

Title	Quiz Show
Director	Robert Redford
Date	1994
Area	Enlightenment
Theme	Kant
Plot Summary	Based on the 50s van Doren quiz show scandal. The producers of a 50s TV quiz show convince academic Charles van Doren (Ralph Fiennes) that it is OK for him to be fed the answers beforehand. He goes on to win and becomes a national celebrity. Van Doren is basically good but has made a Faustian deal with the devil, the TV industry (though he is also a victim of his greed for approval). A government investigator is intent on putting TV on trial, but reluctant to see van Doren himself implicated. Nonetheless, in the end it all comes out and van Doren is disgraced. While the film is largely a critique of the seductive power of TV and mass entertainment it can be used to discuss Kantian ethics, and Kantian deontology versus utilitarianism issues. That is, is the academic's conduct simply immoral, the kantian position, or can it be morally justified on utilitarian grounds – that the end, the promotion of education, justifies the means, cheating on the quiz show.
Key Scenes	The producers of the quiz show suggest to the academic that he be fed the answers beforehand so he can win, first pointing out how little money he makes, and then using the justification that if he wins he will be promoting the cause of education – ‘we need an intellectual Joe DiMaggio, they say. Van Doren replies ‘what would Kant make of this?’ At this point he refuses to go along with them. [16.12 – 19.43]
Relevant Text	