



UCDAVIS

ECS 188 – Spring 2025

[Week 7]

KANTIANISM

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Pure Practical Reason
(what ought to be?)

Moral Law
(objective principle)

Universalization

motive

Balance

a priori

Epistemology

Ontological

End-in-itself

(worth of rational being / objective ground)

Practical Reason
(what ought I do?)

reason

Pure Reason
(what is?)

Thing-in-itself

(Knowledge)

Self-Legislative

Maxim
(subjective principle)

emprical

Innate

theoretical

Subjective

(belief)

Why Vote?

Objective

(belief)

Autonomous
(human condition)

Outcome

Intention

Purpose

Moral Value

Good Will

Inclination

Means
(action)

Power of Choice
(freedom)

Ends
(humanity)

Good-in-itself

(qualify of will)

Qualified Good

Respect

Will

Duty

Moral Worth

Unqualified Good

Right

(co-exist with everyone's freedom)

(practical reason)

Virtue

(duty's as its end)

Nothing in the world—indeed nothing even beyond it—
can be conceived as **good** without qualification except a **good will**.
A **good will** is not good because of what it effects or accomplishes, nor because of its adequacy to
attain some **intended end**; it is good only through its **willing**, that is, **good in itself**.
Its usefulness or fruitlessness can neither add nor take away anything from this worth.
A **will** that **chooses** its **maxims** solely from respect for the **moral law** — that is, from **duty** —
is thereby, in its ground, wholly **independent** of inclinations and of **everything empirical**.
Even if, by the special disfavour of fortune or the niggardly provision of a step-motherly nature,
this will should wholly lack the power to accomplish its purpose, yet, like a **jewel**,
it would still **shine by its own light**, as something which has its full **worth in itself**.

Immanuel Kant

[Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, 4:397–398]

Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called **good without qualification**, except a **good will**.

Duty is the necessity of an action done out of **respect** for the **law**.

The **will** is the **capacity to act** according to the representation of laws, that is, according to **principles**.

Since **reason** is required for deriving **actions** from **laws**, the **will** is nothing other than **practical reason**.

Act only in accordance with that **maxim** through which you can at the same time will that it become a **universal law**.

A maxim is the **subjective principle** of **volition**; the **objective principle** (i.e., the practical law) would be the rule that would serve all **rational beings** as the **objective ground** of a maxim.

Immanuel Kant

[Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, 4:393, 4:400, 4:412. 4:412, 4:421, 4:421]

An **action** done from **duty** has its **moral worth**, not in the **purpose** to be attained by it, but in the **maxim** in accordance with which it is decided upon and done.

Autonomy of the will is the property of the will by which it is a **law to itself** (independently of all properties of the objects of volition).

So act that you use **humanity**, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an **end**, never merely as a **means**.

A rational being belongs to the **kingdom of ends** as a member, when he **legislates** in it **universal laws** while also being himself subject to these laws.

Immanuel Kant
[Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, 4:400, 4:400, 4:429, 4:421]

Choice (Willkür) is **free** when it can determine itself independently of sensible impulses.

Virtue is the **moral strength** of the will in fulfilling its duty.

Any action is **right** if it can coexist with **everyone's freedom** according to a universal law.

Right is concerned only with the external and indeed practical relation of one person to another, in so far as their actions, as deeds, can exert influence on each other.

...**Virtue**, by contrast, has inner freedom, i.e. the **conformity of actions** to duty from the motive of **duty itself**, as **its end**.

Immanuel Kant

[Metaphysics of Morals, 6:213, 6:397, 6:230, 6:213]