EXISTENTIALISM AND FILM

WINTER 2003

REQUIRED TEXTS:


SECONDARY LITERATURE:


2. Olafson, Frederick:


FILMS: (Shown on Wednesday Evenings, 8:00 PM, OU 103):

1. Babette's Feast.
2. The Hairdresser's Husband.
3. The Conversation.
4. Ikuru (To Live).
6. The Passenger.
7. The Unbearable Lightness of Being.

COURSE GOALS:

The primary goal of this course is to introduce students to existentialism as a philosophical movement critical of the predominance of Graeco-Hellenic philosophy within the Western tradition (See detailed course description after Reading Schedule). Films are used as cinematographic artworks that raise important issues associated with particular existentialist figures. Paper assignments allow students to offer philosophical interpretations of such artworks.

EVALUATION:

Students will be evaluated on the basis of class participation, quizzes, two midterm examinations, and a final paper.

1. Class Participation Seminar presentations and discussion 20%
2. Midterm examinations 2 @ 15% each 30%
3. E-mail Correspondence & Quizzes 4 @ 5% = 20%
4. Final Paper 10-15 pages 30%

POLICIES:

Open, respectful and critical discussion is crucial to this course. E-mail correspondence provides students with lecture materials important for our interpretation and criticism of texts, which prepares students for participation in classroom discussions. Quizzes allow students to evaluate their comprehension of basic terms, positions and arguments. Midterm assignments and the final paper offer students the opportunity to respond in depth to a single topic. The final paper is due on the day scheduled for the final examination. 3 unexcused absences will result in a full point reduction of the course grade, and late papers may be accepted with full point reduction for each day after the deadline. Attendance at movies is required.

SCHEDULE OF READING

1. HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION: EXISTENTIALISM AS A CRITIQUE OF
TRADITIONAL WESTERN PHILOSOPHY.

TUESDAY: COURSE MECHANICS

WEDNESDAY:

1. FILM #1: Babette's Feast (OU 103, 8:00 PM).

THURSDAY: THE VOLUNTARIST CRITIQUE OF INTELLECTUALISM & THE EXISTENTIALISM ETHIC OF AUTHENTIC INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS:

1. Guignon, Introduction (pp. XI11-XXXV111).

2. Handout.

2. KIERKEGAARD'S ANALYSIS OF DEFINING RELATIONS: LOVE OF ANOTHER AS ANALOGY FOR FAITH

TUESDAY: THE DEMANDS OF PSEUDONYMOUS AUTHORSHIP UPON THE READER & JOHANNES DE SILENTIO'S ADMIRATION OF ABRAHAM

THURSDAY: KNIGHTS OF FAITH; KNIGHTS OF RESIGNATION.


2. Discussion of Babette's Feast.

TUESDAY: THE TELEOLOGICAL SUSPENSION OF THE ETHICAL & RELIGIOUS
ABSOLUTION.

2. "Problem 1" & "Problem 2" (Guignon, pp. 48-70).

WEDNESDAY: THE TELEOLOGICAL SUSPENSION OF THE ETHICAL & RELIGIOUS ABSOLUTION.

1. FILM #2: The Hairdresser's Husband (OU 103, 8:00 PM).

THURSDAY: ANTI-CLIMACUS'S DEFINITION OF THE SELF AND JOHANNES CLIMACUS'S CONCEPT OF SUBJECTIVE TRUTH.

1. Sickness Unto Death (Guignon, pp. 70-77).

2. Concluding Unscientific Postscript (Guignon, pp. 77-85).

3. Discussion of The Hairdresser's Husband.

4. Midterm Assignment #1.

3. NIETZSCHE'S EARLY DUALISM AND LATER CONCEPT OF THE WILL TO POWER:

TUESDAY: THE APOLLONIAN AND DIONYSIAN


3. The Birth of Tragedy (Guignon pp. 111-115).

WEDNESDAY:

1. FILM #3: The Bacchae (OU 103, 8:00 PM).

4. SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR'S AND JUDITH BUTLER'S CRITIQUES OF ESSENTIALISM:
THURSDAY: THE OVERMAN

1. The Gay Science (Guignon, pp. 115-164).
2. Twilight of the Idols (Guignon, pp. 164-175).

TUESDAY: CONSCIENCE AS INTERNALIZED REGULATIVE NORMS: NIETZSCHE AND MODERN GENDER STUDIES:

1. "Circuits of Bad Conscience" [hand out].
2. "Women's Situation and Character" (Continued).

WEDNESDAY:

1. FILM #4: The Conversation (OU 103, 8:00 PM).

5. HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPT OF BEING IN THE WORLD: CARE, CONSCIENCE AND AUTHENTICITY

THURSDAY: HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGY: PHILOSOPHY AS CONTEMPLATIVE
REFLECTION

1. "Women's Situation and Character" (Continued).
3. Discussion of The Conversation.

TUESDAY: THE EXPERIENCE OF DISRUPTION REVEALS OUR SITUATION & HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE OF TRANSCENDENTAL REFLECTION

1. Heidegger Introduction (Guignon, pp. 175-203).
2. Being and Time (Guignon, pp. 203-247).

WEDNESDAY:

1. FILM #5: Ikiru (OU 103, 8:00 PM).

THURSDAY: HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY.

1. Being and Time (Continued).
2. Discussion of The Conversation.
3. Discussion of Ikiru.

TUESDAY: HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPTS OF AUTHENTICITY: THE "CONCRETE SITUATION"

1. Being and Time (End).
2. Midterm Assignment #2.

WEDNESDAY:

1. FILM #6: The Unbearable Lightness of Being (OU 103, 8:00 PM).

6. BAKHTIN'S EARLY WORKS: THE EXISTENCE OF THE ACT

THURSDAY: ONCE-OCCURRENT BEING AND THE TIME OF OUR LIVES.

1. Discussion of The Unbearable Lightness of Being.
2. The Philosophy of the Act.

TUESDAY: ONCE-OCCURRENT BEING AND THE TIME OF OUR LIVES.

1. The Philosophy of the Act.
WEDNESDAY:
1. FILM #7: Nobody's Fool (OU 103, 8:00 PM).

THURSDAY: MORAL UNIVERSALITY AND AESTHETIC INDIVIDUALISM
1. The Philosophy of the Act.

7. SARTRE'S REINTERPRETATION OF AUTHENTICITY: RADICAL CHOICE AND BAD FAITH

TUESDAY: FACTICITY AND FREEDOM: SARTRE'S INTERPRETATION OF Being and Time.
WEEK NINE
2. The Humanism of Existentialism (Guignon, pp. 268-287).
3. Being and Nothingness.

WEDNESDAY:
1. FILM #8: The Passenger (OU 103, 8:00 PM).

THURSDAY: SARTRE'S CONCEPT OF EXISTENTIALISM.
1. Discussion of The Passenger.

TUESDAY: BAD FAITH, FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY.
WEEK TEN
1. Review.

THURSDAY: REVIEW & COURSE EVALUATIONS

FINALS WEEK: