

Reading Questions for February 1

These questions cover some excerpts from Immanuel Kant's work *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*. The answers do not have to be turned in and you only have to read enough of the text to answer the questions. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

*Background:*

This week we are surveying some key theories in normative ethics. Today we are looking at a theory called "Kantian Ethics". The readings for this week are by the people who originally came up with the theories. They wrote a long time ago and understanding them will at times be somewhat difficult.

*Questions:*

1. On page 31, Kant distinguishes between hypothetical and categorical imperatives. What is this distinction supposed to be?
2. On pages 37-39 Kant states one formulation of the categorical imperative. It is now known as the "formula of the universal law of nature." Explain how this formulation of the categorical imperative is supposed to help us figure out whether an act is morally acceptable.
3. On pages 45- 48 Kant states a different formulation of the categorical imperative. It is now known as the "humanity formula." Explain how this formulation of the categorical imperative is supposed to help us figure out whether an act is morally acceptable.