EXISTENTIALISM AND FILM

LECTURE NOTES:  http://campus.kzoo.edu/phil/ExistW07Lecture.htm

PROFESSOR: Chris Latiolais
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Offices Hours:
1) Monday 3:00 -- 4:00
2) Tuesday 10:30 – 11:30
3) Thursday 10:30 - 11:30.
4) And by appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS:


SECONDARY LITERATURE:


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

- *Babette's Feast.*
- *The Hairdresser's Husband.*
- *The Conversation.*
- *Ikuru (To Live).*
- *The Unbearable Lightness of Being.*
- *Nobody's Fool.*
- *The Passenger.*

COURSE GOALS:
The primary goal of this course is to introduce students to existentialism as a philosophical movement critical of the predominance of Greco-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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Essays</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Quizzes</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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POLICIES:

Students are expected to follow the reading schedule and to come to class prepared to actively discuss the texts they have read. More specifically, students must bring their texts to class with marginal notes, highlighted or underlined passages of particular importance, and 3 written questions to pose for discussion. Quizzes offer students the opportunity to identify and clarify central terms and concepts. The midterm assignment allows students to an essays on the key philosophical issues and arguments of the course, and the final paper offers 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 grade reduction. Late papers will be marked down a half grade for the first day and a full grade for the second day. All work must be turned in at the end of term, unless alternative assignments have been given by the instructor.

SCHEDULE OF READING

WEEK ONE

1. HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION: EXISTENTIALISM AS A CRITIQUE OF INTELLECTUALISM:

TUESDAY: Introductory Lecture:

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

- Guignon, Introduction (pp. X111-XXXV111).
- Handout.

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

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

- Kierkegaard Introduction (Guignon, pp. 1-18).
- *Fear and Trembling*
  - Preface.
  - "A Panegyric Upon Abraham"
  - "Problemata: Preliminary Expectoration" (Guignon pp. 26-55).

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

THURSDAY: KNIGHTS OF FAITH; KNIGHTS OF RESIGNATION.

- *Fear and Trembling* [Continued].
- Discussion of Babette's Feast.

WEEK THREE

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

- *Fear and Trembling*
  - "Problem 1"
  - "Problem 2" (Guignon, pp. 55-77).

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

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

- Sickness Unto Death (Guignon, pp. 78-85).
- Concluding Unscientific Postscript (Guignon, pp. 85-92).
- Discussion of *The Hairdresser's Husband*.
- Midterm Assignment

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

WEEK FOUR

TUESDAY: THE APOLLONIAN AND DIONYSIAN
• Nietzsche Introduction (Guignon, pp. 93-118).
• The Birth of Tragedy (Guignon pp. 119-123).

WEDNESDAY: FILM #3: Nobody's Fool (Dewing 103, 8:00 PM)

THURSDAY: THE OVERMAN

• The Gay Science (Guignon, pp. 123-172).
• Twilight of the Idols (Guignon, pp. 172-183).

4. HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPT OF BEING IN THE WORLD AND AUTHENTICITY

WEEK FIVE

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

• Husserl's Phenomenology and Anthropology (Guignon, 276-289)
• Heidegger Introduction (Guignon, pp. 183-211).
• Being and Time (Guignon, pp. 211-254).

WEDNESDAY: FILM #4: The Conversation (Dewing 103, 8:00 PM).

THURSDAY: HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGY: PHILOSOPHY AS CONTEMPLATIVE REFLECTION

• Husserl's Phenomenology and Anthropology (Guignon, 276-289).
• Lecture: Philosophy as Conceptual Analysis: The Phenomenological Reduction.
• Discussion of The Conversation.
• Heidegger Introduction (Guignon, pp. 183-211).

WEEK SIX

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

• Heidegger Introduction (Guignon, pp. 183-211) [Continued]
• Being and Time (Guignon, pp. 211-254).

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

THURSDAY: HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY.

• Being and Time (Continued).
• Discussion of *Ikiru*.

**WEEK SEVEN**

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

• Being and Time (End).

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

**THURSDAY:** "CONSCIENCE MAKES COWARDS OF US ALL."

• Discussion of The Unbearable Lightness of Being.

**5. JUDITH BUTLER'S CRITIQUE OF ESSENTIALISM: THE PERFORMATIVE CONCEPTION OF GENDER**

**WEEK EIGHT**

**TUESDAY:** CONSCIENCE AS INTERNALIZED REGULATIVE NORMS: *THE PSYCHIC LIFE OF POWER*

• Introduction.
• "Stubborn Attachment: Bodily Subjection."
• "Reading Hegel on the Unhappy Consciousness."

**WEDNESDAY:** 1. FILM #: TBA (Dewing 103, 8:00 PM).

**THURSDAY:** CONSCIENCE AS INTERNALIZED REGULATIVE NORMS: *THE PSYCHIC LIFE OF POWER*

• "Circuits of Bad Conscience".
• "Nietzsche and Freud".

**WEEK NINE**

**TUESDAY:** CONSCIENCE AS INTERNALIZED REGULATIVE NORMS: *THE PSYCHIC LIFE OF POWER*

• Subjection, Resistance, Resignification.
• Between Freud and Foucault.

**WEDNESDAY:** 1. FILM #: TBA (Dewing 103, 8:00 PM).
THURSDAY: CONSCIENCE AS INTERNALIZED REGULATIVE NORMS: *THE PSYCHIC LIFE OF POWER*

- "Althusser's Subjection."
- "Melancholy Gender/Refused Identification."
- "Keeping it Moving."

WEEK TEN

6. SARTRE'S REINTERPRETATION OF AUTHENTICITY: RADICAL CHOICE AND BAD FAITH WEEK NINE

TUESDAY: FACTICITY AND FREEDOM: SARTRE'S INTERPRETATION OF Being and Time.

- Sartre Introduction (Guignon, pp. 255-276).
- The Humanism of Existentialism (Guignon, pp. 290-308).
- Being and Nothingness (309-359).

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

THURSDAY: SARTRE'S CONCEPT OF EXISTENTIALISM.

- Discussion of The Passenger.
- REVIEW & COURSE EVALUATIONS

FINALS WEEK: