

McGill University
Department of Philosophy
19th Century Philosophy PHIL 367 (Fall 2018)

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In this course we will study some of the most illustrious and interesting continental thinkers of the nineteenth century, paying particular attention to their groundbreaking contributions in aesthetics. Schelling's systematic philosophy of freedom privileges philosophy of art as that which can intuit the identity of subject and object. Schiller, disenchanted with the French Revolution, suggested that an understanding of beauty and the cultivation of artistic creative culture would address the moral impoverishment of his fellow citizens. Nietzsche felt that his modern society was morally, politically and intellectually corrupt and wanted to create a whole new society and culture that recognized the value, indeed the *lifesaving power* of great art. *Art* is the only activity that makes human life worth living, Nietzsche argues in *The Birth of Tragedy*, and he turns to the great art of the ancient Greeks such as Aeschylus, Homer and Sophocles to make his case. We will be especially interested in his arguments.

We will study *systematic* thinkers such as Fichte, Schelling, Schiller and Hegel as well as *anti-systematic* thinkers, such as Nietzsche, and we will examine the debate in the nineteenth century about the role and the value of systematic philosophy.

The course will consist of two formal lectures a week and one 50 minute conference in which students will have an opportunity to discuss the readings with their fellow students and with the teaching assistant. Students are expected to keep up with the readings and to prepare a question for class discussion that must be submitted weekly. Students should expect to do approximately 30-70 pages of reading per week. Questions will be submitted on My Courses on **Wednesdays no later than 6:00 pm** and are expected to demonstrate that the student has done the reading and has an interesting question for class discussion for the class. Students should reference the readings in their questions. Questions should be no longer than approximately 150 words. Late questions cannot be accepted for grades.

Required Reading

Texts are available at the Paragraphe Bookstore on McGill College. Where indicated, texts will be posted on My Courses.

- *The Science of Knowledge* by Johann Fichte, tr. by Peter Heath and John Lachs. Cambridge University Press, 1982. Excerpts. (Available on My Courses.)
- *Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings* by Johann Fichte, tr. by Daniel Breazeale. Cornell University Press, 1988. Excerpts. (Available on My Courses.)
- *Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art* by G.W.F Hegel, tr. by T.M. Knox. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988. Excerpts. (Available on My Courses)
- *The Difference Between Fichte and Schelling's System of Philosophy* by G.W.F. Hegel, tr. by H.S. Harris. New York: State University of New York Press, 1977. Excerpts. (Available on My Courses.)
- *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* by Friedrich Schiller, tr. by Reginald Snell. Dover Publications, 2004.
- *The World as Will and Representation Vol I, II* by Arthur Schopenhauer, tr. by E. Payne, Dover Publications. Excerpts. (Available on My Courses)
- *The Birth of Tragedy* by Friedrich Nietzsche, tr. by Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- *Twilight of the Idols* by Friedrich Nietzsche, tr. by Michael Tanner, Penguin, 1990. Excerpts. (Available on My Courses).

Please note that the instructor may add additional required reading that will be uploaded onto My Courses.

Recommended Reading

- Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*
- Schiller, *On Grace and Dignity*.
- Hegel, G.W.F *The Phenomenology of Spirit*.

Expect to do some additional reading and research of the primary sources for your essays. The essays should demonstrate an in depth understanding of the primary sources. Any books we read in part can be read in their entirety.

Method of Evaluation

Questions for Class Discussion: 10% (late questions are not accepted for marks)

Participation in Class Discussion: 10%

Midterm examination: 25% (November 6th and November 8th)

Essay: One 2000 word essay worth 30% (due at the end of the semester). Students must submit all notes and rough drafts for their essays as well as an annotated bibliography. Essays without notes and drafts and annotated bibliographies will not be graded. They will be returned to the student and the late penalty of 1% a day will apply.

Final Examination: 25% (date TBA)

The penalty for late essays is 1% a day including weekends. The penalties are percentage points of your final grade for the course. So, for example, if you hand in your essay five days late, then you have lost 5% of the possible 100% you could get in the course.

The midterm, essay, final exam and questions for class discussion are graded on your understanding of the material you have been assigned to read, **your understanding of the lectures**, your ability to draw on that material where relevant, and on your ability to write in a clear, thoughtful and mature manner. The questions for class discussion should focus on the assigned readings only, *not on the lectures*. The questions should demonstrate that the student has done the reading and has a carefully formulated and interesting question about the reading. Students are expected to quote from, and refer to the assigned reading in their question. Students must submit their questions on My Courses.

If I have a message for students I will post it on My Courses so please check regularly. Please do not leave messages for me on My Courses, please email me at susan.hoffmann@mcgill.ca

Students should refrain from using their cell phones during the lecture. The constant use of cell phones is distracting for the instructor. Please note that the strong preference of the instructor is that students refrain from using laptops and that notes are taken by hand.

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity> for more information).

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.