

PIU22061 | TEXTS I

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| Credits: | 10 ECTS |
| Contact Hours: | 22 Lectures |
| Pre-requisite: | N/A |
| Semester: | Michaelmas |
| Module Leader: | Dr Rachel Handley |
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| Room Number: | 5003 |
| Office Hours: | TBA |

Module Outline and Readings

Component 1 – J. L. Mackie's Inventing Right and Wrong

Week 1: The Status of Ethics – Metaethics vs Ethics

Lecture 1: Module Overview, Q&A, Essay Writing Tips

Lecture 2: The impact of, and the differences between, Metaethics and Ethics

Questions

- What is metaethics?
- What is ethics?
- Does metaethics have an impact on ethics?
- What did Mackie think about the impact of metaethics on ethics?

Reading: No required reading

Week 2: The Status of Ethics - The Subjectivity of Values

Lecture 2: Mackie's Arguments for Error Theory

Lecture 3: Error Theory and its Implications

Questions

1. What is error theory?
2. What is the queerness argument?
3. What is the relativism argument?

Reading

- Mackie, Inventing Right and Wrong, Chapter 1
- Alexander Miller, An Introduction to Contemporary Metaethics, Chapter 6.

Week 3 – The Content of Ethics – Inventing Ethics

Lecture 4: The Consequences of Moral Skepticism

Lecture 5: Metaethics and Ethics – can a metaethical theory constrain our ethical views?

Questions

1. Is morality something to be discovered, or is it something we make?
2. What is the object of morality?

Reading:

- J. L. Mackie, Inventing Right and Wrong Part 2, Chapter 5
- John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism
- Brink, D., 1992, "Mill's Deliberative Utilitarianism," Philosophy & Public Affairs, 21: 67-103.
- Brink, D., Self-Love and Altruism, Social Philosophy & Policy 14 (1997): 122-57
- Fletcher, Guy (ed)., The Routledge Handbook to The Philosophy of Well-Being Chapter 34 (Welfarism)

Week 4 – The Content of Ethics – The Good Life

Lecture 6: What does it mean to live well?

Lecture 7: Mackie and The Good Life

Questions

- What is “the good life”?
- Should we be moral?
- Is morality a crucial aspect of living well?

Reading:

- J. L. Mackie, Inventing Right and Wrong Part 2, Chapter 8
- Dale Dorsey, Welfarism

Week 5 – The Frontiers of Ethics – Intention and Responsibility

Lecture 8: Intention actions and Ethics

Lecture 9: Mackie’s view on responsibility and voluntary action

Questions

1. What is a voluntary action?
2. Does determinism hinder our ability to punish the guilty?
3. Are we only responsible for our intentional actions?

Reading

- Mackie, Inventing Right and Wrong, Chapter 9
- A. J. Ayre, “Freedom and Necessity”
- Richard Taylor, “Determinism and the Theory of Agency”

Component 2 – Elizabeth Barnes' The Minority Body

In Component 2 we will explore the philosophy of disability by reading Elizabeth Barnes' book, *The Minority Body*, as the primary text.

Each week the required reading will be at least one chapter of Barnes' book.

Below is a supplementary reading list which covers the key topics from the module. In the lectures I will indicate which papers are particularly relevant for that week's topic.

Supplementary Reading List

- Boorse, Christopher, 2010, "Disability and Medical Theory", in *Philosophical Reflections on Disability*, D. Christopher Ralston and Justin Hubert Ho (eds.), (Philosophy and Medicine, 104), Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, pp. 55–88. doi:10.1007/978-90-481-2477-0_4
- Wendall, Susan, 1997, *The Rejected Body, Feminist Philosophical Reflections on Disability*
- Kahane, Guy and Julian Savulescu, 2009, "The Welfarist Account of Disability", in *Disability and Disadvantage*, Kimberley Brownlee and Adam Cureton (eds.), New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 14–53. doi:10.1093/acprof:osobl/9780199234509.003.0002
- Jenkins, Katharine and Aness Kim Webster, 2021, "Disability, Impairment, and Marginalised Functioning", *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 99(4): 730–747. doi:10.1080/00048402.2020.1799048
- Haslanger, Sally, 2000, "Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them To Be?", *Noûs*, 34(1): 31–55. doi:10.1111/0029-4624.00201
- Gregory, Alex, 2020, "Disability as Inability", *Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy*, 18(1): 23–48. doi:10.26556/jesp.v18i1.572
- Mitra, Sophia, 2006, *The Capability Approach and Disability*, *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*
- Tremain, Shelly, 2017, *Foucault and Feminist Philosophy of Disability*, Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan University Press. Resists the view that we can give a definition of disability
- Beaudry, Jonas-Sébastien, 2016, "Beyond (Models of) Disability?", *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, 41(2): 210–228. doi:10.1093/jmp/jhv063
- Davis, N. Ann, 2005, "Invisible Disability", *Ethics*, 116(1): 153–213. doi:10.1086/453151
- Sen, Amartya, 1993, "Capability and Well-Being", in *The Quality of Life*, Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen (eds.), Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 30–53. doi:10.1093/0198287976.003.0003

- Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie, 2012, “The Case for Conserving Disability”, *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry*, 9(3): 339–355. doi:10.1007/s11673-012-9380-0
- Haslanger, Sally, 2000, “Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them To Be?”, *Noûs*, 34(1): 31–55. doi:10.1111/0029-4624.00201
- David Wasserman, 2009, Ethical constraints on allowing or causing the existence of people with disabilities, In Kimberley Brownlee & Adam Cureton (eds.), *Disability and Disadvantage*. Oxford University Press. pp. 319-51
- Samaha, Adam M. 2007, “What Good Is the Social Model of Disability?,” *University of Chicago Law Review*: 22(4), 1251–1308. doi:10.2307/20141862

Week 6: Constructing Disability

- Should we understand disability in terms of what disabled people have in common?
- Social and cross-cultural variation in disability
- The social model
- What is disability?

Required Reading

- Barnes, *The Minority Body*, Chapter 1

Week 7 (Reading Week)

Week 9: Bad-Difference and Mere-Difference

- **What is the Bad-Difference View?**
- **What is the Mere-Difference View**
- **What are the problems with each view?**
- **Can we solve those problems?**

Required Reading

- Barnes, *The Minority Body*, Chapter 2

Week 10: The Value Neutral Model

- What is the Value Neutral Model?
- Is disability bad?
- What is the relationship between disability and well-being?

Required Reading

- Barnes, *The Minority Body*, Chapter 3

Week 11: Causing Disability

- If the mere-difference view is correct, would it be permissible to cause disability?

Required Reading

- Barnes, *The Minority Body*, Chapter 5

Week 12: Disability, Injustice, and Pride

- Testimony and belief
- Hermeneutical Injustice
- Disability Pride

Required Reading

- Barnes, *The Minority Body*, Chapters 4 and 6

Learning Outcomes

Component 1 – J. L. Mackie, Inventing Right and Wrong

By the end of this course students will have:

- The ability to critically evaluate error theory.
- Understanding of debates on subjectivism, the good life, and free will and ethical responsibility, as well as an understanding of game theory.

Component 2 – Elizabeth Barnes, *The Minority Body*

By the end of this course students will have:

- The ability to critically evaluate major theories of disability.

- Knowledge of key debates within the philosophy of disability.

Assessment

- Answer 2 essay questions, 1 from each component, 1500 words each.
- Answer 2 exam questions, 1 from each component.