

Hofstra University Honors College
Culture and Expression 012 - H6 (TR 1:15-2:10) crn# 20409 Breslin 200
Spring 2016

Instructor: Tony Dardis
Office: 207 Heger Hall

Phone: x3 5432 email: Anthony.Dardis@hofstra.edu
Office Hours: TR 2:30-4:00p

Hide and Seek: Modern Perspectives on Self, Other and Society

This semester of C&E shifts from our focus in the fall on voice to the sense of sight in the spring, again encompassing the point-of-view of both the individual and society, of the single self and the plurality or collective: The ways we both see and don't see ourselves and others change radically and quickly with the onset of modernity, whether one considers that onset as marked by the advent of technology in general, or print in particular; or the rise of modern vernacular languages; or by the growth of population centers and national consciousness and concentration of wealth, or of mechanized industry and changes in material production and labor; or by new avenues of international travel and trade and exploration, with its concomitant rise of colonialism and exploitation; or the new awareness of otherness, worldly diversity and cultural difference; or by the articulation of individual rights and the questioning of age-old political and economic structures, of philosophical and religious beliefs; or by changes in the forms of representation of self and other. The semester will begin with a lecture on *Hunger Games* (the trilogy starting 2008 and subsequent films) with its archetypical vision of a female warrior (like the mythological hunter goddess Diana/Artemis or the historical Joan of Arc) rebelling against a futuristic dystopian (negative Utopian) society, before turning to Michel Foucault's work *Discipline and Punishment (Surveiller et punir, 1975)* as a theoretical foundation for our analysis of works in the modern period ranging from the *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554) in Golden Age Spain to Shakespeares *Measure for Measure* (1604) in Elizabethan England to the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, and on to modern China and Japan, and the Arab Spring. We end the semester with a return to the U.S. and contemporary race relations as described in in a personal memoir that reflects on Self, Other and Society.

Professors: Bogard, Burlein, Dardis, Frisina, Nanes, Niedt, Slabodsky (SocSci-HUHC 012)
Donahue, Freitas, Kozol, Pasupathi, Rosenthal, Welch, Zhou (Hum-HUHC 014)

The Strategy

C&E consists of two related courses in both fall and spring semesters. *HUHC 011* and *HUHC 012* (Social Sciences) have their emphasis on understanding the structures and values of a culture or civilization through the disciplines of History, Sociology, Religion, Anthropology, Psychology, Philosophy, Economics and Geography. *HUHC 013* and *HUHC 014* (Humanities) have their emphasis on artistic expressions of the respective cultures through the disciplines of literary analysis (e.g. English, Classics, Romance and Comparative Literatures), Linguistics, Music, Drama, Dance, Fine Arts, Architecture and Aesthetics. Faculty on both teams develop a reading list and lecture schedule that work in tandem to reinforce students' insights into and understanding of the ancient world through to the Middle Ages, and then in the spring, the modern world since the Renaissance. Twice weekly faculty lectures set the context for student-based discussion sections.

Our discussion sections

Each section of the HUHC Culture and Expression course is distinctive, since for the most part the instructors for the various sections come from different academic disciplines. Although all of us will

be reading the same books, and all of us will be meeting two times a week together, each section will have some of the flavor of the academic discipline of its instructor. My discipline is Philosophy.

Philosophy is about the big picture. It asks, in the most general way possible: what is there in the world? how can we know about what there is? how should we live? what can we hope for in this life on earth, and for life after this one?

These kinds of questions don't have easy answers. They may not be even be good questions (compare: how many children did Lady Macbeth have?). Since "the big picture" includes *us*, we who ask and try to answer these questions, philosophy is "meta" (= "above", "after", "about", "higher-level"). That is: it steps back and asks, how are we thinking about this? are these good questions? what methods are, or might be, appropriate for answering these questions? So a lot of philosophy is **thinking about thinking**. It's about trying out answers to these questions: looking for reasons to believe one rather than another, and then (more critically) trying to figure out what makes one reason better than another, and which ones win that race.

Wilfrid Sellars put it this way:

The aim of philosophy, abstractly formulated, is to understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term . . . To achieve success in philosophy would be, to use a contemporary turn of phrase, to 'know one's way around' . . . , not in that unreflective way in which the centipede of the story knew its way around before it faced the question, 'how do I walk?', but in that reflective way which means that no intellectual holds are barred.¹

In this section of Culture and Expression we'll begin with some of the basic ideas of reasoning: what an argument is, what a valid argument is, what a strong argument is, what a fallacy is. We'll use these tools to think about the works we're reading. There are two basic things we're trying to do:

- Learn the tools. Argument is (arguably) *the* most useful tool for *all* academic writing, and *all* reasoned interaction, inside and outside the university. The first step is to be more self-conscious, and more explicit, about *how* we are thinking about those works: what *kind* of arguments are we using (deductive? explanatory? statistical?) what kinds of standards are appropriate for the kind of argument we're using? how well does this argument stand up according to those standards? What are the powers and limitations of various kinds of logical tool?
- Look for (and try to solve) puzzles about seeing and being seen: can we know anything about the world through experience? how do seeing and being seen constitute us as who and what we are?

Texts

In addition to the readings for the whole Culture and Expression class, there are a couple of hand-outs on philosophy, what it's about and how to do it, and on logic and argumentation for this section, available on Blackboard.

¹Sellars, W. (1963). Philosophy and the scientific image of man. In *Science, Perception and Reality*, pages 1–40. Routledge & Kegan Paul, New York.

Requirements

- (1) Four short papers (750 words) plus a final project. Each short paper counts for 15% of your grade; the final project counts for 40% of your final grade. There is a handout describing the papers and final project.
- (2) You must lead the classroom discussion at least once.

Class structure

Our class meetings will be structured as seminars. Our focus will be on our discussions of the books we are reading and the lectures we are attending together.

Each session we will talk about *the prior* lecture—that is, *not* the one we just came from, but the one before that. (So for example on Thursday January 28 we'll talk about Professor Freitas' lecture on Tuesday January 26.)

Most of our sections together will be led by one of you. You'll sign up early in the semester to commit to presenting the lecture and reading material for the prior lecture. You will write 2 pages prior to the class, in which you briefly describe what we have read, what the lecturer said about it, and in which you offer a critical commentary on these things. To run the discussion, plan on talking for 5 minutes or so about the lecture and the reading, then ask (roughly) 3 critical questions. "Critical" generally means: what alternative, unexpected perspective can we take on what we're looking at? "The lecturer said that X, but here's a reason to think that X is false" or "We all think that Descartes must be wrong about X but here's a reason to think he's right!"

Do not read what you have written. Instead, talk to the class and engage their critical curiosity and enthusiasm.

These presentations will not be graded but I will comment on them in writing. (Leading a class discussion on a given text or subject matter is an excellent way to work on a paper.)

For the first few weeks of the semester I will talk fairly regularly about reasoning and argument; my aim here is to be very explicit about what reasoning is, in part to guide our search for reasoning in what we are reading, in part to guide you (and me) in constructing good reasoning about what we are reading.

Reading, writing and argument

Your job is to be disagreeable.

Of course, your job is also to know what we're reading and talking about. Assume that's already done. What are you supposed to do with it?

Being disagreeable doesn't mean being unpleasant, or mean, or cruel. It does mean challenging what you encounter. It means asking why things are they way they are, asking whether there are other, better ways for things to be. It means asking what reasons people have for the things they say and believe, and asking whether they are good reasons. It does mean not letting other people off the hook: not our authors, not your professors, not your fellow students.

- Is what they say based on truths? Question: how do we know what is true? Who is to say? — Answer: you are. Use whatever you know and believe. Be disagreeable with yourself: if you believe it, are your reasons good?
- Does what they say follow from their evidence? Could what they say be wrong, even if the evidence really is what they say it is?

- Is there another way (are there many other ways) to think about what you're seeing? Are they preferable? In some ways rather than others?

Another name for being disagreeable is "critical thinking". You're trying to criticize. You're trying to figure out what's wrong with (some of) the thinking you are encountering. (Question: is there something wrong with it? Answer: there is always something wrong with human reasoning. Don't worry. You'll find something.)

I have put a couple of readings on Blackboard about logic, the science of being disagreeable. I will talk about them in class from time to time.

The result of your disagreeableness will be a collection of critical thoughts about our texts and things we've said about them. Normally they will have the form of an explanation. You'll find something odd or weird or just plain puzzlingly interesting about a text. Try to figure it out. You'll spin out an *interpretation*, a theory of what's going on. Perhaps I'll say something about one of the texts, and you will find it puzzling, and you will think I'm just wrong about it.

Whatever you come up with, you will have reasons for what you think. These reasons shouldn't be purely individual and "subjective". They should be reasons that can persuade anybody willing to think things through with you. (Compare: "The *Odyssey* is a long boring poem and I don't like it" and "The *Odyssey* glorifies unprincipled selfish violence and encourages individuals to ignore their social surroundings.") Feel free to use the word 'I', but just ask yourself whether you're telling your reader about *you* or saying something that your reader is going to agree with (*whoever* your reader is).

Reference and citation Your papers *must* include at least one bibliographic reference, in the form of a footnote or an endnote. I do not have any preferences about the form of the reference. If you are comfortable with some standard reference format (MLA, APA), use that; if you don't have one that you are comfortable with yet, pick one, Google it (or use the Hofstra Library links to citation style guides http://www.hofstra.edu/Library/library_citation_style.html), and learn it cold. Suggestion: use/get a good reference management system for your computer.² You should also include a reference if you find yourself using or discussing the ideas of others, for instance ideas that have come up in class from me or from your classmates.³

If you prepare a separate file for references, I've noticed that it's not unusual for people to *forget* to include this sheet when they turn in their papers. Better, however you manage your references, to have them in the same document as the paper itself.

Policies

- Attendance for our section meetings is required. I will take attendance. If you are not present *when* I take attendance, you will be marked absent that day. If you are absent more than 4 times you will receive the grade of F.
- (I will also take attendance at the start of lecture: if you are in H7 (12:15 group), on Tuesday, H6 (1:15 group), Thursday. Make sure I see you at lecture!)
- No late papers accepted.

²Hofstra computer services is enthusiastic about Zotero. EndNote is a very good professional reference manager but expensive. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_reference_management_software describes many alternatives, some of which (for example, JabRef, which can work with Microsoft Word) are open-source—free—software. This *Syllabus* was prepared using L^AT_EX along with its reference management system, B_IB_TE_X. These are very stable, very solid, very powerful programs; they are available (free) for Windows, Mac OS X, and Linux.

³I want to thank James Wilkerson for discussion of ideas about how to organize a syllabus.

- **A paper with no complete bibliographic reference will receive the grade of F.**
- All papers must be submitted **in hard copy only**.
- Any paper may be rewritten: a rewrite must be turned in by 2 weeks from the original due date.
- Excuse clause: stuff happens. If for some reason you are unable to hand in work or attend class, let me know as soon as possible, and be ready to provide documentation.
- If you must leave class early, please inform me before class starts.
- If you cannot attend class, please inform me.
- **Computers (etc).**: Prohibited. Two exceptions: (1) if you have a documented need through SAS, show me the documentation; (2) reference to an electronic version of one of our texts during class. This includes laptops, phones, iPads, iPods, pocket mainframes, robots with brains the size of a planet, connected refrigerators . . .
- **Disabilities**: If you believe you need accommodations for a disability, please contact **Student Access Services (SAS)** (Student Center 104, SAS@hofstra.edu, 516-463-7075). In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, qualified individuals with disabilities will not be discriminated against in any programs, or services available at Hofstra University. Individuals with disabilities are entitled to accommodations designed to facilitate full access to all programs and services. SAS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will provide students with documented disabilities accommodation letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and are not retroactive, please contact SAS as soon as possible. All students are responsible for providing accommodation letters to each instructor and for discussing with him or her the specific accommodations needed and how they can be best implemented in each course.
- **Academic honesty**: Plagiarism is a serious ethical and professional infraction. Hofstra's policy on academic honesty reads: "The academic community assumes that work of any kind [. . .] is done, entirely, and without assistance, by and only for the individual(s) whose name(s) it bears." Please refer to the "Procedure for Handling Violations of Academic Honesty by Undergraduate Students at Hofstra University" to be found at http://www.hofstra.edu/PDF/Senate_FPS_11.pdf, for details about what constitutes plagiarism, and Hofstras procedures for handling violations. Also see the *Hofstra Writer's Guide* for a definition of plagiarism. If you are in any doubt, consult with me.

If I have reason to believe that any kind of plagiarism whatsoever has occurred I will request a discussion of the work. If plagiarism has occurred, I will ask for the work to be completely rewritten. If rewritten work contains plagiarism, I will award the grade of F **for the course**. If there is plagiarism in the final paper, I will award the grade of F for the course. I will always file an academic dishonesty form with the Dean of Students if I believe that plagiarism has occurred.

- **Title Nine**: Hofstra prohibits sexual and other discriminatory harassment, stalking, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault and other sexual misconduct (collectively, "Gender Based Offenses"). If you or someone you know believes they have been subjected to any of these Gender Based Offenses, help is available. To make a report, or for more information about

Hofstra’s Student Policy Prohibiting Discriminatory Harassment, Relationship Violence, and Sexual Misconduct (available at <http://hofstra.edu/sexualmisconduct>), please contact the Title IX Coordinator at (516) 463-5841 or TitleIXCoordinator@hofstra.edu, or Public Safety at (516) 463-6606. Confidential resources and support are also available from clinicians in Student Counseling Services (516-463-6791), medical professionals at the Health and Wellness Center (516-463-6745), and clergy in the Interfaith Center.

Schedule

The plan is to discuss the *prior* lecture, rather than the one that happened just before the discussion. See handout titled “Paper Topics” for details about papers and final project.

Date	Lecture	Assignments
Jan 26	Professor Freitas on <i>Hunger Games</i> DISCUSSION: Syllabus, introductory concepts	
Jan 28	Professor Burlein on Foucault <i>Discipline and Punish</i> DISCUSSION: <i>Hunger Games</i> ; logic	
Feb 2	Professor Donahue on <i>Lazarillo de Tormes</i> DISCUSSION: Foucault’s <i>Discipline and Punish</i>	
Feb 4	Professor Slabodsky on Silverblatt <i>Modern Inquisitions</i> DISCUSSION: <i>Lazarillo de Tormes</i>	SP 1
Feb 9	Professor Pasupathi on Shakespeare’s <i>Measure for Measure</i> DISCUSSION: Silverblatt <i>Modern Inquisitions</i>	
Feb 11	Professor Dardis on Descartes’ <i>Meditations</i> DISCUSSION: <i>Measure for Measure</i>	
Feb 16	President’s Day – No Classes	
Feb 18	Professor Donahue on ‘Art around Descartes’ DISCUSSION: Descartes’ <i>Meditations</i>	SP 2
Feb 23	Professor Frisina on Neo-Confucianism DISCUSSION: Descartes	
Feb 25	Professor Zhou on two stories by Feng Meng Long DISCUSSION: Neo-Confucianism	
Mar 1	Professor Nanes on the French Revolution DISCUSSION: Neo-Confucianism	Conferences about final project
Mar 3	Professor Pasupathi on 18th-century Toilette Poems DISCUSSION: the French Revolution	SP 3
Mar 8	Professor Bogard on the Industrial Revolution and Karl Marx DISCUSSION: 18th-century Toilette Poems	
Mar 10	Professor Kozol on Verdi’s <i>Rigoletto</i> (1851) DISCUSSION: the Industrial Revolution and Karl Marx	
Mar 15	Professor Niedt on Berman <i>All That’s Solid Melts into Air</i> DISCUSSION: <i>Rigoletto</i>	
Mar 17	Professor Kozol on Charles Baudelaire Poems	1 page on final project

Continued on next page

Date	Lecture	Assignments
	DISCUSSION: Berman <i>All That's Solid Melts into Air</i>	
Mar 22	Professor Burlein on Friedrich Nietzsche DISCUSSION: Baudelaire	SP 4
Mar 24	Professor Welch on Higuchi Ichiyo "Child's Play" DISCUSSION: Nietzsche	
Mar 29/31	Spring Recess – No Classes	
Apr 5	Professor Rosenthal on Susan Glaspell's <i>Trifles</i> DISCUSSION: Higuchi Ichiyo	
Apr 7	Professor Bogard on 19th-century Women's Rights movement DISCUSSION: Glaspell	
Apr 12	Professor Zhou on Lu Hsun stories DISCUSSION: 19th-century Women's Rights movement	Second conference on final project
Apr 14	Prof. Slabodsky on Fanon <i>The Wretched of the Earth</i> DISCUSSION: Lu Hsun stories	
Apr 19	Professor Welch on Haruki Murakami stories DISCUSSION: Fanon	
Apr 21	Professor Nanes on the Arab Spring DISCUSSION: Haruki Murakami	
Apr 26	Professor Rosenthal on George Brandt's <i>Grounded</i> DISCUSSION: the Arab Spring	
Apr 28	Professor Dardis on Cognitive Science DISCUSSION: George Brandt's <i>Grounded</i>	
May 3	Prof. Niedt on Coates <i>Between the World and Me</i> DISCUSSION: Coates (and cognitive science?)	
May 6	Final project presentations (TBA)	
May 12	(Social Science final exam)	Final project due

This course conforms to the HCLAS General Education Learning Goals and Objectives for Liberal Arts Distribution credit.