

Philosophy 450/650 / EP&E 478: The Problem of Evil
Spring 2025. Prof. K. DeRose. Tuesdays 3:30-5:20
Provisional Syllabus, 11/17/24

DeRose office hour: Wednesdays (on which Yale classes meet), 1:00-2:00, in room 302 of the Yale Philosophy Building

Yale Divinity School students, as well as students from the Graduate School, should take this course as Phil. 650. Yale College students should take it as Phil. 450 or EP&E 478.

Course Requirements: For Auditors: Auditors should do the readings for each meeting, and attend in participate in each week's discussion.

Course Requirements: For Those taking the course: Those taking the course:

- do the readings for each meeting, and attend in participate in each week's discussion
- class size permitting [this will be decided after the first meeting of the class, but is likely]: each student taking the course for credit will lead about 55 minutes of a seminar, presenting one of the class readings (or a part thereof), and leading discussion of it
- Written work: before Spring Break, submit by email attachment to keith.derose@yale.edu; after Break to both that address and to timothy.williamson@philosophy.ox.ac.uk. There are no tests nor a final exam for this class. The written requirements are:
 - Phil. 425: Two distinct papers, each 2,500-3,500 words (about 7-10 pages) long, on topics directly related to the topics of the course, and each preceded by a brief (about 100 words) topic proposal. Due dates (all Fridays):
 - Proposal for first paper: Feb. 14
 - First paper: due Feb. 28
 - Proposal for second paper: April 18
 - Second paper: May 2
 - Phil. 650: Three options:
 - Two papers, with earlier proposals, just like the Phil. 425 papers above, with the same due dates. Or
 - Two papers: First proposal and paper as above. Second paper: an expansion of the first, 5,000-7,000 words in total, due on May 2, with a proposal for the expansion due on April 18. Or
 - One paper, 5,000-7,000 words long (about 14-20 pages), due on May 2, preceded by a short (about 100-150 word) proposal, due April 18

Reading for the first meeting: The first meeting will largely be an overview of, and some preparation for, what's to come in the semester. The reading you should do before that first meeting is just an introductory essay I wrote, "Might God Have Reasons for Not Preventing Evils?", which is available in either Word or pdf format at my web page, here: <https://campuspress.yale.edu/keithderose/1527-2/>

Readings for subsequent meetings will include:

Nick Trakakis, "Theodicy: The Solution to the Problem of Evil, or Part of the Problem?," *Sophia*, 2008

Toby Betenson, "Anti-Theodicy," *Philosophy Compass*, 2018

Marilyn McCord Adams, "Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, 1989

Rowan Williams, "Redeeming Sorrows," in D.Z. Phillips, ed., *Religion and Morality*, 1996

David Lewis, "Evil for Freedom's Sake?," *Philosophical Papers*, 1993

Peter van Inwagen, *The Problem of Evil*, 2006

John Hick, portions of *Evil and the God of Love*, 1966

C.S. Lewis, the "Hell" chapter from *The Problem of Pain*

Some work in progress by the instructor, especially a partial draft of *Horrific Suffering, Divine Hiddenness, and Hell: The Place of Freedom in a World Governed by God* (3H)