Philosophy and Cultural Diversity  
Summer 2013  
University of Oregon

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Introduction:
All too often, philosophy has represented the views of a particular culture as universal and marginalized voices from other traditions. In this class we will seek to examine how this has happened, what needs to be done to open philosophy up to our pluralistic universe, and the difficulties that are involved in doing so.

We will begin by reading Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* to think about the rise of nationalism and the radical shift this represented for traditional communities. This will be followed by selections for Alexis De Toqueville’s *Democracy in America*—his insights into what resulted from the first modern, national experiment with democracy.

We will then read WEB Du Bois’ *The Souls of Black Folk*, Gloria Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera* and *Power and Place* by Vine Deloria Jr. and Daniel Wildcat. Each of these books will serve to introduce students to philosophical perspectives from other “cultures” but also begin to examine the difficulties of speaking of “cultures.” We will finish this set of concerns with Edward Said’s *Orientalism*. We will use our last book, Zygmunt Bauman’s *Consuming Life* to address the issues of “culture” in a consumer society.

Course Objectives:
1. To reexamine philosophy in a pluralistic society  
2. To gain exposure to different culture philosophies and examine the difficulties of the concept “culture”  
3. To develop critical thinking skills  
4. To improve writing ability

Expectations:
Over the term we will read seven books that will help us think about philosophy and culture diversity:

- *Imagined Communities* by Benedict Anderson  
- *Democracy in America* by Alexis De Toqueville  
- *The Souls of Black Folks* by WEB Du Bois  
- *Borderlands/La Frontera* by Gloria Anzaldúa  
- *Power and Place* by Vine Deloria Jr. and Daniel Wildcat  
- *Orientalism* by Edward Said  
- *Consuming Life* by Zygmunt Bauman
Students will be expected to have read the assigned reading each day. Because this is a condensed term, groups of students will be asked to write summaries of different chapters in the reading and bring these with them to class. Although students will be responsible for all of the reading, they will also narrow in on specific chapters and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class. The summaries need not be long, between ½ -1 page double spaced. These daily summaries take the place of quizzes, which are more cumbersome.

**Grade Breakdown:**
- 100 pts summaries
- 100 pts midterm
- 100 pts final
- 50 pts attendance and participation

**Schedule:**
- Week 1: Imagined Communities and Democracy in American, begin Souls
- Week 2: continue Souls, Borderlands/La Frontera, begin Power and Place
- Week 3: continue Power and Place, begin Orientalism
- Week 4: continue Orientalism, Consuming Life

Final Exam due during Finals Week

Notice that the schedule is very loose. This is on purpose. I want to be flexible with the pace. If discussion moves quickly, we will move quickly. If students find a particular reading interesting or difficult, I want to take time to work through it. I will also insert smaller articles into the readings if and when they become relevant.

**Official Stuff**

1.) Note on Sexual Harassment
The University of Oregon is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which students, faculty and staff can work and study together in an atmosphere free from all forms of prohibited discrimination, and discriminatory harassment. The Office of Affirmative Action & Equal Opportunity (OAA&EO) is available to assist members of the university community in seeking to prevent and correct any prohibited discrimination on campus.
Let me know if you see it happen, don’t put up with it from me or anyone else.

2.) What kind of paper deserves an “A,” “B,” etc.? The following rubric reflects the general standards of the Philosophy Department at the University of Oregon.

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.

Please note: what counts as “excellent” or “OK,” for example, depends in part upon the nature and level of the class in question.

Exam/Paper Grading Scale:

- 92% or above A
- 90-92% A-
- 87-89% B+
- 83-86% B
- 80-82% B-
- 77-79% C+
- 70-72% C-
- 67-69% D+
- 63-66% D
- 60-62% D-
- 0-59% F

Students registered with the P/NP grading option must receive at least 70% in order to receive a P.

3.) Academic Honesty

If you are caught in an act of academic dishonesty, you will receive an “F” for the course. Such acts include:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else’s product, words, ideas, or data as one’s own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes. By placing one’s name on work submitted for credit, one certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. Verbatim statements by others must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from the regular text as indented extracts. Students will avoid being charged with plagiarism if there is acknowledgement of indebtedness. Indebtedness must be acknowledged whenever:

1) one quotes another person’s actual words or replicates all or part of another’s product;
2) one uses another person’s ideas, opinions, work, data, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased in one’s own words;
3) one borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative material—unless the information is common knowledge.

Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. If in doubt, consult the instructor or seek assistance from the staff of Academic Learning Services (68 PLC, 346-3226). In addition, it is plagiarism to submit as your own any academic exercise prepared totally or in part by another person, even if that person is acting as a tutor or editor (and ends up substantially producing part of the work).

Fabrication: Fabrication is the intentional use of information that the author has invented when he or she states or implies otherwise, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive. Examples include, but are not limited to:

1) citing information not taken from the source indicated;
2) listing sources in a reference not used in the academic exercise;
3) inventing data or source information for research or other academic exercises.

Cheating: Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help in an academic exercise. Examples include but are not limited to: 1) copying from another student’s work; 2) collaborating without authority or allowing another student to copy one’s work in a test situation; 3) using the course textbook or other material not authorized for use during a test; 4) using unauthorized material during a test; for example, notes, formula lists, cues on a computer, photographs, symbolic representations, and notes written on clothing; 5) resubmitting substantially the same work that was produced for another assignment without the knowledge and permission of the instructor; 6) taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you.