aristotle sections.

Julia Annas, *The Morality of Happiness*, part 1, chap. 1 and chap 2, parts 1-3 and 5-7 (OUP, 1993).

*Rosalind Hursthouse, *On Virtue Ethics* (OUP, 1999).

Julia Driver, 'The Virtues and Human Nature' in R. Crisp (ed.), *How Should One Live? Essays on the Virtues* (OUP, 1996).

Gary Watson, 'On the Primacy of Character' in D. Statman (ed.), *Virtue Ethics* (Georgetown UP, 1997).

David Solomon, 'Internal Objections to Virtue Ethics', in D. Statman (ed.) *Virtue Ethics*.

Consequentialism

*Mill, Hume, and Sidgwick selections.

*Bernard Williams, 'A Critique of Utilitarianism' in J.J.C. Smart and B. Williams, *Utilitarianism: For and Against* (CUP, 1973).

Brad Hooker, 'Rule Consequentialism?' *Mind* 99 (1990).

Shelly Kagan, *The Limits of Morality* (OUP, 1989), pp. 1-46 and 331-385.

Deontology and Kantian Ethics

*Kant selections.

*W. D. Ross, *The Right and the Good* (OUP, 1930), chap. 2.

Thomas Nagel, *The View From Nowhere* (OUP, 1986), chap. IX.

Warren Quinn, 'Actions, Intentions and Consequences: The Doctrine of Double Effect', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 18 (1989).

Contractarianism/Contractualism

*John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Harvard UP, 1971), sec. 1-30; 65-67; 77-79; 85-6.

*T. M. Scanlon, 'Contractualism and Utilitarianism', in A. Sen and B. Williams (eds.) *Utilitarianism and Beyond* (CUP, 1982).

Note: We assigned Scanlon's early article on contractualism, because it provides a clear and concise statement of the view. You should be aware, however, that Scanlon's book, *What We Owe to Each Other* (HUP, 1998), in many respects supersedes the original essay. Although not required for the major or minor exams, we encourage students who intend to work in either normative ethics or metaethics to familiarize themselves with Scanlon's more recent ideas.

David Gauthier, 'Why Contractarianism?' in P. Valentyne (ed.), *Contractarianism and Rational Choice* (CUP, 1991).

*Philip Pettit, 'Can Contract Theory Ground Morality?' in J. Dreier (ed.), *Contemporary Debated in Moral Theory* (Blackwell, 2006).

Particularism

*Brad Hooker, 'Moral Particularism: Wrong and Bad' in B. Hooker and M. Little (eds.), *Moral Particularism* (OUP, 2000).

*Jonathan Dancy, 'The Particularist's Progress' in B. Hooker and M. Little (eds.), *Moral Particularism*.

Martha Nussbaum, 'Why Practice Needs Ethical Theory: Particularism, Principle, and Bad Behavior', in B. Hooker and M. Little (eds.), *Moral Particularism*.