

Phil 215 Kant's Transcendental Dialectic
Prof. Lucy Allais and Eric Watkins
Tuesday 1:00-3:50, Phil 7077 (Seminar Room)

In the “Transcendental Dialectic”, which constitutes a major part of the second half of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant presents a powerful and sustained critique of traditional metaphysics, one that calls into question important claims concerning God, freedom, and the immortality of the soul, among other things. In this seminar, we will attempt to understand several of the specific criticisms that Kant makes as well as the general nature of these kinds of criticisms. (This course does not presuppose prior knowledge of Kant's theoretical philosophy.)

Reading Schedule (subject to adjustment):

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| Week 1 | Introduction
*Lucy Allais, <i>Manifest Reality</i> , Chapters 1 & 9
*Karl Ameriks, “The Critique of Metaphysics”
*Marcus Willaschek, “Kant’s Conception of Reason and Metaphysics”
*Marcus Willaschek and Eric Watkins, “Kant’s Account of Cognition” |
| Week 2 | Tr. Dial., Introduction & First Book (A293/B349-A338/B396)
Marcus Willaschek, “The Supreme Principle of Pure Reason”
Michelle Grier, “Transcendental Illusion” |
| Week 3 | First Paralogism (A341-A351, B406-408)
Tobias Rosefeldt, “Subjects of Kant’s First Paralogism”
*Karl Ameriks, “The Paralogisms of Pure Reason in the First Edition” |
| Week 4 | Second Paralogism (A351-361, B408)
Karl Ameriks, <i>Kant’s Theory of Mind</i> , chap. 2, §§5-8 |
| Week 5 | The Problem of the first two Antinomies of Pure Reason
First and Second Antinomies (A405-443/B432-471, A462-532/B490-560)
Adrian Moore, “A Note on Kant’s First Antinomy”
*Eric Watkins, “The Antinomy of Pure Reason, Sections 3-8” |
| Week 6 | The Solution of the first two Antinomies of Pure Reason
First and Second Antinomies A515-532/B543-560)
TBD |
| Week 7 | The Third Antinomy (A444/B472-A451/B579, A528/B556-A558/B586)
Allen Wood, “Kant’s Compatibilism”
*Eric Watkins, <i>Kant and the Metaphysics of Causality</i> , chap. 5 |
| Week 8 | Fourth Antinomy (A452-461/B480-488, A559-567/B587-595)
The Ideal of Pure Reason (A567-602/B595-630)
TBD
Allen Wood “The Idea of God”, <i>The Ideal of Pure Reason</i> , pp. 28-63. |
| Week 9 | The Ideal of Pure Reason |

(A603-642/B631-670)

[[There is much lit on K's discussions of the ontol., cosmol. and tel. arguments]

Week 10 Appendix to the Dialectic (A642/B670-A704/B732)
TBD
*Eric Watkins, "Kant on Infima Species"

* indicates recommended reading (either as general background or more specific in depth discussion)

Required Texts:

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. & tr. (Paul Guyer & Allen Wood), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Seminar Requirements:

I. Class participation: Attendance and active participation in every class is required.

II. Short writing assignments: Students must write two four-page papers that provide an analysis of Kant's criticism of one of the arguments of traditional metaphysics. Ideally, we will coordinate the short papers so that they are spread out evenly over the ten weeks. Students should distribute each short paper to the entire class by Sunday evening so that we can be thinking about the issues that are of most interest to students.

III. One term paper (15 –20 pages): Approval of the term paper topic is required before the end of Week 8. The term paper is due on Thursday of finals week.