

PHL217 H1F
INTRODUCTION TO CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY
MW 10-11
Sidney Smith Hall 2118

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Sol Goldberg

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Office hours: Tuesday & Thursday 3pm-4pm (SS 5016H)

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to some of the major texts and figures of nineteenth and twentieth century Continental philosophy through an investigation of a classical philosophical problem: the relationship between truth and society. There are, broadly speaking, two opposite tendencies within the Continental philosophical tradition. On the one hand, some continental philosophers, from Kant to Habermas, argue that truth requires publicity and that social life is impossible without truth and truthfulness. On the other hand, continental philosophers such as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Heidegger contend either that truth is incompatible with publicity or that both truth and society should be renounced as superficial. This course will consider these tendencies within continental philosophy, as students learn how to approach critically some of their representative texts and figures.

REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance:** Presence in class with relevant readings, which you are expected to have read; attendance and participation in tutorials and office hours (10%)
2. **Assignments:** (25% x 2 = 50%)
3. **Final exam:** (40%) Will take place during 12/9-20; exact date, time and location TBA

WEEKLY READINGS

All of the course material will be available on Blackboard.

BLACKBOARD

Please consult the Blackboard website for information regarding essays, exams, deadlines, and other materials. To access Blackboard you will need a valid UTOR email address that is entered on ROSI. You will be expected to check the website regularly for announcements and materials, as well as updates or alterations to the syllabus (if there are any). You should also check your U of T

email account regularly for messages from me or your TA (it is essential that you use your UTOR account for email, as only this interfaces with Blackboard).

STUDENT CONDUCT

Please switch off cell-phones before class; do not talk to your classmates; use laptops only for taking notes. Distraction of other students is unacceptable.

ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Students with diverse needs are welcome in this course. Please contact the Accessibility Centre for needs assessment, referrals and arrangements. The instructors will be glad to provide whatever assistance is necessary. <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the act of using the ideas or work of another person as if it were one's own. As plagiarism is grounds for dismissal from the University, students are strongly cautioned to use all appropriate documentation to credit any sources used in compiling their own work. Sometimes plagiarism is partial and accidental rather than complete and intentional, resulting from inexperience in academic writing. But ignorance is not an excuse for plagiarism. For more information about how not to plagiarize, visit:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

EMAIL POLICY

Because of the size of the class, emails to me or the teaching assistants should be limited to technical and administrative matters. Philosophical issues and requests for clarification should be brought to the discussion groups, to question periods in the lectures, or to my office hours.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1 - Introduction

M 9/12 How are Continental Philosophers like Continental Breakfasts?

W 9/14 Virtues of Truthfulness

1. Bernard Williams, "The Problem" (Chapter 1 of *Truth and Truthfulness*)

Week 2 - Immanuel Kant

M 9/19 Enlightenment and Publicity

2. "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?"

3. "A Secret Article for Perpetual Peace"

W 9/21 A Lie's Harm to Humanity

4. "On the Supposed Right to Lie from Philanthropy"

Week 3 - Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

S 9/25 Last date to add or change courses

M 9/26 The Method and Shape of Philosophical Truth

5. "Preface" [to *Phenomenology of Spirit*]

W 9/28 Cultural Maturation and the Disappearance of Individual Minds
6. "Preface" [to *Phenomenology of Spirit*]

Week 4 - Søren Kierkegaard

M 10/3 Subjectivity as Truth
7. "Truth, Subjectivity, and Communication" (excerpts from *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*)

W 10/5 The Public as Untruth
8. "The Present Age" (excerpts)
9. "On the Dedication to 'That Single Individual'"

Week 5 - Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

M 10/10 THANKSGIVING - NO CLASS

T 10/11 ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE

W 10/12 Art as Truthful Untruth
10. "On Truth and Lie in a Nonmoral Sense"

Week 6 - Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

M 10/17 The Will to Truth
11. "On the Prejudices of Philosophers" (excerpts from Part I of *Beyond Good and Evil*)

W 10/19 The Comedy of Truth
12. "What Do Ascetic Ideals Mean?" (excerpts from the third treatise of *The Genealogy of Morality*)

Week 7 - Georg Simmel

M 10/24 Truth and Lie in Human Interactions
13. "Knowledge, Truth, and Falsehood in Human Relations" (Part I of "The Secret and the Secret Society")

W 10/26 Intimacy, Trust, and Secrecy
14. "Types of Social Relationships by Degrees of Reciprocal Knowledge of Their Participants" & "Secrecy" (Parts II & III of "The Secret and the Secret Society")

Week 8 - Martin Heidegger

M 10/31 Authentic Existence and the "They"
15. *Being and Time*, sections 1, 2, 9, 27 & 35-36

W 11/2 Appearance and Judgment in Phenomenological Truth
16. *Being and Time*, section 7

R 11/3 Last day to withdraw from class without academic penalty

Week 9 - Emmanuel Levinas

M 11/7 FALL BREAK - NO CLASS

W 11/9 Subjected Truth
17. "Existence and Ethics"

R 11/10 ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE

Week 10 - Emmanuel Levinas & Hannah Arendt

- M 11/14 Infinite Truth
 18. Levinas, "The Truth of Testimony and the Truth of Disclosure"
- W11/16 From Holocaust Denial to the Global Distortion of Facts
 19. Arendt, "Truth and Politics"
- Week 11 - Michel Foucault**
- M 11/21 The Subject of Truth and Its Public Performance
 20. "The Word *Parrhesia*" (from *Fearless Speech*)
 21. "The Practice of *Parrhesia* in Community Life"
- W11/23 Dealing with Others, Caring for Oneself
 22. "The Practice of *Parrhesia* in Personal Relationships and in Techniques of
 Self-Examination" (from *Fearless Speech*)
- Week 12 - Jürgen Habermas & Jean Baudrillard**
- M 11/28 Rationality and Communicability
 23. Habermas, "Truth and Society: The Discursive Redemption of Factual
 Claims to Validity"
- W11/30 Mass Media, Indifferent Truths, and Irresponsibility
 24. Baudrillard, "The Masses: The Implosion of the Social in the Media"
- Week 13 - Ian Hacking**
- M 12/5 The Virtues of Truth Revisited
 25. "Truthfulness"