Stanford



Rupert Sparling

COLLEGE Lecturer, Civic, Liberal, and Global Education

Curriculum Vitae available Online

Bio

BIO

My name is Rupert Sparling, and I am a lecturer for Stanford's Civic, Liberal, and Global Education requirement. I read for a BA in Classics at Oxford and then received a PhD in philosophy from Stanford. My main area of research is ancient Greek philosophical ethics, and especially the foundational concepts and frameworks that underwrite ancient Greek ethics. My current project is concerned with Plato's ethics, and the question of whether he ever endorses the kinds of claims we find in deontological ethical theories. In particular, I argue that contrary to the current consensus, Plato recognizes constraints that prevent agents from doing what is overall best and options that permit them to do what is overall worse. This conflicts with the traditional interpretation of Plato's ethics as eudaemonist in so far as it is ultimately justified by the maximal promotion of an agent's happiness. In addition to ancient ethics, I also work on ancient epistemology and moral psychology.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- COLLEGE Lecturer, Civic, Liberal, and Global Education

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- Citizenship in the 21st Century: COLLEGE 102 (Win)
- Why College? Your Education and the Good Life: COLLEGE 101 (Aut)

2025-26

- The History of Ancient Greek Philosophy: CLASSICS 40, PHIL 100 (Aut)

2024-25

- Plato and Punishment: PHIL 35S (Sum)

2023-24

- Grad Tutorial: Plato on Punishment: PHIL 24R (Spr)

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Patricide and Plato's Deontic Option** *POLIS*
  Sparling, R.
  2026; 43 (1): 53-76

- **Early Greek Ethics (Book Review)** *JOURNAL OF HELLENIC STUDIES*
  Book Review Authored by: Sparling, R., Wolfsdorf, D. C.
  2023
- **Plato's Epistemology: Being and Seeming (Book Review)** *AUSTRALASIAN JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY*
  Book Review Authored by: Sparling, R. L.
  2023