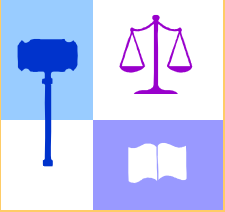


*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the  
Metaphysics of Morals*



Ethical Theory  
PL 3100  
John F. Morris, Ph.D.  
Rockhurst University

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

I. DUTY

A. Popular morality has given us an idea of DUTY, but this idea is *impure*. (p.19)



---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

B. To “purify” our idea of DUTY we must examine the concept free from our experience of the natural, physical world (*the world of phenomena*).



1) That is, we must examine the idea *a priori*.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

C. For morality to be valid, it must apply to all *rational beings*, and not just human beings. (p.23)



---

---

---

---

---

---

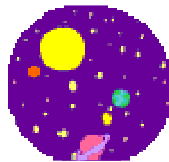
---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

II. LAW

A. Everything in nature works according to *laws*. (p.23)



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

B. However, a *rational being* has the power to act according to the conception of *laws*.



1) That is, we understand *law* as an abstract idea in the form of *principles*.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

III. WILL

A. The determination of how to act based upon *principles* and *laws* requires the use of **reason**.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

1) The practical part of our **reason** - the part that helps us decide how to act - is called our **WILL**.



---

---

---

---

---

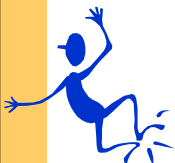
---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

B. A *perfectly good WILL* is one that always follows reason and is never influenced by personal inclinations.



1) Such a **WILL** is **FREE**.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

But **FREE** from what?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

But **FREE** from what?

*Thus, a Good Will  
transcends – or rises above –  
the phenomenal world!*



---

---

---

---

---

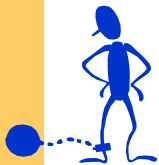
---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

C. An *imperfect WILL* is influenced  
by personal inclinations. (p.24)



1) Such a **WILL** is *not free* in  
its ability to follow **reason**.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

IV. IMPERATIVES

A. The presentation of an objective *principle* insofar as it necessitates the **WILL** is called a command of reason, or an *imperative*. (p.24)



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

B. There are two types of *imperatives* (p.25-26):



1) HYPOTHETICAL: these include *rules of skill* and *counsels of prudence*.



2) CATEGORICAL: *commands (laws) of morality*.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

1) HYPOTHETICAL:



a) *Rules of Skill*: one who wishes for a specific END, *necessarily* wills the MEANS needed to reach that END. (p.27)



(1) These *rules of skill* only obligate the one who wishes for that particular GOAL.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

b) *Counsels of Prudence*: all **rational beings** wish for happiness, but the means to achieve it vary greatly. (p.28)



(1) These *counsels* of wisdom help each of us achieve happiness in our own life.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

*In short,  
hypothetical imperatives  
vary from person to person –  
they do not apply to  
everyone the same!*



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

NOTE: 1) Both types of hypothetical imperatives are called analytical.



2) One discovers that these exist from an analysis of the GOAL being willed.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

V. CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE:

**ACT ONLY ACCORDING TO  
THAT MAXIM WHEREBY YOU  
CAN AT THE SAME TIME  
WILL THAT IT SHOULD  
BECOME A UNIVERSAL LAW!**

(p.30)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

A. FOUR CASES



- 1) Suicide: **cannot** be universalized as a law of nature because life is always full of struggle, so nothing in nature would be left alive!

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

A. FOUR CASES



- 2) Lying: **cannot** be universalized, because if it was natural to lie anytime you were in trouble, society would collapse due to the lack of trust in each other!

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

A. FOUR CASES



- 3) Laziness: *can be* universalized, but **contradicts** itself because if no one worked there would be nothing for all of us lazy people to sit back and enjoy!

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

A. FOUR CASES



- 4) Non-benevolence: *can be* universalized, but **contradicts** itself because at some point all of us need help from others, but if no one is generous no help will come!

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

B. There can be **two** failings of the test of the *categorical imperative* (p.32):



- 1) First, some actions are so constructed that they cannot even be *conceived* of without **contradiction**.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

B. There can be **two** failings of the test of the *ategorical imperative* (p.32):



2) Second, other actions can be *conceived* of, but if performed the action would *contradict* the agent's **WILL**.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

C. But if all of this is true, why do we act against this *ategorical imperative*?



1) We do so by making exceptions for ourselves. (p.32-33)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Immanuel Kant:  
Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

<i>DUTY</i>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Positive</b>
to <b>Self</b>	<i>Suicide</i> (I should not kill myself)	<i>Laziness</i> (I should develop my talents)
to <b>Others</b>	<i>Lying</i> (I should not lie to others)	<i>Non-Benevolence</i> (I should be generous)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---