

# PHI 130 – Morality & Society – Spring 2013

008 TR 12:30 – 1:45 **CB** 333  
007 TR 2:00 – 3:15 **FB** B8

## Professor

**Kyle Burchett**

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Department Phone ☎

(859) 257-1861

## Office Hours

TR 3:30 – 4:30

1406 Patterson Office Tower

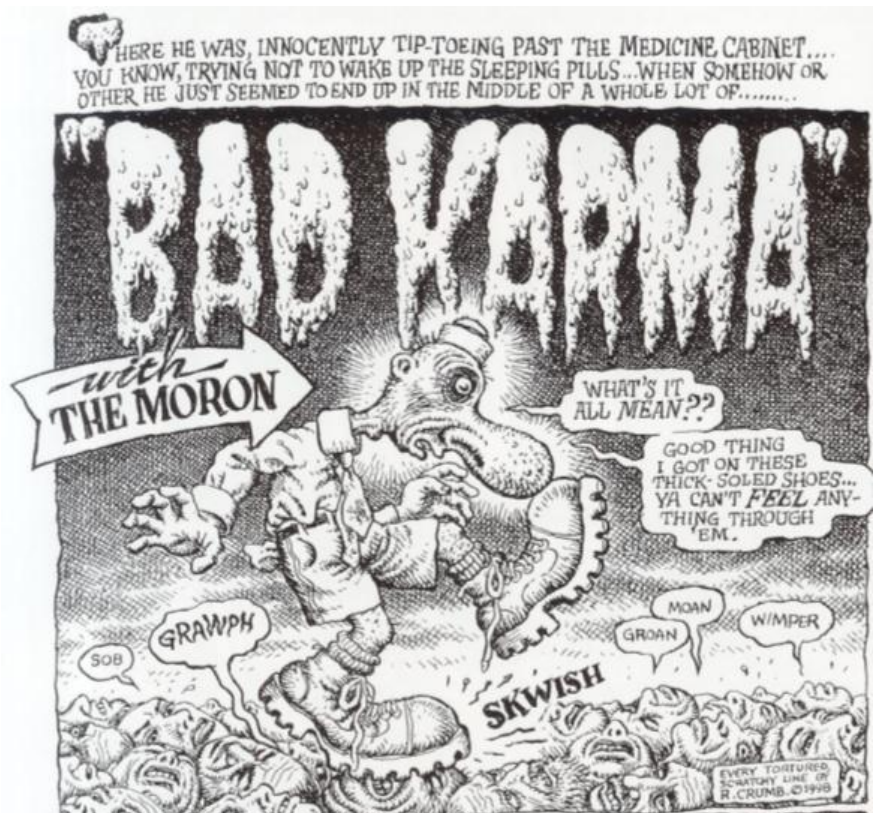
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1443 Patterson Office Tower

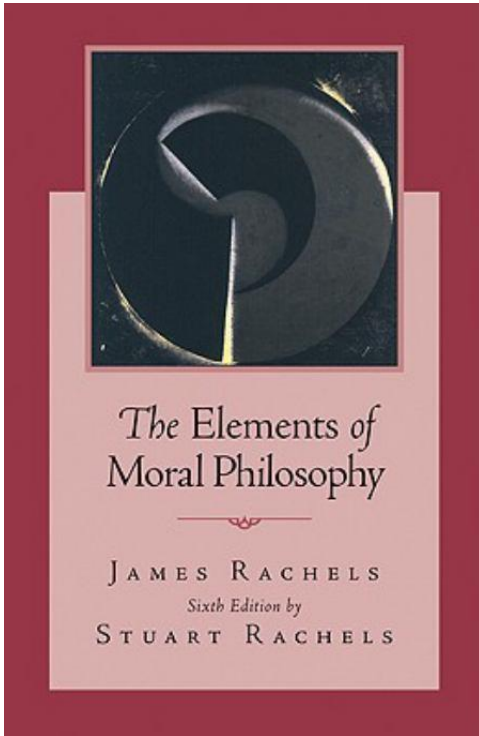
## Overview

What exactly *is* morality? Is there such a thing as an *objective* right or wrong? How is it possible to determine whether an action is (*or should be*) permissible, forbidden, or obligatory? How can one determine the makeup of the moral community—i.e., who or what has rights or responsibilities? Philosophers have long held disparate beliefs about the nature of value and its place in our lives, and their weighty opinions have helped shape the widespread assumptions accepted (*or rejected*) by individuals across cultures as well as subcultures. Without the shared beliefs and practices of a community's members, particularly those regarding notions of right and wrong behavior, the emergence of complex social and political structures would be unlikely, if not impossible.

In this course, we will examine some of the most prevalent ethical theories that have emerged in the West and explore the implications of adopting these theories in response to contemporary ethical issues. By the end of the semester, students are expected not only to attain a practical understanding of moral philosophy as it has evolved in the West but also to critically evaluate and clarify their own positions on various ethical issues in a dialogue with the ethical frameworks encountered in the assigned material.



## Required Texts



### ***The Elements of Moral Philosophy***

McGraw-Hill Higher Education, **6<sup>th</sup> Edition**, 2010

[James Rachels](#) & [Stuart Rachels](#)

ISBN: 0073386715



**NOTE – The 6<sup>th</sup> edition will be used in this class.** If you purchase the 7<sup>th</sup> edition, you will pay too much. Used copies of the 6<sup>th</sup> edition are listed online at reasonable prices. Students are advised to check around for the best deals available before purchasing the text. (Try [campusbooks4less](#), for example.)

☞ Please obtain the text ASAP since it will be used from the first day of class.

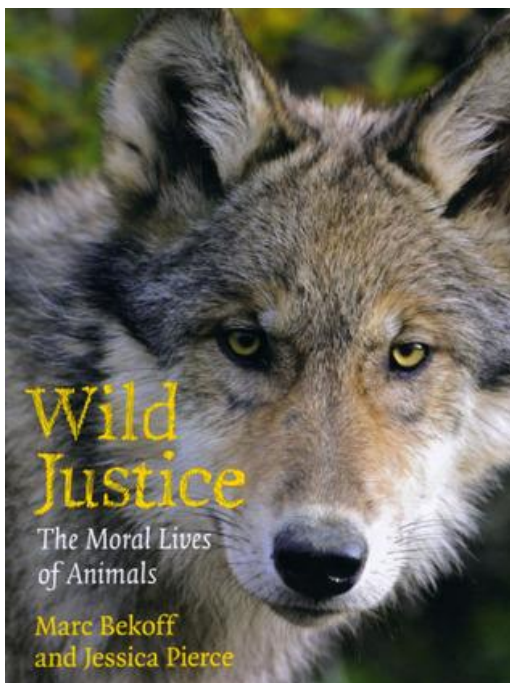
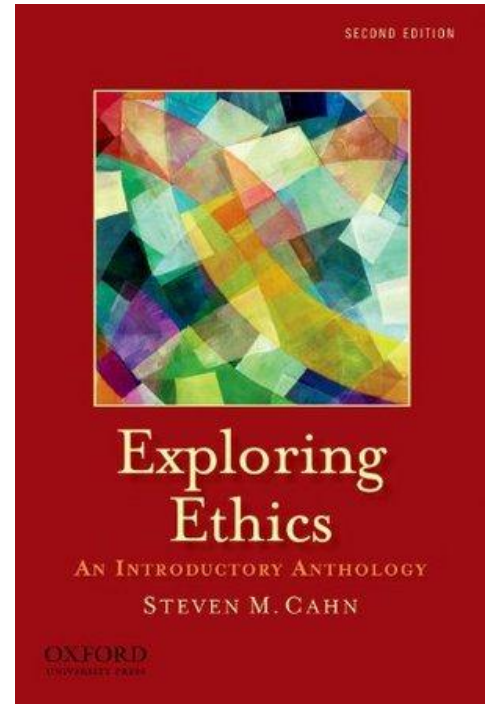
### ***Exploring Ethics: An Introductory Anthology***

Oxford University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2011

[Steven M. Cahn](#)

ISBN: 0199757518

Companion Website: <http://www.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780199757510/student/?view=usa>



### ***Wild Justice: The Moral Lives of Animals***

University of Chicago Press, 2010

[Marc Bekoff](#) & [Jessica Pierce](#)

ISBN: 0226041638

# Grading

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Students will maximize the possibility of receiving a satisfactory grade in this course by completing all assignments and attending every class ready to discuss that day's material. Missed quizzes, exams, etc. will not be made up without an excuse.

The grading scale is as follows: A = 90 – 100%, B = 80 – 89%, C = 70 – 79%, D = 60 – 69%, E = 0 – 59%.

1. **Quizzes: (20%)** There will be a number of quizzes administered during class, either announced or unannounced, to determine whether or not students are keeping up with homework assignments.
2. **Exams: (50%)** There will be two exams, each worth 25%: a midterm and a final. Exams will test students' understanding of the ethical theories presented in the readings as well as students' ability to apply these theories to contemporary ethical issues.
3. **Presentation: (10%)** Each student will give a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation on an assigned reading. (*Presentations will be assigned at the beginning of the semester.*) Students are expected to demonstrate adequate understanding and critical evaluation of the readings by providing coherent summaries and by facilitating classroom discussion regarding relevant ethical issues. **PowerPoint files must be e-mailed to the instructor by the morning of the assigned presentation.**
4. **Ethical Issues Album: (20%)** Each student is required to submit an ethical issues album, **both in print form and via [Blackboard](#)**, in which the student will critically engage contemporary ethical issues through reflection on the various moral principles encountered in assigned readings. Ethical issues arise in virtually all areas of life, and they are blatantly presented to us almost any time we watch or read the news. Students are encouraged to identify as many ethical issues as they can as the issues arise in the media throughout the semester. Please keep in mind that an album will be considered incomplete if it fails to exhibit appropriate consideration of the following: cultural relativism, ethical subjectivism, ethical egoism, social contract theory, Kantian ethics, utilitarianism, virtue ethics, the ethics of care, environmental ethics, and nonhuman value theory.

Each album entry must be based on a source—magazine article, newspaper report, internet entry, etc.—published no earlier than the first day of this course. Students must include in the printed version of the album a clipping or photocopy (*if from a printed source*) or embedded copy (*if from an online source*) of each source that is used, and in the electronic version an internet link. For each ethical issue that is analyzed, students should take the following steps:

- a. Define precisely the ethical issue at stake. If there are several issues involved, focus on the most important one (but mention others as appropriate). Formulate the issue as a conflict of claims—i.e., acknowledge more than one side.
- b. Clarify the conflict of claims by representing the views of more than one side. State which claim or claims are being upheld by the various parties and which are being rejected—again, focusing on the one that is most important.

- c. Offer reasons for supporting one side of the claims, based on an application of the ethical principles encountered in the readings. If the ethical issue under consideration reveals in some way the inadequacy of the applied principles, please state that as well; if possible, explain the alternative principle that could be used to resolve the issue.
- d. Offer reasoned objections, also based on encountered ethical principles, to the position that is supported in step (c).
- e. Give reasoned replies to the objections given in step (d).

Entries must be double-spaced, in 12 pt. font, with 1" margins. Number each entry on a separate page and paginate the album. Do not cover or enclose entries in plastic. Present the album in a simple binder.

Albums will be evaluated on the quantity and diversity of ethical issues analyzed as well as on the quality of clarifications, observations, and reasoning provided. Students are expected to exhibit college-level proficiency in English. Students who struggle with spelling or grammar are advised to make use of the free services provided by UK's Writing Center, located in the W. T. Young Library:

<http://wrd.as.uky.edu/writing-center>.


- 5. **Attendance: Attendance is mandatory.** Students will be permitted two unexcused absences, though perfect attendance is highly recommended. Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a deduction of two percentage points from the final grade. If a student is tardy, leaves class early without permission, is mentally absent, or is otherwise disruptive, a further deduction may result. *If you are going to be absent and have a legitimate reason, it is in your best interest to let me know.* Students who maintain perfect attendance and consistently contribute to classroom discussions will be rewarded with two bonus percentage points at the end of the semester.

## Letters of Accommodation

If you have a documented disability which requires academic accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible with a letter of accommodation from the Disability Resource Center:

<http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/DisabilityResourceCenter/>.

## Miscellaneous

- ❖ **CAUTION:**  **Cell phones must be muted or turned off during class. Text messaging is strictly forbidden and guaranteed to draw my ire.** Up to five points may be deducted from a student's overall grade for each violation. Egregious violators will be ejected from the classroom. Computers and tablets, however, are allowed if used for note taking or accessing assigned materials.
- ❖ If you would prefer to privately discuss the materials or any other concerns, please do not hesitate to visit me during scheduled office hours or contact me by e-mail.



**Schedule to be revised at the instructor's discretion.**

*Exploring Ethics: An Introductory Anthology* ([EE](#))

*The Elements of Moral Philosophy* (**EMP**)

*Wild Justice: The Moral Lives of Animals* (**WJ**)

1. R 1.10  
Greetings—What We Are Doing in This Class
2. T 1.15  
*Morality and Moral Philosophy* [William K. Frankena](#) ([EE Ch. 1](#)) pp. 3-6  
*Crito* [Plato](#) ([EE Ch. 2](#)) pp. 7-22  
*What Is Morality?* (EMP Ch. 1) pp. 1-13
3. R 1.17  
*The Challenge of Cultural Relativism* (EMP Ch. 2) pp. 14-31  
*Subjectivism in Ethics* (EMP Ch. 3) pp. 32-47  
*The Nature of Ethical Disagreement* [Charles L. Stevenson](#) ([EE Ch. 9](#)) pp. 70-76  
***Star Trek TOS: A Taste of Armageddon*** [http://www.startrek.com/watch\\_episode/fPZzsPG\\_li5C](http://www.startrek.com/watch_episode/fPZzsPG_li5C)
4. T 1.22  
***Birmingham 1963*** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0lD37bq8YI>  
*Letter from a Birmingham Jail* [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) ([EE Ch. 39](#)) pp. 379-395  
*Phaedo* [Plato](#) ([EE Ch. 40](#)) pp. 396-400
5. R 1.24  
*How Not to Answer Moral Questions* [Tom Regan](#) ([EE Ch. 3](#)) pp. 25-29  
*God and Morality* [Steven M. Cahn](#) ([EE Ch. 4](#)) pp. 30-33  
*Right and Wrong* [Thomas Nagel](#) ([EE Ch. 6](#)) pp. 47-50  
*Does Morality Depend on Religion?* (EMP Ch. 4) pp. 48-61
6. T 1.29  
*Ethical Egoism* (EMP Ch. 5) pp. 62-79  
*Egoism and Moral Scepticism* [James Rachels](#) ([EE Ch. 7](#)) pp. 51-62  
*Happiness and Immorality* [Steven M. Cahn](#) and [Jeffrie G. Murphy](#) ([EE Ch. 8](#)) pp. 63-69
7. R 1.31  
*The Social Contract* [Thomas Hobbes](#) ([EE Ch. 17](#)) pp. 129-136  
*The Idea of a Social Contract* (EMP Ch. 6) pp. 80-96
8. T 2.05  
*The Categorical Imperative* [Immanuel Kant](#) ([EE Ch. 10](#)) pp. 79-88  
*A Simplified Account of Kant's Ethics* [Onora O'Neill](#) ([EE Ch. 11](#)) pp. 89-92
9. R 2.07  
*Are There Absolute Moral Rules?* (EMP Ch. 9) pp. 124-135  
*Kant and Respect for Persons* (EMP Ch. 10) pp. 136-145
10. T 2.12  
*Utilitarianism* [John Stuart Mill](#) ([EE Ch. 12](#)) pp. 93-104  
*Strengths and Weaknesses of Utilitarianism* [Louis P. Pojman](#) ([EE Ch. 13](#)) pp. 105-113
11. R 2.14  
*The Utilitarian Approach* (EMP Ch. 7) pp. 97-108  
*The Debate Over Utilitarianism* (EMP Ch. 8) pp. 109-123

## 12. T 2.19

*The Ethics of Virtue* (EMP Ch. 12) pp. 158-172

*The Nature of Virtue* [Aristotle](#) (EE Ch. 14) pp. 114-119

*Virtue Ethics* [Bernard Mayo](#) (EE Ch. 15) pp. 120-122

## 13. R 2.21

*The Ethics of Care* [Virginia Held](#) (EE Ch. 16) pp. 123-128

*Feminism and the Ethics of Care* (EMP Ch. 11) pp. 146-157

## 14. T 2.26

*What Would a Satisfactory Moral Theory Be Like?* (EMP Ch. 13) pp. 173-183

*A Theory of Justice* [John Rawls](#) (EE Ch. 18) pp. 137-142

## 15. R 2.28

**Midterm Exam**

## 16. T 3.05

*A Defense of Abortion* [Judith Jarvis Thomson](#) (EE Ch. 19) pp. 145-163

*On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion* [Mary Anne Warren](#) (EE Ch. 20) pp. 164-181

## 17. R 3.07

*Why Abortion Is Immoral* [Don Marquis](#) (EE Ch. 21) pp. 182-189

*Virtue Theory and Abortion* [Rosalind Hursthouse](#) (EE Ch. 22) pp. 190-202

## 18. T 3.12

**Spring Break**

## 19. R 3.14

**Spring Break**

## 20. T 3.19

*Active and Passive Euthanasia* [James Rachels](#) (EE Ch. 23) pp. 203-209

*Active and Passive Euthanasia: A Reply to Rachels* [Thomas D. Sullivan](#) (EE Ch. 24) pp. 210-217

## 21. R 3.21

*Famine, Affluence, and Morality* [Peter Singer](#) (EE Ch. 25) pp. 218-231

*World Hunger and Moral Obligation: The Case Against Singer* [John Arthur](#) (EE Ch. 26) pp. 232-238

***Save the Fat Americans*** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xp-Z3JAo01s>

## 22. T 3.26

*We Are What We Eat* [Tom Regan](#) (EE Ch. 35) pp. 326-333

*Philosophical Problems for Environmentalism* [Elliott Sober](#) (EE Ch. 36) pp. 334-355

***How Many People Can Live on Planet Earth?*** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wa3ZDEZi3P8>

## 23. R 3.28

*The Case for Animal Rights* [Tom Regan](#) (EE Ch. 33) pp. 300-313

*The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research* [Carl Cohen](#) (EE Ch. 34) pp. 314-325

***A Case for Animal Rights*** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5RRLBC1S3w>

## 24. T 4.02

*Death, Misfortune and Species Inequality* [Ruth Cigman](#) (PDF) pp. 47-64

***Tarra and Bella*** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2oYOvx8lTY>

***Tarra Mourns for Bella*** [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-6dH\\_U7yWE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-6dH_U7yWE)

25. R 4.04

*Preface: Into the Wild* (WJ) pp. ix-xv

*Morality in Animal Societies: An Embarrassment of Riches* (WJ Ch. 1) pp. 1-23

***Can Animals Tell Right from Wrong?*** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2Bd-bVgCfM>

26. T 4.09

*Foundations for Wild Justice: What Animals Do and What it Means* (WJ Ch. 2) pp. 24-54

***The Monkey Puzzle*** <http://www.veoh.com/watch/v1409539kcDBdYCz?h1=Capuchins+-+The+Monkey+Puzzle>

27. R 4.11

*Cooperation: Reciprocating Rats and Back-Scratching Baboons* (WJ Ch. 3) pp. 55-84

***Moral Behavior in Animals*** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GcJxRqTs5nk>

28. T 4.16

*Empathy: Mice in the Sink* (WJ Ch. 4) pp. 85-109

29. R 4.18

*Justice: Honor and Fair Play Among Beasts* (WJ Ch. 5) pp. 110-135

**Ethical Issues Album Due — in print form and [via Blackboard](#).**

30. T 4.23

*Animal Morality and Its Discontents: A New Synthesis* (WJ Ch. 6) pp. 136-153

31. R 4.25

*Death* [Thomas Nagel](#) (EE Ch. 37) pp. 356-365

*The Meaning of Life* [Richard Taylor](#) (EE Ch. 38) pp. 366-376

32. T 4.30

**FINAL EXAM for Section 007 [8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.]**

33. R 5.02

**FINAL EXAM for Section 008 [1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.]**

Final grades will be posted on [myUK](#) by midnight Monday, 5.06.

