Recognition, Self, and Society

PHIL 475H / CRN 27657
MW 10-11:50
WIL 112

Dr. Rocio Zambrana
zambrana@uoregon.edu
Office Hours: R 2-4
and by appointment
PLC 331

Course Description:
To be a self is to have become a self through an other, and in a concrete social context. A self only exists in being recognized. Selves are never self-sufficient; rather, they must negotiate relations of dependence that make possible their independence. This thought is the centerpiece of some of the most influential continental theories of self and society, and it continues to inform discussions in moral psychology and ethics, social ontology and politics within and beyond continental philosophy today. In this seminar, we will examine the development of the concept of recognition throughout 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st century continental philosophy. In addition to seminar discussions, student presentations, and a final 15-page research paper, we will consider research methods and reflect on the work involved in producing advanced research.

Note:
Students must have completed at least 12 credits of upper division coursework in philosophy and have cumulative GPA of at least 3.3.

Primary Texts:
Theoretical Foundations:
1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Discourse on the Origin of Inequality
2. Fichte, Foundations of Natural Right
3. G.W.F Hegel, selections from from Phenomenology of Spirit
4. Jean-Paul Sartre, selections from Being and Nothingness

The Concrete Other:
5. Simone de Beauvoir, selections The Second Sex
6. Franz Fanon, selections Black Skin, White Masks

Trust, Vulnerability, World:
7. Jean Améry, selections from At the Mind’s Limit
8. Judith Butler, selections from Precarious Life and Frames of War

Recognition and the Politics of Identity:
9. Axel Honneth and Nancy Fraser, Redistribution or Recognition?
10. Linda Martín Alcoff, Visible Identities

Secondary Sources:
3. Nancy Bauer, selections from Simone de Beauvoir: Philosophy and Feminism
4. Kelly Oliver, “Alienation and its Double; or, The Secretion of Race” in Race and Racism in Continental Philosophy
5. David Velleman, “The Genesis of Shame”
6. Helmhut Plessner, “Being and Having a Body,” and “The Sources of Laughing and Crying,” in *Laughing and Crying: A Study in the Limits of Human Behavior*


All primary texts are available at the Duckstore. A coursepack is available on Blackboard.

**Course Structure, Requirements, and Policies:**

Details of the graded assignments will be discussed in class and guidelines will be distributed at that time.

**Readings and Participation:**

You are responsible for all of the primary and secondary readings each week. In addition to these readings, you are expected to pursue additional secondary materials in support of your own interests and the final paper (recommended readings and beyond). You are expected to arrive on time, prepared to discuss the assigned material, and provide relevant, thoughtful, and constructive responses to the readings and your peers.

**Oral Work:**

~ Meeting with Instructor:
   Please meet with me briefly during the first or second week of the quarter, so that I may have an opportunity to learn about your interests.

~ Presentation:
   You will lead one seminar discussion. You should summarize the argument of the text and raise a set of critical questions. You will open the discussion with a 10-15 minute presentation.

**Written Work:**

~ Précis:
   You will write two précis—one on an author representative of theoretical foundations, and one on any of the three other themes of the course. Each précis should summarize the argument of the reading chosen and pursue an engagement with secondary literature addressing the text or problem. The first précis should be 4 pages in length, and the second 8 pages in length.

~ Paper Proposal:
   Please submit a one-page proposal stating the topic of your paper and the argument that you intend to pursue. You must include an annotated bibliography with a list of secondary sources and a description of each source. Submission of final paper is contingent on approval of your proposal.

~ Final Paper:
   This 15 page paper will develop further—both exegetically and critically—one of your précis, including expanding your engagement with secondary literature.

**Grading:**

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Précis 1</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Précis 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Leadership</td>
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Paper Proposal and Bibliography and First Draft of Final Paper

Final paper

Improvement in graded work will count positively in calculating your final grade. Incompletes will not be granted, except in the case of an emergency. Students registered P/NP grading must earn the equivalent of a C- grade in order to receive a grade of P.

The following rubric reflects the general standards of the Philosophy Department at the University of Oregon as approved by the faculty.

A = excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.
B = good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.
C = OK. Some errors, but a basic grasp of the material.
D = poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.
F = failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.

Statement on Plagiarism:
Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course.
For more information, see http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/.

Accommodation for a Disability:
If you have special needs due to a disability, please talk with me as soon as possible so that your needs can be addressed.

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Schedule of Readings:
The schedule of readings is subject to change during the quarter. All changes will be announced in advance via email. If you have questions about the assignments, requirements, or subject matter, please email me.

Wk. 1
Mon., Jan. 7 Introduction to the Course and Research Methods
Wed., Jan. 9 Rousseau, Discourse on the Origin of Inequality
            Secondary Source: Dent, Rousseau (1988), chap 2

Wk. 2
Mon., Jan. 14 continuation, Rousseau, Dent
Wed., Jan. 16 Fichte, selections of Foundations of Natural Right

Wk. 3
Mon., Jan. 21 MLK – No Classes
Wed., Jan. 23 continuation Fichte, Nuzzo

Wk. 4
Mon., Jan. 28 Hegel, “Self-Consciousness,” from Phenomenology of Spirit
            Secondary Source: Beauvoir, selections The Second Sex
            Recommended Reading: Bauer, Simone de Beauvoir: Philosophy and Feminism
            Secondary Source: Fanon, selections Black Skin, White Masks
Recommended Reading: Kelly Oliver, “Alienation and its Double; or, The Secretion of Race"

**Précis #1 Due**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk. 5</th>
<th>Mon., Feb. 4</th>
<th>continuation of Hegel, Beauvoir, Fanon; Paper Proposal Workshop</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Wed., Feb. 6</td>
<td>Sartre, “The Look” and “The Body” in <em>Being and Nothingness</em></td>
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<td>Secondary Source: David Velmens, “The Genesis of Shame”</td>
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<th>Wk. 6</th>
<th>Mon., Feb. 11</th>
<th>continuation Sartre, Velmens, with focus on Plessner, “Being and Having a Body,” and “The Sources of Laughing and Crying” in <em>Laughing and Crying</em></th>
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<td>Wed., Feb. 13</td>
<td>Améry, selections from <em>At the Mind’s Limit</em></td>
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<th>Wk. 7</th>
<th>Mon., Feb. 18</th>
<th>continuation Améry, and Jay Bernstein, “Trust: On the Real but Almost Always Unnoticed Ever-Changing Foundation of Ethical Life”</th>
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<td>Secondary Reading: Ann Murphy, “Corporeal Vulnerability and the New Humanism”</td>
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<th>Wk. 8</th>
<th>Mon., Feb. 25</th>
<th>Butler, “Precariously Life, Grievable Life,” and “Survivability, Vulnerability, Affect,” in <em>Frames of War</em></th>
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<td>Wed., Feb. 27</td>
<td>Axel Honneth and Nancy Fraser, <em>Redistribution or Recognition?</em></td>
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<td><em>Précis #2 due</em></td>
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<th>Wk. 9</th>
<th>Mon., Mar 4</th>
<th>Axel Honneth and Nancy Fraser, <em>Redistribution or Recognition?</em></th>
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<td>Wed., Mar 13</td>
<td>Closing Discussion and Final Paper Workshop</td>
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| Wk. 11  | Wed., Mar 18  | *Final Essay is due*                                             |