Course Description

Theories in normative ethics attempt to explain and systematize our moral judgments. They also provide an account of our moral obligations and duties, suggesting a standard of right and wrong conduct. In this course, we shall examine some of the most influential moral theories in the history of ethics.

This course begins with a study of the ancient moralists, including Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus and Epictetus. We will also consider the merits of virtue ethics and hedonism, and how we can achieve happiness and the good life. We also discuss the moral theories of Hobbes, Hume, Kant, Bentham, Mill and Sartre, and ask questions about whether we are egoists by nature, and whether morality is based on reason or emotion.

If you have any questions or would like to know more about this course, please email at cvitrano@brooklyn.cuny.edu or stop by my office (3315 Boylan) during office hours on Tuesdays from 12:15 – 2:15 PM and on Thursdays from 12:15 – 1:25 PM.