

Phil 43s: Happiness: Positive Psychology and Philosophy

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Summer 2007, Tue Thu 01:15 PM - 02:30 PM, Bldg 50 52H

Course Description: In the past few years, a number of psychologists have focused on the empirical study of human happiness. What is happiness? What conditions make human beings happy? What role does heredity play in determining our ability to be happy? Philosophers, on the other hand, have asked themselves a related but slightly different set of questions. Should we pursue happiness? Are the things that make us happy 'good'? Can we be happy without fulfilling our moral obligations? What should we do when the demands of ethics and those of our happiness are in conflict? What other values compete with that of happiness?

Course Requirements:

- 10% Participation
- 15% Reading Responses [11 responses 1 page each]
- 25% Mid-Term Paper [4-5 pages]
- 50% Final Paper [8-10 pages]

Readings: All selections are available through coursework (coursework.stanford.edu).

Contact Info: The best way to reach me is to e-mail me at jennifer.morton@stanford.edu and set-up an appointment. I will be holding office hours immediately after class, Tue Thus 2.30pm-3.30pm.

Part I: Happiness, Well-being, and Pleasure

06/26 *Introduction*

- Kahneman, Daniel, Diener, Ed, and Norbert Schwarz. *Preface. Well-Being: The Foundations of Hedonic Psychology*. Russell Sage Foundation Publications: New York, 1998.
- Seligman, Martin E.P. *Foreword: The Past and Future of Positive Psychology. Flourishing: Positive Psychology and the Life Well-Lived*. (Eds. Corey L.M. Keyes and Jonathan Haidt) American Psychological Association: Washington D.C., 2003. Pp. xi-xx.

06/28 *Clarifying the terms*

- Kahneman, Daniel. *Objective Happiness. Well-Being: The Foundations of Hedonic Psychology*. Russell Sage Foundation Publications: New York, 1998. pp. 3-22.
- Diener, Ed. *Subjective Well-Being. American Psychologist*. January 2000. Vol. 55, no. 1, pp. 34-43.

07/03 *Eudaimonia*

- Aristotle. *Book I and Book X. Nicomachean Ethics*.

07/05 *Ancient to Modern Conceptions*

- McMahon, Daniel. *Introduction. Happiness: A History*. Atlantic Monthly Press, 2005.
- Kraut, Richard. "Two Conceptions of Happiness." *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 88, No. 2 (Apr., 1979), pp. 167-197

Part II: The Hedonistic Treadmill

07/10 *The Set-point & Resilience*

- Seligman, Martin E.P. Chapter 3: *Why Bother To Be Happy? And Chapter 4: Can You Make Yourself Lastingly Happier?* In *Authentic Happiness*. Nicolas Brealey Publishing: London, 2003.
- Diener, Ed, Lucas, Richard and Christie Napa Scollon. "Beyond the Hedonic Treadmill" *American Psychologist*. Vol. 61 No. 4, May-June 2006. pp. 305-314.

07/12 *Flow and Creativity*

- Nakamura, Jeanne and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. *The Construction of Meaning Through Vital Engagement. Flourishing: Positive Psychology and the Life Well-Lived*. (Eds. Corey L.M. Keyes and Jonathan Haidt) American Psychological Association: Washington D.C., 2003. Pp. 83-104.
- Schopenhauer, Arthur. *On Aesthetics. Essays and Aphorisms*. Penguin Classics: London, 1970.

07/17 *Chemicals*

- Degrazia, David. "Prozac, Enhancement, and Self-Creation" *The Hastings Center Report*, Vol. 30, No. 2. (Mar. - Apr., 2000), pp. 34-40.
- Nettle, Daniel. *Chapter 5: Wanting and Liking* in *Happiness: The Science Behind your Smile*. Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2005.

****Mid-Term Paper Due****

07/19 *Social Relationships/Altruism*

- Hume, David. *Section Two and Appendix Two. Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*.
- Haidt, Jonathan. *Elevation and the Positive Psychology of Morality in Flourishing: Positive Psychology and the Life Well-Lived*. (Eds. Corey L.M. Keyes and Jonathan Haidt) American Psychological Association: Washington D.C., 2003.

Part III: Utilitarianism and the Conditions of Happiness

07/24 *Utilitarianism and its Critics*

- Mill, John Stuart. *Chapter 1 and 2. Utilitarianism*.
- Nozick, Robert. Selections on the *Experience Machine. Anarchy, State, and Utopia*. Pp. 42-45
- Bentham, Jeremy. *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation. Legislation I*. (Available from ebrary)

07/26 *Income Vs. GNH*

- Easterlin, Richard A. *Income and Happiness: Towards a Unified Theory*. The Economic Journal. July 2001. Vol. 111, no. 473, pp.465-484.
- Revkin, Andrew C. A New Measure of Well-Being from a Happy Little Kingdom. New York Times, October 4th, 2005.
- The Happy Planet Index. <http://www.happyplanetindex.org/>
- *Happiness (and how to measure it)* The Economist. December 23rd-January 5th 2007

07/31 *Work and Its Discontents*

- Seligman, Martin. *Chapter 10: Work and Personal Satisfaction*. Authentic Happiness. Nicolas Brealey Publishing: London, 2003.
- Marx, Karl. "Alienation" from his Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts. Karl Marx: Selected Writings. (Ed. David McLellan) Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2000. pp. 83-95.

****Final Paper Proposal Due****

Part IV: Competing Values—Authenticity, Aesthetics, etc.

08/02 *The Diversity of Values*

- Charles Taylor, *The Diversity of Goods, Utilitarianism and Its Critics* pp. 129-144.
- Williams, Bernard. *Conflicts of Values, Moral Luck*, pp. 71-82.

08/07 *The Will To Power*

- Nietzsche, Friedrich. Genealogy of Morals. Essay I, Section 10. Essay III, Section 14. Beyond Good and Evil. Sections 198, 212, 260, 279. Ecce Homo. Book II, Sections 9-10. The Gay Science. Book IV, Sections 302-303
- Schopenhauer, Arthur. *On the Suffering of the World*. Essays and Aphorisms.

08/09 *Life as Art*

- Alexander Nehamas *Introduction to The Art of Living* (2000).
- Kimmelman, Michael. *The Art of Making Art without lifting a Finger in The Accidental Masterpiece on the Art of Life and Vice Versa*. Penguin Press: New York, 2005.

08/14 *Conclusion*

****Final Paper Due on August 17th at 5pm****