

**Contemporary Moral Issues (Phil 140)**  
**Kerstein/Spring 2009**  
**Paper II: Due 22 April**

**Paper Topics**

(Papers must be **2-3 pages** in double-spaced 12 pt. typescript. On the first page of your paper, please indicate the number of the topic you've chosen, your T.A.'s name and the time at which your discussion section meets, and the honor pledge.)

- 1] Kant claims the following: "If . . . [someone] has committed murder he must *die*. Here there is no substitute that will satisfy justice. There is no *similarity* between life, however wretched it may be, and death, hence no likeness between the crime and the retribution unless death is judicially carried out upon the wrongdoer . . ." (333) Explain this claim in your own words. Then set out a plausible objection to it and explain how Kant might reply to the objection.
- 2] Explain in detail what "proportional retributivism" is, according to Reiman. Summarize why, according to him, we (in the contemporary United States) should not adopt the death penalty as a punishment for murder. Then offer a plausible objection to his view that we should not do so.
- 3] With the help of concrete examples, distinguish between the stronger and more moderate versions of Singer's "general principle." Then set out a plausible objection to the more moderate version. Sketch the strongest reply to this objection you can.
- 4] According to Otteson, the immorality of failure to help in Pond Cases does not entail the immorality of failure to help in Overseas Aid Cases. Explain his grounds for this claim. How would Singer respond? Would this response be effective? Why or why not?

**Paper Guidelines**

- 1] Be sure to answer *each* of the questions posed in the paper topic. Don't allow yourself to plunge so deeply into one aspect of the topic that you fail to address the others.
- 2] Don't worry about writing an engaging or literary introduction. You don't have to get our attention or convince us that the topic is important. Just get right to the point.
- 3] You should have a clear conception of the role played by each paragraph in your paper. If, when you read your work, *you're* unsure how a particular paragraph contributes to your treatment of the paper topic, it's likely that we will be unsure as well. Please delete "wandering" paragraphs.
- 4] Please proofread your papers before you turn them in.
- 5] Please *defend* your interpretation of a thinker by citing passages that support it. But don't quote passage after passage. Instead, put the thinker's points into your own words and indicate the page on which she makes them.