

## Philosophy 536: Ethical Theory and Global Poverty

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Summer Term One, May 15-June 7th 2017

University of British Columbia  
Buchanan D-324

With the end of colonialism, famine and extreme poverty in developing countries came to be seen more acutely as a moral responsibility pertaining to all affluent individuals. In 1972, Peter Singer drew philosophical attention to problem in a challenging article that gave rise to a new literature on the 'problem of demandingness'. At the same time, others have urged that extreme poverty and global disparities require us to rethink traditional state-centred models of justice altogether, or argued for associational responses channeled through transnational civil society organizations. We will look at some of the philosophical problems arising, including the ethical dilemmas and challenges faced by NGO organizations trying to meliorate suffering.

This course is aimed at philosophy graduate students with some background in ethical theory: it will equip them to contribute to the growing philosophical literature in this area, or to include Ethics and Global Poverty in their teaching portfolios. We will look at attempts in recent philosophy to respond appropriately to extreme suffering, economic disparities, and structural injustices that exist between societies in the contemporary world. Attention will be given to emerging issues in this field, and to the ethical challenges raised by transfers of resources across political and cultural borders, outside of the mechanisms of democratic control.

The course will be offered as part of a Summer Institute at University of British Columbia, and includes a two-day professional workshop with leading Canadian researchers in this area and a 10-day visit by Dr. Anthony Musonda of University of Zambia's Department of Philosophy and Applied Ethics. The course will meet for twelve three-hour seminar meetings from 1-4pm during the weeks of May 15th-June 2nd; students are invited to participate in the associated two-day professional workshop June 5-6th and to present their work.

### Readings (subject to minor revision):

#### 1. Ethical Frameworks for Responding to Global Poverty

Tuesday May 16th

Peter Singer, 'Famine, Affluence, & Morality'

William MacAskill, 'Earning to Give'

Wed May 17th

Onora O'Neill, 'Kantian Approaches to Famine Problems'

Kok-Chor Tan, 'Kantian Ethics & Justice'

Thurs May 18th

Henry Shue, 'Solidarity Among Strangers and the Right to Food'

Garrett Cullity, 'International Aid and the Scope of Kindness', *Ethics* 105 (1994)

Fri May 19th

Alan Thomas, 'Consequentialism, Integrity and Demandingness'

Garrett Cullity, 'Asking Too Much', *Monist* 86 (2003), 402-18.

#### 2. Responses to Global Poverty from Social/Political Philosophy

Tues May 23rd

Paul Gomberg, 'The Fallacy of Philanthropy', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 32 (2002)

Thomas Pogge, 'Human Rights and Human Responsibilities'

Wed May 24th

John Rawls, 'The Law of Peoples'

Allen Buchanan, 'Rules for a Vanished Westphalian World'

Thurs May 25th

Thomas Nagel, 'The Idea of Global Justice'

Michael Blake, 'Distributive Justice, State Coercion, and Autonomy,' *PPA* (2001)

Fri May 26th

Amartya Sen, 'Poverty as Capability Deprivation'

Martha Nussbaum, 'Non-relative Virtues'

### **3. International Aid and Institutions beyond Borders**

Tues May 30th

Nigel Dower, 'Aid, Trade and Development,' ch. 8 of *World Ethics*

Thomas G. Weiss, 'Governance, Good Governance and Global Governance'

optional: Kenneth Anderson, 'Global Philanthropy and Global Governance', *Giving Well*

Wed May 31st

Iris Marion Young, 'Responsibility, Social Connection, and Global Labour Justice'

Jennifer Rubenstein, 'Humanitarian NGOs' Duties of Justice'

Thurs June 1st

Thomas Pogge, 'How International NGOs Should Act' in *Giving Well*

Lisa Fuller, 'It is Not as Easy as ABCD', *Journal of Global Ethics* 8

Fri June 2nd

Jonathan Glover, 'The Research Programme of Development Ethics'

Conny Lenneberg, 'To Respect or Not to Respect?'

Mon/Tues June 5-6th

Two-day Professional Workshop, *New Directions in Ethics and Global Poverty*

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Anthony Musonda; Presentations by Drs. Scott Anderson, Sylvia

Berryman, Monique Deveaux, Jay Drydyk, Lisa Fuller, Cindy Holder, Christine Koggel.

Themes: Public service ethics, empowerment, coercion and nondomination in international aid, human rights, the status of aid organizations

Graduate students participate as commentators/poster session presenters

#### **Evaluation:**

Students will be asked to write two short (2-page) response papers, to lead seminar discussion of one paper, and to participate during the professional workshop as commentators and poster session presenters. They will be asked to write a longer paper (8-10 pages) on a topic of their choice in the field of ethics and global poverty, due June 30th.

Two short papers: 10% each

Workshop participation: 10%

Seminar presentation: 10%

Final paper: 60%