

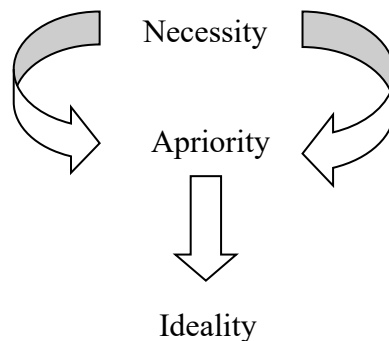
Introduction

- Kant's Big Question: "How are *a priori* synthetic judgments possible?" (146.4)
 - this is important to metaphysics (139.5), the fate of which Kant is concerned about in his Preface (starting at 109.6) as well as here in the Intro (139.4), where we see Kant's interest in "God, freedom, and immortality"; and is a problem from Hume (146.7). With regard to the middle item (freedom), that 'Everything which happens has its cause' (142.9) is threatening
- The *a priori/a posteriori* distinction (136.8-138.9; PF slide 10)
 - necessity and universality as marks of the *a priori*: 137.7; PF slide 10
- The analytic/synthetic distinction (130.1-133.9; PF slide 10)
 - We focus on the discussion and examples at 130.6-132.2, esp. the example of 'Everything which happens has its cause'
- Kant and Hume (146, and see Hume, below): If Kant's analytic/synthetic distinction matches up with Hume's relation of ideas/matter of fact distinction, then he would seem to have a direct answer to Hume's skeptical argument in section IV of the *Enquiry*, which is based on the claim that there is/can be no *a priori* knowledge of matters of fact (synthetic propositions?) Hume, from the second paragraph of that section: "The contrary of every matter of fact is still possible, because it can never imply a contradiction, and is conceived by the mind with the same facility and distinctness, as if ever so conformable to reality. *That the sun will not rise tomorrow* is no less intelligible a proposition, and implies no more contradiction, than the affirmation, *that it will rise*."
- Kant's Big Answer (in brief): Synthetic *a priori* knowledge of the empirical world is possible, because certain synthetic propositions must be true of any empirical world by virtue of the necessary conditions for any possible experience. Huh?

Preface (to the B edition; with a brief look at the Transcendental Aesthetic)

- Kant's "Copernican Revolution" (esp. 110.5-111.5, 113n): "Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all attempts to extend our knowledge of objects by establishing something in regard to them *a priori*, by means of concepts, have, on this assumption, ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge." (110.6)
- "We can know *a priori* of things only what we ourselves put into them"* (111.5). This includes propositions about space and time (115.2), and causality (115.6).
- But this limits us to knowledge only of appearances, leaving the things in themselves behind (112.2): the Phenomena/Noumena distinction
 - Is Kant here relying on a sensitivity condition on knowledge (or justified cognition): that we don't know that objects as they are in themselves have these properties if we'd have the same grounds for thinking they do as we actually have, even if they didn't have the properties?
- Does Kant mean to be denying that things in themselves have the spatial, temporal, and causal properties we experience them as having, or merely to be agnostic about whether they have those properties? Can read the "only what we ourselves [have] put into them" differently on this matter: Does that mean we put into them something they did not in themselves have, or just that we would experience them as having these properties

- whether or not they really had them? At various places Kant reads to me as if he's making the stronger (denying) inference. Let's just look at what Kant has to say here about space in the Transcendental Aesthetic at B42-B44 (GW pp. 176.8-178.2)
- But "though we cannot *know**these objects as things in themselves, we must yet be in position at least to *think* them as things in themselves" (115.4)
*The difference in translation seems important here: G&W have "cognize" rather than "know"
 - Thus taking the object "in a twofold sense" (116.0) saves the thought that we are free, because the principle of causality applies to us only as objects of experience : "But though I cannot *know*, I can yet *think* freedom" (116.4: note G&W's much less zippy translation here!)
 - More generally, with regard to thoughts of God and immortality, as well as of freedom (117.1), Kant says he has "found it *necessary* to deny *knowledge*, in order to make room for *faith*" (117.2: note that here G&W match NKS in using "knowledge" and "faith")
 - Indeed, Kant presents his critical philosophy as the only antidote to a host of unsavory enemies: materialism, fatalism, atheism, free-thinking, fanaticism, superstition, idealism, skepticism (119.2)



Hume: Two Kinds of truths: Relations of Ideas vs. Matters of Fact

	Relations of Ideas	Matters of Fact
[K: analytic/synthetic]	Contrary does imply a contradiction; true (presumably) by pred. containment; "conceptually necessary," we might say	"The contrary of every matter of fact" does not "imply a contradiction"
Modal Status	Necessary	Contingent: "The contrary of every matter of fact is still possible" (25.9)
How Known	(Can be) known <i>a priori</i> : "discoverable by the mere operation of thought" (25.6)	Cannot be known <i>a priori</i> ; only from experience [<i>a posteriori</i>]
How Securely Known	(Can be) "Intuitively or demonstratively certain" (25.4)	Not intuitively or demonstrably certain
Studied by	Geometry, algebra, arithmetic (25.4)	Natural sciences. Also comprise much of our everyday knowledge.
Examples	"That the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the squares of the two sides"; "That three times five is equal to half of thirty" (25.5)	"The sun will rise tomorrow" (see 26.0); When the first billiard ball strikes the second, the second ball will move (see 29- 30)

-This is not just innocent observation & classification. That only necessary truths can be known *a priori* is a substantive claim.