**Graduate Course Descriptions**

**Fall 2019**

**Emotions and Agency**

Remy Debes

PHIL 7/8040

T 2:30-5:30

<Practical>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will have three interrelated objectives. First, students will work towards basic competency in the philosophy of emotion through study of those theories (especially c.1900 forward) that have had lasting influence on the field. Second, we will study the way emotion figures into agency through a study of recent work on agency and personhood. By and in large, we will do this by reading in the analytic tradition. However, some exploration of contributions from other traditions will also be included. We think about the relation between emotion and rationality, the place of perspective and narrative in agency, and the emotional aspects that go into experiences of isolation, exclusion, trauma, humiliation, and invisibility. Finally, we will undertake this study against a shared, real world context that calls out to be partly analyzed by the complicated convergence that these three topics point to. To that end, all students will be expected to have read before the term begins, *Spectacle: The Astonishing Life of Ota Benga*, by Pamela Newkirk

The following authors will be included:

**Emotion**: James, Lyons, Lazarus, Solomon, Nussbaum, Deigh, Goldie, Tappolet, Damasio, Prinz, Zaonc, Ekman, Ellsworth, Griffiths, Debes, Merleau-Ponty.

**Agency**: Bratman, Sosa, Korsgaard, Velleman, Strawson, Shoemaker, Tappolet

**Persons**: Brison, Schechtman, Goldie

Possible Further Viewpoints will include:

* Privilege, Agency and Affect: Understanding the Production and Effects of Action by C. Maxwell
* Being Human: The Problem of Agency by Margaret S. Archer
* The Anxious Mind: An Investigation into the Varieties and Virtues of Anxiety (The MIT Press) by Charlie Kurth
* Agency and the Foundations of Ethics: Nietzschean Constitutivism by Paul Katsafanas
* Black Women, Agency, and the New Black Feminism (Routledge Research in Gender and Society) by Maria del Guadalupe Davidson
* Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self, by Catriona Mackenzie

**Requirements**: A one-page final paper proposal and research bibliography. A 15-20 page final. Prepared Lead Questions/Responses for assigned days. A draft of the final 16-page paper may be submitted for comments and revision prior to its submission for a grade.

Proposal & Questions: 10%

Final Paper: 70%

Class Participation: 20%

**CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY: Hermeneutics: Intersubjectivity and Interpretation**

Shaun Gallagher

PHIL 7/8203

R 5:30-8:30

<Theoretical>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Although historically the main target of hermeneutics has been the interpretation of texts, there are many relevant discussions in Dilthey, Gadamer, Ricoeur and other authors in this tradition about a more immediate understanding of other persons in face-to-face interactions. In this seminar we will explore contemporary issues surrounding questions about intersubjectivity and social cognition, viewing them through the hermeneutical lens. Dilthey, for example, outlines a concept of empathy and takes it to be the basis for a method for the human and social sciences. Gadamer’s hermeneutical model borrows directly from the dynamics of conversation. Ricoeur insists on the role of alterity as central to concepts of recognition and self-interpretation. These kinds of analyses can be directly related to concepts of “second person” and relational autonomy in feminism and critical theory, as well as to discussions of intercorporeity (Merleau-Ponty) and embodied and socially extended cognition. We’ll also push hermeneutics to where it has never gone before by exploring recent studies by Anita Avramides, Dina Mendonça, Jessica Lindblom and Evan Selinger on pragmatist conceptions of situation, embodied communicative patterns, and the application of dishonest anthropomorphism in robotics. Several of these philosophers will visit the seminar and discuss their work.

**Texts**

Most texts that we will consider will be available online.

**Required text**

Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1989 *Truth and Method*. New York: Continuum.

**Additional texts**

Avramides, A. (2000). *Other Minds*. London: Routledge.

Avramides, A. (2013). Other minds, autism, and depth in human interaction. *The Oxford*

*Handbook of Philosophy and Psychiatry*. Oxford: OUP.

Dilthey, W. (1976). Dilthey: Selected Writings. London: Cambridge University Press.

Lindblom, J. (2015). *Embodied Social Cognition*. Berlin: Springer.

Mendonça, D. (2012). Pattern of sentiment: following a Deweyan suggestion.

*Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society: A Quarterly Journal in American Philosophy*,

*48*(2), 209-227.

Ricoeur, P. 1992 *Oneself as Another*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ricoeur P. 2005. *The Course of Recognition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University

Press. Selinger, E. and Leong, B. 2019. Robot eyes wide shut: Understanding

Dishonest Anthropomorphism. Proceedings of the ACM FAT Conference on

Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency.

**Seminar in Major Figures: “Derrida, *Of Grammatology*”**

PHIL 7/8020

Kas Saghafi

M 2:30-5:30

<Theoretical >

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will be a close reading of Derrida’s *Of Grammatology*, one of the three major texts he published in 1967. The second part of the book is a close examination of Rousseau.

Course Requirements: Three Short papers throughout the semester; one final paper after consultation with me.

**Seminar in Modern Philosophy**

Daniel J. Smith

PHIL 7/8301

W 5:30 – 8:30

<History>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will introduce students to Kant’s practical philosophy through the debate that took place in its early reception about “evil”. We will begin the semester by covering the basics of Kantian practical philosophy, with a particular focus on his account of freedom. We will then consider some critiques that were in circulation during his lifetime, and some of the responses to these critiques by Kant and others. We will pay particular attention to his essay on “radical evil”, which is a source of considerable controversy in the recent scholarship. Our main focus will be a close reading of the primary texts, but we will also discuss and evaluate some of the interpretive issues commonly debated in the secondary literature.

In addition to Kant’s essay on “radical evil”, we will read “third antinomy” of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the whole of the *Groundwork*, the essay “On the Miscarriage of all Philosophical Trials in Theodicy”, and selections from the *Metaphysics of Morals*. In addition to Kant, other possible texts include Reinhold’s *Letters on the Kantian Philosophy*; Fichte’s “Creuzer Review” and his modification of Kant’s theory of “radical evil” in §16 of the *System of Ethics*; Schmid’s dictionary of Kantian terminology; Schelling’s “General Overview of the Most Recent Philosophical Literature” and *Freiheitsschrift*.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Students will be assessed on class participation, one in-class presentation (~20

minutes), and a final research paper of approximately 16 pages.