

Philosophy 306
American Philosophic Thought
Fall 2009

Dr. Graybosch

Office Hours: To be announced each month after the furlough days are announced. In other words, I'll take my furlough days from office hours rather than from class time whenever possible

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Texts:

1. Students should purchase our package of readings. Consult the topical outline and course calendar for the reading schedule. If you have a packet from an earlier year in which I offered this class it will be good enough.
2. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*. first edition 1855. Any reprint of the first edition will do. You can usually find cheap used Penguin editions on Amazon.com. Also, I have put a link to an online text version in our reading list.
3. Walter Lippmann, Selections from *Public Opinion*. Link to online version can be found in the reading list.
4. William James, "What Makes a Life Significant?" Link to online version can be found in the reading list.
4. Charles Bukowski, *Post Office*.
5. Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

Exams

There will be five objective exams worth ten percent each at the end of weeks 3, 5, 7, 9, and 14. You will take these sometime between the Wednesday class and the following Monday class via webct. Total 50 percent.

There will be one expository essay exam taken in class on the Wednesday of week 8. I will post the candidate questions one week before the essay test. You may bring a 5 by 8 note card to each of the essay exam. 25 percent.

Paper

4-5 pages in which you describe the view of aesthetic beauty held by Edwards and/or Emerson and then explain to what extent the work of Dick, Whitman, or Bukowski embodies the selected view(s) of aesthetic beauty. I must have your paper on 12/9 at class time. 25 percent

Attendance

You are allowed three absences; this includes absences supposedly approved by various university authorities. There are no excused absences. After three absences I may deduct one grade level (5%) from your final cumulative grade for each additional absence. If there is some unforeseen event that prevents regular class attendance such as a serious illness contact me at the outset so that I can make arrangements for you to complete the class. If you contact me after an extended absence I will not make any special arrangements. Instead I will urge you to withdraw or post a U. If you decide to withdraw from this class please complete the necessary paperwork.

FAQ:

No food

No laptops

Turn off cell phones

Arrive on time for class. If you arrive late I may just mark you absent.

Plan to stay for the entire class. If you leave early I will mark you absent.

No in and outs.

No matter how wrong you think someone's view is try to listen and respond respectfully. I'll try to do this too.

Got home work to do for another class? Go home and do it. Do it in here and you are marked absent.

If you email me or leave me a phone message that you are doing x, it does not follow that you have my agreement that you do x.

Internships are valuable. Just don't think one excuses you from class.

Looking for a job? Got an interview? Great. Just don't think it excuses you from class.

Participating in a field trip, a sport, social work day, a play or some other worthwhile pursuit? Great. Just don't think it excuses you from class.

Every semester someone takes 4 or 5 absences then a family member dies and then the student gets angry with me because they have used up their absences. I don't mind if you get angry with me. But, think twice before blowing off a class just to go watch the A's or Raiders or Giants or Kings lose again. You may need that day off later for something serious.

Reading List:**OVERTURE**

Philip Dick, Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? AKA Blade Runner.

True Religion and the Sense of Beauty

Jonathan Edwards, "The Nature of True Virtue", and "Religious Affection."

Kenneth Merrill, "The American Enlightenment: Ethan Allen and Thomas Paine."

Ethan Allen, "Of Miracles."

Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature."

William K. Clifford, "Selection from The Ethics of Belief."

William James, "The Will to Believe."

William James, "Selection from A Pluralistic Universe: God is Finite."

Josiah Royce, "Job"

John Dewey, "Faith and Its Object."

Morality and Individualism

Thomas Jefferson, "Letters to Peter Carr and Thomas Law."

Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance."

William James, "The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life."

Sidney Hook, "Pragmatism and the Tragic Sense of Life" and "Choosing Death."

Freedom of the Will

Henry David Thoreau, "Selections from Walden."

Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God", and "Freedom of the Will."

William James, "The Dilemma of Determinism."

Racism, Sexism, and Civil Disobedience

Thomas Jefferson, "Selection from Notes on the State of Virginia", "Letters to Edward Carrington and Henri Gregoire."

Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government."

Margaret Fuller, "The Great Lawsuit."

Martin Luther King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail."

Political Philosophy

Thomas Jefferson, "Political Philosophy", "Religion", "Short Selection from Autobiography", "Letter to Nehemiah Dodge."

James Madison, "Federalists 10 and 51."

Josiah Royce, "Philosophy of Loyalty."

John Dewey, "Lost Individual."

Walter Lippmann, Selection from: Public Opinion
pp 3-16, 29, 31-32, 247-249, 338-346, 351-365 online

American Beauty

Walt Whitman, "Leaves of Grass."

Charles Bukowski, Post Office

Getting a Living

Henry David Thoreau, "Selections from A Week on the Concord and Merrimack River",
"Selection from Cape Cod", "Life Without Principle."

William James, "On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings", and "What Makes a Life Significant?"