Autonomy

PHIL 641 / CRN 16494
Dr. Rocío Zambrana
MW 9-10:50
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PLC 314
Office Hours: M 4-6
and by appointment
PLC 331

Course Description:
This seminar will examine the idea of autonomy developed within 18th and 19th century Continental Philosophy, specifically by Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche. If self and society are understood as ultimately subject to and sustained by norms, freedom involves being subject to norms and institutions of which one can regard oneself as the author. A variety of paradoxes seemingly follow: the paradox of founding in Rousseau, reason as self-authorizing in Kant, individual freedom dependent on institutional rationality in Hegel, and autonomy as sovereign individuality in Nietzsche. We will consider how these paradoxes inflect notions of self and society, freedom and sovereignty, authority and legitimacy, good and evil in these thinkers. We will furthermore assess how these paradoxes inform ideas of normativity—practical as well as theoretical—in these thinkers and in contemporary interlocutors. Accordingly, recommended readings will include contemporary texts that address the paradoxes of autonomy.

Primary Texts:
1. Rousseau, Discourse on the Origin of Inequality and The Social Contract
2. Kant, Practical Philosophy
3. Hegel, Elements of the Philosophy of Right
4. Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil and Genealogy of Morals

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

See below for Secondary Sources. Sources marked * are available on reserve at Knight. Sources marked ** are available on Blackboard.

Course Structure, Requirements, and Policies:
Written and Oral Work:
~Presentations:
You will be required to lead two seminar discussions. Leading a discussion involves writing a 5-page report on the text, which you will distribute via email to the class the day before the class session in which you will present meets. The report should reconstruct the argument of the text and raise a set of critical questions. You will open the discussion with a 10-15 minute presentation working off your written report.

~Prospectus:
You will submit a one-page prospectus stating the topic of your paper and the argument that you intend to pursue. Please include an annotated bibliography with a list of secondary sources that you intend to use. Submission of final paper is contingent on approval of your prospectus. Your prospectus is due on Friday of week 7.

~Final Paper:
This 3,000 wd. paper may develop further—both exegetically and critically—one of your presentations, although it need not. It may engage a different text among those discussed in class. As a research paper, you must engage secondary literature and pursue an original thesis.
All final papers are due by 4pm on Wednesday, December 7 at the Philosophy Department (box at the counter). No late papers will be accepted, unless accompanied by proof of illness or emergency.

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

Grading Standard:
- A+ = superb. No mistakes, well-written, well-researched, and pursues an original thesis.
- 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 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 complete lack of effort.

Grading:
- Class participation 20%
- Presentations 30% (15% each)
- Final paper 50%

Participation:
Coming prepared to discuss the assigned text and participating in class discussions are requirements.

Attendance:
You are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly. More than 3 absences will result in a failing final grade, unless proof of illness or emergency is provided.

Accommodation for a Disability:
If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon.

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Schedule of Readings:

Wk. 1
Mon., Sept. 26   Introduction to the course and syllabus
Wed., Sept. 28  Rousseau, Discourse on Inequality
               Recommended: Dedication, Preface
               Neuhouser, Rousseau's Theodicy of Self-Love, chaps. 1 and 2
               Dent, Rousseau (1988), chaps. 2 and 3

Wk. 2
Mon., Oct. 3    Rousseau, The Social Contract, Book 1
               Recommended for all sessions on SC:
               Levine, The Politics of Autonomy
               Neuhouser, Rousseau's Theodicy of Self-Love, chap. 6
               Dent, Rousseau (1988), chaps. 5, 6, 7
Recommended: Alan Keenan, “The Rule of the People?”  
Seyla Benhabib, “Deliberative Rationality and Models of Democratic Legitimacy”  
Bonnie Honig, “Between Decision and Deliberation”

**Wk. 3**  
Recommended for all sessions on the *Groundwork*:  
Pippin, *Hegel’s Practical Philosophy*, chap. 3  
Pinkard, *German Philosophy*, pt. 1, chap. 2  
Susan Meld Shell, “The Paradox of Autonomy,” *Kant and the Limits of Autonomy*

**Wk. 4**  
Recommended: Henry Allison, *Kant’s Theory of Freedom*, chaps. 12, 13  
Onora O’Neill, “Autonomy and the Fact of Reason in the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*”

**Wk. 5**  
Recommended: Wood, *Kant’s Ethical Thought*, chap. 9  
Susan Meld Shell, “Moral Hesitation in *Religion within the Boundaries of Bare Reason*,” *Kant and the Limits of Autonomy*  
Wed., Oct. 26  Hegel, “The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate”  

**Wk. 6**  
Mon., Oct. 31  Hegel, Preface and Introduction to *Philosophy of Right*  
Recommended: Pippin, *Hegel’s Practical Philosophy*, chap. 4  
Axel Honneth, *Pathologies of Individual Freedom*  
Recommended for all sessions on PR:  
Neuhouser, *Foundations of Hegel’s Social Theory*  
Hardimon, *Hegel’s Social Philosophy*

**Wk. 7**  
Mon., Nov. 7  Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, “Morality,” §§105-114, 129-141  
Recommended: “Morality” in *Phenomenology of Spirit*  
Wk. 8
Mon., Nov. 14  Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, Preface, 1, 2, 3
   Recommended for all sessions on Nietzsche:
   Guay, “Nietzsche on Freedom”
   Essays in Nietzsche on Freedom and Autonomy
   Bernard Reginster, The Affirmation of Life
   Deleuze, Nietzsche and Philosophy
Wed., Nov. 16  Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, 4, 5, 6, 9

Wk. 9
Mon., Nov. 21  Nietzsche, Genealogy of Morals, Preface and Essay 1
Wed., Nov. 23  Nietzsche, Genealogy of Morals, Essay 2

Wk. 10
Mon., Nov. 28  Nietzsche, Genealogy of Morals, Essay 3
Wed., Nov. 30  Continuation of Nietzsche / Concluding Reflections

Wk. 11
Wed., Dec. 7  Final Essay is due

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Some Secondary Sources:
Rousseau
*Frederick Neuhouser, Rousseau’s Theodicy of Self-Love
*John Charvet, The Social Problem in the Philosophy of Rousseau
*Andrew Levine, The Politics of Autonomy
Judith Shklar, Men and Citizens
Louis Althusser, Politics and History: Montesquieu, Rousseau, Marx
**Bonnie Honig, “Between Decision and Deliberation”; see also apropos Kant Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics
**Alan Keenan, “The Rule of the People?” chap. 1 of Democracy in Question
**Sofia Näsström, “The Legitimacy of the People”

Kant
*Allison, Kant’s Theory of Freedom
*Allen Wood, Kant’s Ethical Thought
Christine Korsgaard, Sources of Normativity and Creating the Kingdom of Ends
Paul Guyer, Kant’s Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals: Critical Essays
*Susan Meld Shell, Kant and the Limits of Autonomy
**Seyla Benhabib, “Deliberative Rationality and Models of Democratic Legitimacy”
Anderson-Gold and Muchnik, eds., Kant’s Anatomy of Evil
**Richard J. Bernstein, “Radical Evil: Kant at War With Himself,” in Radical Evil: Cotemporary Perspectives
*Onora O’Neill, “Autonomy and the Fact of Reason in the Kritik der praktischen Vernunft”
Jürgen Habermas, “Discourse Ethics: Notes on a Program of Philosophical Justification”
John Rawls, “Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory”
**Kant and Hegel**
*Terry Pinkard, German Philosophy (1760-1860) The Legacy of Idealism*
Robert Brandom, *Reason in Philosophy*

**Hegel**
*Frederick Neuhouser, Foundations of Hegel’s Social Theory: Actualizing Freedom*
*Robert Pippin, Hegel’s Practical Philosophy*
*Axel Honneth, Pathologies of Individual Freedom* (see also *The Struggle for Recognition; Suffering from Indeterminacy*)
Allen Wood, *Hegel’s Ethical Thought*
*Michael Hardimon, Hegel’s Social Philosophy: The Project of Reconciliation*
Elliot Jurist, *Beyond Hegel and Nietzsche*
See also: Hegel, “Lordship and Bondage” in *Phenomenology of Spirit*

**Nietzsche**
*Bernard Reginster, The Affirmation of Life*
Henry Staten, *Nietzsche’s Voice*
*Gilles Deleuze, Nietzsche and Philosophy*
Keith Ansel Pearson, *Nietzsche contra Rousseau*
Keith Ansel Pearson, ed., *Nietzsche and Modern German Thought*
*Gemes and May, eds., Nietzsche on Freedom and Autonomy*
Robert Pippin, *Nietzsche, Psychology, and First Philosophy*
*Judith Butler, “Circuits of Bad Conscience,” The Psychic Life of Power*
**Guay, “Nietzsche on Freedom”*
Christa Acampora, *Nietzsche’s Beyond Good and Evil: A Reader’s Guide*
*Brian Leiter, Guidebook to Nietzsche on Morality*