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| Title | High Noon |
| Director | Fred Zinneman |
| Date | 1952 |
| Area | Moral Philosophy |
| Theme | Deontological ethics - Kant |
| Plot Summary | Town Marshall Will Kane (Gary Cooper) waits for the return of an outlaw, who once terrorized the town, on the midday train. It was Kane who arrested him and sent him to prison. Now he is coming back to take his revenge. Kane cannot leave, even though he has been deserted by his new bride and by the townspeople he has served for years, and has been left to confront the killer alone. His stance has parallels with a Kantian view of morality. Firstly, in the manner of the Kantian moral agent, Kane acts as he does on the basis of inner necessity and personal integrity, not pride or an external ideal. When his new bride Amy (Grace Kelly) asks him whether he is trying to be a hero, he replies: 'I'm not trying to be a hero. If you think I like this, you're crazy'. He stays because it is the right thing to do, his duty, the requirement on him as town marshall to uphold the law. In addition, in keeping with the Kantian view of morality as requiring the exclusion of desire or feeling from one's motivation, this dutiful behaviour involves putting aside his own desires and interests. Doing the right thing means doing one's duty despite what one's desires and interests are prompting us to do. |
| Key Scenes | |
| Relevant Text | G. F. Kryche, 'High Noon -A Paradigm of Kant's Moral Philosophy', Teaching Philosophy, Vol.II, No.3 (1988): 217-228. |