

Introduction to Philosophy

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Most of the readings are available online via SOLO.

Please email me your essays by **5pm on the day before our meeting**.

Your essay should be about **1,500 to 2,000 words** in length. Don't tackle everything in a single essay and be selective about your readings. The reading lists¹ below are quite extensive, so that you can follow up on the issues you find interesting. Pick one interesting aspect of the topic, pick an argument/view that you like or dislike, and try to come up with interesting arguments. Try to have a clear structure and write in a simple and concise manner.

It would be great if you could read as much as possible of Mill's *Utilitarianism* ahead of the term. (It's short!)

Useful resources:

<https://philpapers.org>

<https://plato.stanford.edu>

Podcasts:

<http://www.philosophybites.com>

Advice on writing philosophy essays:

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>

<http://oyc.yale.edu/sites/default/files/philosophy-paper.pdf>

¹ I have borrowed heavily from Ralf Bader's and Kacper Kowalczyk's reading lists.

General

- Mill: Utilitarianism
- Crisp, R. Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism (Routledge, 1997)
- Bykvist, K., *Utilitarianism: a Guide for the Perplexed*, London: Continuum, 2009
- Blackburn, S. (1999). *Think: A compelling introduction to philosophy*. Oxford University Press.

1. Pleasure, Happiness and Well-being

Essay topic:

1. Why does Mill distinguish between higher and lower pleasures, and does his account succeed?

Key reading

- Mill, J.S. Utilitarianism, ch. 2
- Crisp, R. Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism (Routledge, 1997), ch. 2.
- Bykvist, K., *Utilitarianism: a Guide for the Perplexed*, London: Continuum, 2009, ch. 4.

Further reading

- Parfit, D. *Reasons and Persons*, (OUP, 1996), Appendix I.
- Brink, David, "Mill's Moral and Political Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = [<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/mill-moral-political/>](https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/mill-moral-political/).
- Brink, David O. "Mill's Deliberative Utilitarianism." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 21, no. 1 (1992): 67-103.
- Kagan, Shelly. "The Limits of Well-Being." *Social Philosophy and Policy* 9, no. 2 (1992): 169-189.
- Crisp, Roger. "Hedonism Reconsidered." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 73, no. 3 (2006): 619-645.
- Crisp, Roger and Morten Kringelbach. "Higher and Lower Pleasures Revisited: Evidence from Neuroscience." *Neuroethics* 11, no. 2 (2018): 211-215.

- Weijers, Dan. "Nozick's Experience Machine is Dead, Long Live the Experience Machine!" *Philosophical Psychology* 27, no. 4 (2014): 513-535.
- Feldman, Fred. *Pleasure and the Good Life: Concerning the Nature, Varieties, and Plausibility of Hedonism* Clarendon Press, 2004.
- Sumner, L. W. *Welfare, Happiness, and Ethics* Oxford University Press, 1996, esp. chapters 1, 4, 5.
- Martin, Rex. "A Defence of Mill's Qualitative Hedonism." *Philosophy* 47, no. 180 (1972): 140-151.
- West, Henry R. "Mill's Qualitative Hedonism." *Philosophy* 51, no. 195 (1976): 97-101.

2. Forms of Consequentialism

Essay topic:

1. 'Either rule-utilitarianism licenses all and only the acts licensed by act-utilitarianism, or it is not defensible from a utilitarian point of view.' Discuss.

Key reading

- Mill, J.S. Utilitarianism, ch. 2, 3, 5
- Crisp, R. Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism (Routledge, 1997), ch. 5
- Bykvist, K., *Utilitarianism: a Guide for the Perplexed*, London: Continuum, 2009, ch. 10.

Further reading

- Hooker, Brad. *Ideal Code, Real World: A Rule-Consequentialist Theory of Morality* Oxford University Press, 2000, esp. chapters 1, 3, 4.
- Bales, R. Eugene. "Act-Utilitarianism: Account of Right-Making Characteristics Or Decision-Making Procedure?" *American Philosophical Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (1971): 257-265.
- Jackson, Frank. "Decision-Theoretic Consequentialism and the Nearest and Dearest Objection." *Ethics* 101, no. 3 (1991): 461-482.
- Kagan, Shelly. "Evaluative focal points", in Hooker, Brad, Elinor Mason, Dale E. Miller. *Morality, Rules, and Consequences: A Critical Reader* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000, pp. 134-155.

- Smart, J. J. C. and Bernard Williams. *Utilitarianism: For and Against* Cambridge University Press, 1973, esp. sect. 7 of Smart and section 6 of Williams.
- Lyons, David. *Forms and Limits of Utilitarianism* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965, chapter 3.
- Regan, Donald H. *Utilitarianism and Co-Operation* Oxford University Press, 1980, chapters 5 and 6.
- Hare, R. M. *Moral Thinking: Its Levels, Method, and Point* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981, chapters 2 and 3.
- Mabbott, J. D. "Interpretations of Mill's 'Utilitarianism'." *Philosophical Quarterly* 6, no. 23 (1956): 115-120.
- Urmson, J. O. "The Interpretation of the Moral Philosophy of J. S. Mill." *Philosophical Quarterly* 3, no. 10 (1953): 33-39.

3. Integrity

Essay topic (pick one):

1. What is the integrity objection to utilitarianism? How good is it?
2. Is utilitarianism too demanding?

Key reading

- Mill, J.S. Utilitarianism, ch. 1-4
- Crisp, R. Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism (Routledge, 1997), ch. 6
- Smart, J. J. C. & B. Williams, *Utilitarianism, For and Against*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973, pp. 93-118.
- Bykvist, K., *Utilitarianism: a Guide for the Perplexed*, London: Continuum, 2009, ch. 7.

Further reading

- Cox, Damian, La Caze, Marguerite and Levine, Michael, "Integrity", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2017 Edition).
- Scheffler, Samuel. *The Rejection of Consequentialism: A Philosophical Investigation of the Considerations Underlying Rival Moral Conceptions* Oxford University Press, 1994, esp. ch. 2.
- Carr, S., "The Integrity of a Utilitarian", *Ethics*, vol. 86, no. 3 (April, 1976), pp. 241- 246.

-Conly, S., "Utilitarianism and Integrity", *The Monist*, vol. 66, no. 2 (April, 1983), pp. 298-311.

-Harris, G. W. "Integrity and Agent Centered Restrictions", *Nous*, vol. 23, no. 4 (September, 1989), pp. 437-456.

-Harris, J. "Williams on Negative Responsibility and Integrity", *The Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 96 (July, 1974), pp. 265-273.

-Herman, B. "Integrity and Impartiality", *The Monist*, vol. 66, no. 2 (April, 1983), pp. 233-250.

-Williams, B. *Moral Luck: Philosophical Papers, 1973-1980*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, ch. 3.

4. Justice and Rights

Essay topic (pick one):

1. Can a utilitarian give due weight to justice and individual rights?
2. Is utilitarianism too permissive?

Key reading

- Mill, J.S. Utilitarianism, ch. 5

- Crisp, R. Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism (Routledge, 1997) ch. 7

-Bykvist, K., *Utilitarianism: a Guide for the Perplexed*, London: Continuum, 2009, ch. 8 and ch. 5.

Further reading

- Scheffler, Samuel (ed.). *Consequentialism and its Critics* Oxford University Press, 1988, especially Introduction, Nagel's, Nozick's and Sen's chapters.

- Otsuka, Michael. "Are Deontological Constraints Irrational?", in Bader, R., & Meadowcroft, J. *The Cambridge companion to Nozick's Anarchy, state, and utopia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp. 38–58.

-Brown, Campbell. "Consequentialize this." *Ethics* 121, no. 4 (2011): 749-771.

-Kagan, Shelly. *The Limits of Morality* Oxford University Press, 1989, pp. 1–32, and ch. 3

and 4.

-Kamm, F. M. "Review: Non-Consequentialism, the Person as an End-in-itself, and the Significance of Status." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 21, no. 4 (1992): 354-389.

-Hirose, I. *Egalitarianism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, chapters 1, 3, 4.

-Harsanyi, John C. "Cardinal Welfare, Individualistic Ethics, and Interpersonal Comparisons of Utility." *Journal of Political Economy* 63, no. 4 (1955): 309- 321.

-Broome, John. *Weighing Goods: Equality, Uncertainty and Time*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991, chapters 4 and 10.

-Nozick, R., *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, New York: Basic Books, 1974, chapter 7, section 1.

-Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice* Harvard University Press, 1971, chapter 1.

-Lyons, D. "Benevolence and Justice", in Miller, Harlan B. and William H. Williams. *The Limits of Utilitarianism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.

5. Free Will

Essay topic:

1. Is a person free only if she can do otherwise?

Key reading

- Strawson, G. 'The Impossibility of Moral Responsibility', *Philosophical Studies* 1994

- van Inwagen, P. 'The Incompatibility of Free Will and Determinism', *Philosophical Studies* 1975

- Frankfurt, H. 'Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility', *Journal of Philosophy* 1969

- Frankfurt, H. 'Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person', *Journal of Philosophy* 1971

Further reading

- Blackburn, S. (1999). *Think: A compelling introduction to philosophy*. Oxford University Press, ch 3.

- Chisholm, R. 'Human Freedom and the Self'

- Ayer, A.J. 'Freedom and Necessity'

- Bennett, J. 'Accountability'

6. Personal Identity

Essay topic (pick one):

1. Could you survive having half of your brain transplanted into one body and half into another?
2. Could you survive teleportation?

Key reading

- Parfit, D. 'Personal Identity' or Parfit, D. Reason and Persons, chs. 10-13
- Lewis, D. 'Survival and Identity'

Further reading

- Williams, B. 'The Self and the Future'
- Williams, B. 'Personal identity and individuation'
- Nagel, T. 'Brain Bisection and the Unity of Consciousness'
- Blackburn, S. (1999). *Think: A compelling introduction to philosophy*. Oxford University Press, ch 4.

7. Mind and Body

Possible essay topics:

1. Does the knowledge argument show us that there is more to the world than the physical facts?

Key reading

- Jackson, F. 'Epiphenomenal Qualia'
- Jackson, F. 'What Mary Didn't Know'
- Lewis, D. 'What Experience Teaches'
- Nagel, T. 'What is it Like to be a Bat?'

Further reading

- Blackburn, S. (1999). *Think: A compelling introduction to philosophy*. Oxford University Press, ch 2.

-Jackson, F. (2004). *There's something about Mary: essays on phenomenal consciousness and Frank Jackson's knowledge argument*. MIT press.

-Nida-Rümelin, Martine and Donnchadh O Conaill, "Qualia: The Knowledge Argument", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/qualia-knowledge/>>.