

Paper Topics - *Beyond Good and Evil*

Write on one of the following three prompts:

1. In *BGE* §177, Nietzsche writes: “Perhaps nobody yet has been truthful enough about what ‘truthfulness’ is.” Discuss this statement in relation to Nietzsche’s other remarks about “the will to truth” (e.g. *GS* §344, *BGE* §1) and what previous philosophers have made of the notion of truth. Is there a legitimate sense in which Nietzsche continues to uphold a view of philosophy as dedicated to the pursuit of truth?
2. In *BGE* §§ 19 and 21 (among other passages), Nietzsche presents various considerations against the traditional notion of freedom of the will and in favor of a different conception of the will and its freedom. Explain as clearly as you can the basis of Nietzsche’s claims on this topic. Do they add up to a convincing refutation of the traditional account?
3. In *BGE* §228, Nietzsche offers the following criticism of “British utilitarians” (e.g. Bentham, Mill): “None of these ponderous herd animals with their unquiet consciences... wants to know or even sense that ‘the general welfare’ is no ideal, no goal, no remotely intelligible concept, but only an emetic—that what is fair for one *cannot* by any means for that reason alone also be fair for others; that the demand of one morality for all is detrimental for the higher men; in short, that there is an order of rank between man and man, hence also between morality and morality.” Reconstruct as carefully as you can the reasoning Nietzsche draws on in rejecting utilitarian views, based on the principle of the greatest happiness. Are his criticisms persuasive?

Your paper should be 5-6 pages long, printed in 12-point Times New Roman font and doubled-spaced. All work on the paper must be your own and full bibliographical citations must be given for any sources you rely on. Provided you are using the Kaufmann editions, you may cite Nietzsche’s works by section number.

For those of you new to writing philosophy papers, I encourage you to consult the following web-site: <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>.

In grading your paper, I will be evaluating your understanding of Nietzsche’s views, your use of textual evidence in support of interpretative claims, and the clarity and rigor of your own reasoning.

All papers are due in class on **Thursday, May 14**. Late papers will be assessed a penalty of 1/3 letter grade per day, unless an extension is granted **in advance**.