

Skepticism, Atheism, and Religious Faith (Religious Studies 2LL3)
Fall 2014

TEXT PREPARATION 1

Assignment due in class on October 6

This assignment consists of attendance of the full class session on October 6, plus completing the written assignment below, to be submitted in class on October 6 only.

(*Rationale:* Text Preparation assignments are designed to help you prepare the reading assignment for a particular class meeting, in conjunction with your participation in that class meeting, when we go over the reading selection together.)

If you cannot come to class on October 6, please plan to complete a different Text Preparation assignment for a future date.

This assignment is based on:

- Immanuel Kant, selection from *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), trans. Mary Gregor [included in coursepack; or copy from *Practical Philosophy* on reserve: pp. 236–55]: Read closely Part III ("On the Primacy of Pure Practical Reason") and Part IV ("The Immortality of the Soul as a Postulate of Pure Practical Reason"); begin reading Part V ("The Existence of God as a Postulate of Pure Practical Reason").

Detailed Instructions. In well-written paragraphs, a total of approximately 600 words, please address the following question with detailed reference to the text:

What is "the highest good" for Kant? Who is capable of attaining it? What are the consequences for the immortality of the soul?

As was the case for the Text Summary assignment, your observations should be backed up with references that allow your reader to see what they are based on. For this purpose, please use in-text parenthetical page references – for an example of these, see Harvey, *Writing with Sources* [selection in coursepack/book on reserve/purchase book], p. 51, under "MLA Basic Rules."

Please print your assignment double-spaced and with one-inch margins, using an 11-12-point font.

Please number and staple the pages you hand in.

Please write "Text Preparation 1" at the top, and indicate the total word count at the end.

Study Question (or alternate Text Preparation Question): The Text Preparation question above relates to Section IV of the Kant reading. Section III will be more difficult than Section IV to make sense of before we have discussed it in class. But here is a study question for Section III:

In this section, Kant distinguishes "pure," "theoretical," "speculative" reason from "practical reason" (which relates to moral judgments). How does he describe the relationship between these two types of reason?

If you prefer, you may answer this question, instead of the question above, in your Text Preparation.

Note: Since this is your first reading of this text, and since we have not yet discussed it in class, the Text Preparation assignment is simply a first effort at figuring out what it says, and doing it will help you get the most of our in-class work on it. The assignment is not evaluated for whether it

continued on next page

demonstrates a good understanding of the reading, but for evidence of your having worked in detail to understand the reading. Your fuller understanding will develop in the course of our class and tutorial meetings, and with successive re-readings.

Plagiarism Warning: This assignment is designed to be completed by means of independent work on the assigned selection from Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, aided by the guidance you have received in class/tutorial and by consulting the instructor and the TA: We are always available to discuss the questions you encounter as you read and re-read the texts for this class. It is neither necessary nor desirable that you consult outside sources in order to complete this assignment. Please remember that unacknowledged use of such sources constitutes plagiarism and is a violation of the university's [Academic Integrity policy](#).

Please keep a copy of your assignment to refer to in our class discussions of Kant over the next couple of meetings.

posted September 30, 2014

socserv.socsci.mcmaster.ca/danahol/2LL3/textprep1.pdf