

Psychology, Epistemology, & Ethics

Psychology 8260-01

Spring 2019

General Information

Professor: John L. Roberts, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: 9am-Noon Monday/Wednesday, and by appointment

Course Description

An exploration of the intersection of epistemology and ethics as it relates to human meaning-making.

Course Objectives

Students will: 1) Express fluency and understanding concerning the reciprocal relationship between epistemology and ethics, as related to psychology as a field of study, and as related to historical subjectivity; 2) Critically examine psychological and philosophical perspectives as matters of ethical practice and subject formation, as well as more circumscribed concerns such as moral psychology; and, 3) Develop an original scholarly project aligned with course content and student interest.

Required Texts

Texts will consist of required books, and other materials (i.e., book chapters, essays, etc.) on Course Den, and/or handed out in class. The required books are as follows:

Beyond Good and Evil, Friedrich Nietzsche

After Virtue, Alasdair MacIntyre

Constructing the Subject: Historical Origins of Psychological Research, Kurt Danziger

Merleau-Ponty and the Ethics of Intersubjectivity, Anya Daly

The Ethics of Authenticity, Charles Taylor

Deleuze and Guattari's Immanent Ethics, Tasmin Lorraine

Foucault, Douglass, Fanon, and Scotus in Dialogue, Cynthia Nielsen

The Elements of Moral Philosophy, James Rachels (unassigned but suggested)

Course Format

The course is a seminar, and will be primarily based around class discussion with student presentations/discussion facilitation. As such, students will be expected to be consistently and thoroughly prepared by reading all of the assignment material, coming to class with questions and issues in mind, and participating actively in discussion. If a student is not adequately prepared (has not done the reading), he/she cannot meaningfully contribute to our discussion. "Seminar" derives from the Latin *seminarium*, meaning "seed plot." Ideally, we will all learn from each other, and that our time together will be fertile ground for the exchange of perspectives and the growth of understanding.

Course Requirements & Expectations

Attendance: It is vital that you attend all class meetings unless there is a very good reason for you not being present. In a seminar, we are all teachers and when someone is absent the teaching suffers. In my experience, more the three (3) absences will likely result in diminished understanding and engagement.

Participation: Because the seminar format requires consistent participation from its members, a significant portion of the grade will be based on weekly reading assignments – in the form of discussion and group facilitation/presentation (which will rotate).

Research Paper: It is expected that each student will complete a written twenty to twenty-five (20-25) page (double-spaced, 1 inch margin, APA style, etc.) research paper (due May 1). The paper will examine some dimension of psychology, epistemology, and ethics pursuant to the student's interest. It is expected that this paper will be scholarly and, perhaps, of publishable quality. As part of the research project, each student will complete a 300 word abstract (due on April 3), and discuss their work with the seminar.

Academic Honesty: Students are responsible for upholding the University's honor code.

Other Student Rights & Responsibilities: Students should carefully review information here:

http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf

It contains important material pertaining to your rights and responsibilities in this class. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, university, and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

Evaluation

Grading is collaborative, which means we will have a conversation concerning what grade is appropriate before the grade is assigned. Here is the breakdown of grading:

Participation: 50 %

Final Paper: 50 %

Course Schedule

Readings for focused group discussion are in **bold**. Further readings are in [brackets].

1/7 Greetings

Introduction

1/9 Introduction: **Beatrice Han, "The Analytic of Finitude and the History of Subjectivity," 1-19**; Michel Foucault, from *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality, Volume 2*, 3-32; [Martin Heidegger, "Time and Being," 1-24, and Joan Stambaugh's Introduction, vii-xi.].

Epistemology, Ethics and the Subject of Philosophy

- 1/14 The Legacy of the Ancient Greeks: **Aristotle, from *Nicomachean Ethics (Books I & II)* 3-37; Daniel Robinson, from *An Intellectual History of Psychology*, 14-67;** Martha Nussbaum, "Human Functioning and Social Justice: In Defense of Aristotelian Essentialism," 202-246; [Darcia Narvaez, "Baselines for Virtue," 14-33; Christine Swanton, "Developmental Virtue Ethics," 116-134; Daniel Robinson, from *Aristotle's Psychology*, 91-111; Charles Taylor, from *Sources of the Self* ("Plato's Self-Mastery"), 115-26].
- 1/16 Birth of the Modern Subject: **John Locke, from *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 296-314; Jerrold Seigel, from *The Idea of the Self* ("Personal Identity and Modern Selfhood: Locke"), 87-110;** Charles Taylor, from *Sources of the Self* ("Locke's Punctual Self, 159-176; Mary Douglas, "The Person in an Enterprise Culture," 41-62; [Jerrold Seigel, from *The Idea of the Self* ("Self-centeredness and Sociability: Mandeville and Hume," 111-138; Jerrold Seigel, from *The Idea of the Self* ("Adam Smith and Modern Self-Fashioning," 139-167); Charles Taylor, from *Sources of the Self* ("Descartes' Disengaged Reason"), 143-158].
- 1/21 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day: No Class
- 1/23 Subjectivity, Reason, and the Limits of Knowledge: **Immanuel Kant, from *Critique of Pure Reason* ("Transcendental Aesthetic"), 59-84; Thomas Teo, from "Kant and Early 19th Century Critics of Psychology," 39-51; Roger Scruton, "The Categorical Imperative," 73-95; Roger Scruton, "The Transcendental Deduction," 32-53;** Roger Scruton, "The Logic of Illusion," 54-72; [Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment," 43-57].
- 1/28 Consequence and Will, Utility and Power: **Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Parts 1-4; John Stuart Mill, from *Utilitarianism* ("What Utilitarianism Is"), 185-202;** [Paul Katsafanas, from *The Nietzschean Self: Moral Psychology, Agency, and the Unconscious*, Chapters 1 & 2; Jonny Anomaly, "Nietzsche's Critique of Utilitarianism," 1-14].
- 1/30 Subjectivity, Power, Genealogy: **Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Parts 5-9;** [Paul Katsafanas, from *The Nietzschean Self: Moral Psychology, Agency, and the Unconscious*, Chapters 4, 6, & 8].
- 2/4 Film: *Examined Life*
- 2/6 A Fragmented Ethical World: **Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Chapters 1-8).**
- 2/11 A Fragmented Ethical World: **Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Chapters 9-18).**

Modern Psychology, Empirical Knowledge, and the Moral Subject

- 2/13 Psychology, History, and Epistemic Practice: **Gordana Jovanovic, “Historicizing Epistemology in Psychology,” 310-328; Kurt Danziger, from *Constructing the Subject: Historical Origins of Psychological Research*, Introduction and Chapters 4-6; Ian Hacking, “Biopower and the Avalanche of Printed Numbers,” 65-81; [Kurt Danziger, from *Constructing the Subject: Historical Origins of Psychological Research*, Introduction and Chapters 2-3]**
- 2/18 Psychology, History, and Epistemic Practice: **Kurt Danziger, *Constructing the Subject: Historical Origins of Psychological Research*, Chapters 9-11; Brent Slife, Greg Martin, and Sondra Sasser, from *The Hidden Worldviews of Psychology’s Theory and Practice* (“A Prominent Worldview of Professional Psychology”), 25-43; Kari O’Grady and Brent Slife, from *The Hidden Worldviews of Psychology’s Theory and Practice* (“A Prominent Worldview of Psychological Research”), 44-57; [David Goodman & Adriana Marcelli, “The Great Divorce: Ethics and identity,” 563-583; Kurt Danziger, *Constructing the Subject: Historical Origins of Psychological Research*, Chapters 7-8].**
- 2/20 The Subject of Moral Psychology – Moral Reasoning & Experimental Ethics: **Niklas Dworazik and Hannes Rush, “A Brief History of Experimental Ethics,” 38-56; Marc Hauser, from *Moral Minds: The Nature of Right and Wrong* (Chapter 3 – “The Grammar of Violence,”) 111-159; [Lawrence Kohlberg, “The Development of Children’s Orientations Toward a Moral Order”” 11-33; Carol Gilligan, from *A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development* (Chapter 3, “Images of Relationship”), 24-63; John Mikhail, “Universal Moral Grammar: Theory, Evidence, and the Future,” 143-152.]**
- 2/25 The Subject of Moral Psychology – Moral intuitions: **Jonathan Haidt, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment,” 814-834; Joshua Greene, “Beyond Point-and-Shoot Morality: Why Cognitive (Neuro)Science Matters for Ethics,” 695-726; Jonathan Haidt, Jesse Graham, and Craig Joseph, “Above and Below Left-Right: Ideological Narratives and Moral Foundations,” 110-119; [Paul Churchland, from *The Engine of Reason, the Seat of the Soul*, 123-150.]**
- 2/27 Psychology – Altruism & Moral Personality: **Elliott Sober and David Sloan Wilson, from *Unto Others, The Evolution and Psychology of Unselfish Behavior* (Chapter 10), 296-327; Daniel Batson, from *Altruism in Humans* (Introduction, Chapters 1 & 5), 1-32, 110-134; Elliott Sober and David Sloan Wilson, from *Unto Others, The Evolution and Psychology of Unselfish Behavior* (Chapters 6 & 7), 199-250; [Ed Gantt & Jeffrey Reber, “Sociobiological and Social Constructionist Accounts of Altruism: A Phenomenological Critique,” 14-38; Darcia Narvaez, “Triune Ethics Theory and Moral Personality,” 136-158; Dan McAdams, “The Moral Personality,” 11-29].**

Knowledge, and the Ethical Subject at the Limits of Modernity

- 3/4 Film/recording: TBD
- 3/6 Phenomenology, Intersubjectivity, & Ethics: **Anya Daly, *Merleau-Ponty and the Ethics of Intersubjectivity*, Chapters 1-4**; Will Adams, "The Primacy of Interrelating: Practicing Ecological Psychology with Buber, Levinas, and Merleau-Ponty," 24-61.
- 3/11 Phenomenology, Intersubjectivity, & Ethics: **Anya Daly, *Merleau-Ponty and the Ethics of Intersubjectivity*, Chapters 5-7**; Brock Bahler, "Levinas and the Parent-Child Relation: A Merleau-Pontyan Critique," 128-147; **RESEARCH PAPER IDEAS/TOPICS DUE (suggested)**
- 3/13 Hermeneutics, Ethics, Modernity: **Charles Taylor, from *The Ethics of Authenticity*, Chapters 1-5**; **Matthew McDonald, "A Reconceptualization of the Self in Humanistic Psychology: Heidegger, Foucault, and the Sociocultural Turn," 37-59**; Jürgen Habermas, from *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* ("The Undermining of Western Rationalism through the Critique of Metaphysics: Martin Heidegger"), 131-160; [Nicholas Taylor, from *Strong Hermeneutics: Contingency and Moral Identity* (Chapter 1), 10-34; Martin Heidegger, from *Being and Time*, 225-311].
- 3/18 Spring Break: No Class
- 3/20 Spring Break: No Class
- 3/25 Hermeneutics, Ethics, Modernity: **Charles Taylor, from *The Ethics of Authenticity*, Chapters 6-10**; **Nicholas Taylor, from *Strong Hermeneutics: Contingency and Moral Identity* (Chapter 2), 35-57**; Paul Cammell, "Relationality and Existence: Hermeneutic and Deconstructive Approaches Emerging from Heidegger's Philosophy," 235-249; [Nicholas Taylor, from *Strong Hermeneutics: Contingency and Moral Identity* (Chapter 6), 121-147; Thomas Sheehan, from *Making Sense of Heidegger: A Paradigm Shift*, 133-185].
- 3/27 Psychology, Ethics, and the Other: **Emmanuel Levinas, from *Totality & Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (Section 3 – "Exteriority and the Face"), 194-247**; **Joshua Clegg & Brent Slife, "Epistemology on the Hither Side: A Levinasian Account of Relational Knowing," 65-76**; Zygmunt Bauman, from *Modernity and Holocaust* ("The Ethics of Obedience (Reading Milgrim)"), 151-168; [David Goodman, from *The Demanded Self: Levinasian Ethics and Identity in Psychology* (Chapter 5, "Hineni and Transference"), 119-144; George Kunz, "Interruptions: Levinas," 241-266; Zygmunt Bauman, from *Modernity and Holocaust* ("The Uniqueness and Normality of the Holocaust"), 83-116].

- 4/1 Psychology, Ethics, and the Other: **Emmanuel Levinas, from *Totality & Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (Section 4 – “Beyond the Face”), 254-286; Diane Perpich, “Don’t Try This at Home: Levinas and Applied Ethics,” 127-152; Lisa Baraitser, “Mum’s the Word: Intersubjectivity, Alterity, and the Maternal Subject,” 86-110; Donna Brody, “Levinas’s Maternal Method from ‘Time and the Other’ Through *Otherwise Than Being*,” 53-74; [Emmanuel Levinas, from *Otherwise than Being, or Beyond Essence* (Chapters 2 & 3), 23-97; Zygmunt Bauman, from *Postmodern Ethics* (“The Moral Party of Two”), 82-109].**
- 4/3 Immanentism in Knowledge & Ethics: **Tamsin Lorraine’s *Deleuze and Guattari’s Immanent Ethics*, Chapters 1-3; ABSTRACTS DUE**
- 4/8 Immanentism in Knowledge & Ethics: **Tamsin Lorraine’s *Deleuze and Guattari’s Immanent Ethics*; Chapters 4-6.**
- 4/10 Psychoanalytic Ethics: **Jacques Lacan, from *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960, Seminar VII*, 291-325; Calum Neil, from *Lacanian Ethics and the Assumption of Subjectivity*, 73-122; Kareen Malone, “The Subject as Drop-Out: Cultural Accountability and the Ethics of Psychoanalysis and Humanistic Psychology,” 449-471; [Dany Nobus & Malcom Quinn, from *Knowing Nothing, Staying Stupid: Elements for a Psychoanalytic Epistemology*, 107-137; Bruce Fink, “The Ethics of Psychoanalysis: A Lacanian Perspective,” 529-545; Adrian Johnston, from *Žižek’s Ontology* (“Substance as Subject: The Self-Sundering of Being”); Alexandre Kojève, from *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 3-30; G. W. F. Hegel, from *Phenomenology of Spirit* (“Self Consciousness”), 104-138.]**
- 4/15 Foucault, Ethics, and the Postmodern Subject: **Michel Foucault, from *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 1-39; Michel Foucault, “About the Beginning of the Hermeneutics of the Self: Two Lectures at Dartmouth,” 198-227; Joseph Steward-Sicking, “Cognitive Therapy and the Punctual Self: Using an Ascetical Framework to Critique Approaches to Psychotherapy,” 111-122; Philip Cushman, “Psychotherapy as Moral Discourse,” 103-113; [Michel Foucault, “The Ethics of the Concern of Self as a Practice of Freedom,” 281-301; Michel Foucault, “Technologies of the Self,” 223-251; Derek Hook, from *Foucault, Psychology, and the Analytics of Power* (“Governmentality, Racism, *Affective Technologies of Subjectivity/Self*”), 215-275.]**
- 4/17 Social Construction and Freedom: **Cynthia Nielsen, *Foucault, Douglass, Fanon, and Scotus in Dialogue*, Chapters 1-3; Lewis Gordon, from *Existential Africana: Understanding Africana Existential Thought* (“Frederick Douglass as an Existentialist”), 41-61; [Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, 724-789].**
- 4/22 Social Construction and Freedom: **Cynthia Nielsen, *Foucault, Douglass, Fanon, and Scotus in Dialogue*, Chapters 4-6; Fanon, from *Black Skin, White Masks*, 83-108.**

4/24 Discussion of Participants' Work

4/29 Discussion of Participants' Work

5/1 No Class; Papers Due (for feedback this semester)

5/7 No Class; Final Deadline for Papers

Syllabus Subject to Change (like people)