

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

Graduate courses and seminars for 2014-15

Fall Quarter

PHIL 275A, John Fischer in Epistemology and Metaphysics [Wednesday 12 – 3 PM] The seminar will discuss metaphysical and normative issues pertaining to death and immortality, with an eye to introducing the students to the contemporary debates about these topics: Why is death bad? Could immortality be choiceworthy for human beings? What is the relationship between death and the meaningfulness of life?

PHIL 280, Pierre Keller – Kant's Bequest to Post-Kantian Philosophy: World-Constitution as World-Revolution [Tuesday 2 – 5PM]

It will be argued that Kant is a much more revolutionary and revolutionarily systematic thinker than he is generally taken to be. Following, but also fundamentally criticizing Plato's conception in the middle books of the *Republic* of philosophy and wisdom as a "turning around of the whole soul," Kant's Copernican revolution in thought is to include the whole of nature, but also the whole person (feeling and desire, as well as intellect), the whole of society and of politics, history and culture, indeed the whole natural and ("non-natural") history of humanity. Kant's conception of transcendental philosophy is not juxtaposed to history and agency and the natural and social context of our purposes as it is often thought to be, but grounds cognition and metaphysics in the systematic way in which we as agents socially and naturally relate to nature and to our history from within that very nature and history. Kant's revolution in thought is a revolution in the way we are to think about and relate to the world and to ourselves as a whole (including even our relation to God). It is a revolution against the very radically context-independent conception of understanding with which it is generally identified. This makes Kant's work a systematic anticipation of the development of the entire phenomenological tradition and its unpacking of the significance of the concept of world and of the temporality and historicity of significance.

We will begin with the Prefaces and Introduction from Kant's First Critique and develop their systematic import as a reconstruction of the argument of the Critique as a whole. Then we will discuss Kant's final two works: *the Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* and *the Conflict of the Faculties* (you are also encouraged to read *Kant's Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*) and the way in which they develop Kant's conception of the essentially temporal and historical significance that the world has for us as human agents who start from an understanding of the world within that very world. It will be argued that Hegel takes up this idea in a very fundamental and systematic way in his work. Hegel's *Phenomenology* and *Encyclopedia* are thus much closer to Kant in their positive conception than in their criticisms of the surface narrative of Kant (most of the things that Hegel and Kant scholars take to differentiate Hegel from Kant are systematic appropriations of Hegel's from Kant). The same claim will be made for Marx and the Marxist tradition and for Heidegger's *Being and Time* and *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. It will be argued that Heidegger's work *Being and Time* is fundamentally incorrect in its characterization of Kant; it works with a commonly held caricature of Kant that belies the manner in which Heidegger makes Kant's fundamental position his own. Kant is not committed to "a world-less subject" for which history, even the engaged history of an agent, and situating

affect are not relevant; our history, the history of our reason is fundamental for Kant. Kant does not accept the principle that knowers may be understood purely as (world-less and affectless) knowers who approach the world without approaching it through the mediation of a language and culture that we share with others. And as a result Kant does not conceive of metaphysics exclusively in terms of a set of objects (of the present at hand) that can be understood independently of the way in which we as agents historically relate to things given our interests. Based on our prior reading of Kant we will be able to see what Heidegger was on to in Kant especially in conjunction with the role of imagination and schematism and the temporality of significance and being and what Heidegger arguably never completely succeeded in understanding about Kant. Time permitting, we will conclude with a discussion of the relation of the conception in question to Korsgaard's conception of *Self-Constitution*.

PHIL 281, Larry Wright – Kuhn [Monday 1 – 4PM]

The seminar will cover much of the T. S. Kuhn corpus, beginning with his book on *The Copernican Revolution*, then working through the *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, and finally the collection of essays in his anthology *The Essential Tension*. The seminar will consist entirely in a close reading of those subtle and difficult texts.

PHIL 282, Andrews Reath – Kant's Moral Theory [Thursday 2 – 5PM]

The seminar will focus on the foundational arguments of the *Groundwork* and *Critique of Practical Reason*. I'll cover the main line of argument of the *Groundwork* and the Analytic of the second *Critique*, plus recent secondary literature. A syllabus and bibliography of secondary reading will be available in early September. Basic text: either *Kant: Practical Philosophy*, tr. and ed. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge University Press, 1996) or the (Green) Cambridge Texts in History of Philosophy editions of the *Groundwork* and *Critique of Practical Reason*.

PHIL 272, Peter Graham and Eric Schwitzgebel, Workshop in Epistemology and Philosophy of Psychology. [Friday 3-5 PM]

We run an annual workshop, inviting speakers to present their research on topics related to Epistemology and the Philosophy of Psychology. Most speakers will present during the assigned time, but not always. Students who are interested in the workshop may enroll for credit in 272. When there are no speakers, Peter will lead discussions on social norms, cooperation, and linguistic communication, especially as these topics relate to the epistemology of testimony.

Winter Quarter

PHIL 275-C, Agnieszka Jaworska - First Year Proseminar in Value Theory

The bulk of the seminar will survey some of the main currents in contemporary normative theory, including consequentialism, contractualism (T.M. Scanlon), and contemporary neo-Kantianism (Christine Korsgaard). We will also discuss various questions about the nature of reasons for action and the connection between reasons and desires or motives – e.g., are all reasons desirebased?

PHIL 280, Howard Wettstein - Martin Buber on I-Thou

A close study of Buber's classic work, *I-Thou*, after a preliminary reading of Buber's *Two Types of Faith*.

PHIL 281, Adam Harmer – Leibniz

This seminar will provide an advanced introduction to Leibniz's philosophy. We will consider, in particular, Leibniz's theory of substance and how it emerges from his engagement with the problems of material structure. We will connect Leibniz's theory of substance to other aspects of his philosophy such as: causation, freedom, perception, and thought.

PHIL 283, Coleen Macnamara – Supererogation

Spring Quarter

PHIL 275B, Michael Nelson - First Year Proseminar in M&E

This proseminar is on modality, broadly construed. We will start with alethic modality, the metaphysics of possibility and necessity, and in particular the debate between actualists and possibilists. We will read David Lewis, Robert Stalnaker, Alvin Plantinga, and Robert Adams. We will also look at Quine's attack on modality and issues in the interaction of necessity and quantification and the contingency of existence. We will then move to issues in deontic modality and the problem of conflicting restrictions. Here we will read some of John Broome's work on reasons and rationality and literature spawned by it. Third, we will look at what I will call practical modalities, which are ability claims, both of the kind 'George has the ability to speak French' and 'George could have done other than he actually did'. These kinds of attributions are implicated in the free will literature. A hope in combining these three issues is that progress on the second and third topics can be made by understanding 'should' and 'is able to' as modal operators and applying insights from possible worlds semantics and the metaphysics of modality.

PHIL 281, Andreja Novakovic – Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit

This seminar will be a close reading of parts of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. As one of the richest and most influential texts in European philosophy, it addresses a vast range of topics: the nature of consciousness and self-consciousness; reason in its theoretical and practical uses; recognition and social life; morality, conscience, and action; the emergence of the norm of freedom; and progress in history, just to name a few. In this seminar we will be looking at key chapters of the *Phenomenology* with a particular question in mind: what does Hegel mean by "experience" and how (and *what*) do we "learn" from experience at the various developmental stages that Hegel is tracking?

PHIL 282, Jozef Müller – Plato's *Republic*

The seminar is an examination of Plato's *Republic*. The *Republic*, perhaps more than any other of Plato's works, presents Plato's vision of the real place and meaning of human life in the universe. Consequently, more than any other of his works, it combines ethical, religious, and political concerns with epistemology and metaphysics into a unified but often very puzzling and extreme theory. As if this combination was not enough, there is a clear and explicit move away from the Socratic aporetic method (exemplified in book 1) to a more positive, but no less puzzling method of exposition in the rest of the work. The *Republic* thus presents rather unique challenges to the reader. The aim of the course is to try to meet these challenges and work out a way of understanding Plato's method. This should put us in a good position from which we can start to work out the content and meaning of many of Plato's famous and often unbelievable claims and arguments in this paradoxically foundational work of Western philosophy.

PHIL 282, Maudemarie Clark – Nietzsche on Morality

The seminar will study the development of Nietzsche's thinking about morality – what morality is and what Nietzsche's problem with it is – from *Human, All-Too-Human* (HA) to his *Genealogy* (GM). We will begin with “Schopenhauer as Educator,” however, because in that early essay, we find Nietzsche himself committed to the morality he would later reject. We will then move on to such topics as 1) the crude psychological egoism and moral nihilism of HA, 2) the ethical egoism and initial attempt to naturalize morality of *Daybreak* (D), 3) D's denial of the will and the ego, and perhaps 4) what I can only call the Darwinian-inspired descriptive utilitarianism of *Gay Science*. The main concern will be to figure out how Nietzsche got from these early positions to the much more sophisticated one we find in BGE and GM. That is, what did he find unsatisfactory in his early positions and how did his later view improve upon them?