

## **PHIL 520: Studies in Modern Philosophy**

Fall 2024

MHP 102

Thursdays, 2.00 – 4.20 pm

Instructors: Edwin McCann, Ralph Wedgwood

The goal of this seminar is to explore the history of early modern British moral philosophy from 1640 until 1792. The twelve philosophers whom we will be reading are the following:

- Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679)
- Ralph Cudworth (1617–1688)
- Anne Conway (1631–1679)
- John Locke (1632–1704)
- Anthony Ashley Cooper, Lord Shaftesbury (1671–1713)
- Samuel Clarke (1675–1729)
- Joseph Butler (1692–1750)
- Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746)
- David Hume (1711–1776)
- Richard Price (1723–1791)
- Edmund Burke (1729–1797)
- Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797)

Excerpts from the works of nine of these – all except for Conway, Burke, and Wollstonecraft – are reprinted in the following collection:

*British Moralists 1650-1800*, ed. D. D. Raphael. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969.  
Reprinted Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

The core readings for these nine philosophers (Hobbes, Cudworth, Locke, Shaftesbury, Clarke, Butler, Hutcheson, Hume, and Price) will be the excerpts in this collection.

Other excerpts from these philosophers – as well as from Conway, Burke, and Wollstonecraft – will be available on the course Brightspace site.

For each meeting of the seminar after Week 1, you should do the assigned reading and come to class with a question about the reading that you are interested in our discussing. Each class meeting will start with canvassing the students' questions.

The writing assignment will be one term paper: an appropriate length would be around 15 pages. You must submit a term paper proposal (about 2 pages) by the beginning of Week 8 – i.e. on Monday 14 October. The final draft will be due in the week after the end of classes.

## Schedule of topics

1. 29 Aug.

Intro to early modern moral philosophy: The legacies of ancient and medieval moral philosophy; Grotius and Descartes

2. 5 Sept.

Hobbes: Philosophical method and conception of human nature

- *The Elements of Laws*, Part I (“Human Nature”), Chaps. I–XIV
- *De Cive*, Chap. I
- *Leviathan*, Chap. I–XIII
- *De Corpore*, Chaps. I, VI, and XXV

Some of this is in Raphael, *The British Moralists*, §§ 1–54.

3. 12 Sept.

Hobbes: Natural law

- *The Elements of Laws*, Part I (“Human Nature”), Chaps. XV–XIX
- *Leviathan*, Chaps. XIV–XVII
- *De Cive*, Chaps. II–V

Some of this is in Raphael, *The British Moralists*, §§55–89 and 100–103.

4. 19 Sept.

Cudworth and Conway

- Raphael, *The British Moralists*, §§ 119–153
- Conway, *Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, selections to be confirmed

5. 26 Sept.

Locke

- *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, selections to be confirmed

6. 3 Oct.

Shaftesbury and Clarke

- Raphael, *The British Moralists*, §§ 195–261

7. 10 Oct.

Fall recess – no class

8. 17 Oct.

Butler

- *Fifteen Sermons*, Preface and Sermons I, II, III, XI, and XII
- Dissertation II: Of the Nature of Virtue

Most of this is in Raphael, *The British Moralists*, §§ 374–432

9. 24 Oct.

Hutcheson

- Raphael, *The British Moralists*, §§ 303–373

10. 31 Oct.

Hume: The passions and the will

- *Treatise of Human Nature*, II.i.1-6 and 11; II.ii.1, 5, and 7; II.iii.3

11. 7 Nov.

Hume: The moral sense and the natural virtues

- *Treatise of Human Nature*, III.i.1–2 , III.iii.1 and 3–5
- *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, Sections 1, 2, 5, and 9, Appendices I and IV

12. 14 Nov.

Hume: Justice and the artificial virtues

- *Treatise of Human Nature*, III.ii.1-2 and 5
- *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, Sections 4 and 5, Appendix 3

13. 21 Nov.

Price

- Raphael, *The British Moralists*, §§ 655-762

14. 28 Nov.

Thanksgiving – no class

15. 5 Dec.

Burke and Wollstonecraft

- Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. Iain Hampsher-Monck (Cambridge, 2014), pp. 11–19 and 54–85.
- Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Dedication, Introduction, Chaps. I–II, and Chap. XIII, Section 6.

## Primary texts

### Collection of core texts

*British Moralists 1650-1800*, ed. D. D. Raphael, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969).

### Modern editions of the primary texts

#### Thomas Hobbes

*The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic: Human Nature and De Corpore Politico*, ed. J. C. A. Gaskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

*On the Citizen* (= *De Cive*), ed. and transl. Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

*Leviathan*, ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994).

*Man and Citizen* (= *De Homine*, Chaps. X–XV, and *De Cive*), ed. Bernard Gert (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991).

*Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity*, ed. Vere Chappell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

#### Ralph Cudworth

*A Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*, with *A Treatise of Freewill*, ed. Sarah Hutton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

#### Anne Conway

*The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, ed. and transl. Allison P. Coudert and Taylor Corse (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

#### John Locke

*An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, ed. P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975). [Oxford Scholarly Editions online](#).

#### Lord Shaftesbury

*Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, ed. Lawrence E. Klein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)

### **Joseph Butler**

*Fifteen Sermons and other writings on ethics*, ed. David McNaughton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

### **Francis Hutcheson**

*An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, ed. Wolfgang Leidhold (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2008).

### **David Hume**

*Hume Texts Online*, ed. Amyas Merivale and Peter Millican: <https://davidhume.org>

### **Richard Price**

*A Review of the Principal Questions of Morals*, ed. D. D. Raphael (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974).

*Political Writings*, ed. D. O. Thomas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

### **Edmund Burke**

*A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Beautiful and Sublime*, ed. Paul Guyer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). [Oxford Scholarly Editions online](#).

*Revolutionary Writings: Reflections on the Revolution in France and the First Letter on a Regicide Peace*, ed. Ian Hampsher-Monk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

### **Mary Wollstonecraft**

*A Vindication of the Rights of Men and A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, ed. Janet M. Todd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

### **Some key secondary literature**

Stephen Darwall, *Modern Moral Philosophy: From Grotius to Kant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

T. H. Irwin, *The Development of Ethics: A Historical and Critical Study*, Volume II: From Suarez to Rousseau (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

John Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*, ed. Barbara Herman (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000).

Jerome B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).