

## Kant on Freedom, Law, and Happiness

Kant is often portrayed as the author of a rigid system of ethics in which adherence to a formal and universal principle of morality – the famous categorical imperative – is an end itself, and any concern for human goals and happiness a strictly secondary and subordinate matter. Such a theory seems to suit perfectly rational beings but not human beings.

The twelve essays in this collection by one of the world's preeminent Kant scholars argue for a radically different account of Kant's ethics. They explore an interpretation of his moral philosophy according to which freedom is the fundamental end of human action, but an end that can only be preserved and promoted by adherence to moral law. Moreover, Paul Guyer shows that while Kant did not view moral laws as simply prudential rules for the maximization of human happiness, he did hold that an interpersonal system of happiness should result from the free choices of individual human beings if made with due respect for the freedom of all other humans to choose their own ends and ways of life as well.

The essays are structured to reveal the emergence of this conception of the fundamental value of freedom in Kant's early work, to explore its systematic presentation in his central philosophical works, and to demonstrate its application in his liberal political philosophy and his theory of personal virtue.

Any new study of Kant by Paul Guyer is virtually mandatory reading for all Kant scholars. The potential appeal of this volume, though, is considerably greater than that constituency. By radically revising the traditional interpretation of Kant's moral and political philosophy and by showing how Kant's coherent liberalism can guide us in current debates, Paul Guyer will find an audience across moral and political philosophy, intellectual history, and political science.

Paul Guyer is Professor of Philosophy and Florence R. C. Murray Professor in the Humanities at the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to being the author of three major books on Kant (published by Cambridge), he is the coeditor of The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, the coeditor and cotranslator in that edition of the recent groundbreaking translation of *Critique of Pure Reason*, and the editor of *The Cambridge Companion to Kant*.

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### Acknowledgments

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### *Acknowledgments*

Eighth International Kant Congress in Memphis, at the invitation of the organizing committee, and published in the *Proceedings of the Eighth International Kant Congress*, edited by Hoke Robinson (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995), volume I, part 1, pp. 51–69; this chapter has been somewhat revised for this volume. Minor corrections and stylistic improvements have been silently made throughout; more significant departures from the previously printed versions of these chapters have been noted. I thank all of these editors and publishers for their original invitations as well as their permission to reprint these essays.

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## Note on Translations and Citations

All quotations from and references to passages in Kant's works are located by parenthetical citations of the volume and page number in *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, edited by the Royal Prussian (later German) Academy of Sciences (Berlin: Georg Reimer et al., later Walter de Gruyter, 1900–), except for citations from the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which are located by the customary use of the pagination of its first ("A") and second ("B") editions. Translations are based on the text of this edition, the so-called *Akademie* edition, unless otherwise indicated. The source of the translations in each chapter is indicated in a note in that chapter; most translations are my own, but where I have followed an existing translation, I have noted that. When I have cited the *Critique of Pure Reason*, I have not usually used any abbreviation for it, since the use of the "A" and "B" pagination will make the source clear. For other works, I have used the following abbreviations:

CJ	<i>Critique of Judgment</i>
CPracR	<i>Critique of Practical Reason</i>
G	<i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i>
IUH	<i>Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View</i>
JäL	<i>Jäsche Logic</i>
MM	<i>Metaphysics of Morals</i>
MM, DR	<i>Metaphysics of Morals</i> , Part I, "Doctrine of Right"
MM, DV	<i>Metaphysics of Morals</i> , Part II, "Doctrine of Virtue"

*Note on Translations and Citations*

OPP	<i>Only Possible Basis for a Proof of the Existence of God</i>
OQ	<i>An Old Question Raised Again: Is the Human Race Constantly Progressing? (The Conflict of the Faculties, Part II)</i>
PP	<i>Toward Perpetual Peace</i>
R	<i>Reflexionen</i> , that is, the notes and fragments in Kant's <i>Handschriftliche Nachlaß</i> ("handwritten remains"), collected in volumes 14–19 of the <i>Akademie</i> edition.
Rel	<i>Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason</i>
RP	<i>What Real Progress Has Metaphysics Made since the Time of Leibniz and Wolff?</i>
TP	<i>On the Common Saying: That Might Be Right in Theory but Not in Practice</i>