

PHILOSOPHY 3912

DEWEY

Fall 2010

Professor Philip Kitcher

Aims

The seminar will consider the philosophical views of John Dewey, surely the most influential, and arguably the greatest, American philosopher of all time. Dewey thought about philosophy in a very different way from most of the figures whom you have studied: he believed deeply that philosophy should be connected with human life, and with the various areas of human inquiry and achievement. We shall read some major works in which he examined different aspects of our lives.

This course is intended to be a seminar, and it will provide you with ample opportunities for discussion. Each of you will be expected to make a presentation, and I shall try to help you develop your skills in talking about philosophical topics.

Requirements

A seminar presentation and a final essay. There will be no presentations in the first two weeks. At the second meeting (September 20) I shall hope to draw up a schedule of presentations, so please come with some views about when you might like to present. *Presentations are not for you to offer a summary of the reading, but to develop some point, question, theme or argument that relates to the work you have read for the session.* (Don't worry: I shall be very happy to discuss with you in advance.) You may read a short essay, or speak from notes (or powerpoint), as you prefer.

The final essay should be on a topic of your choice, but you should consult me to make sure it is appropriate. It should be no more than 15 pages in length (standard font and margins, double-spaced); although it should be a substantial piece of work, there is no need to think you must write 15 pages. Essays are due by noon on December 20.

Required Books

The following books, all by Dewey, are required. They are all paperbacks, and will be available at *Book Culture* (formerly *Labyrinth Books*)

- The Quest for Certainty* (QC)
- Experience and Nature* (EN)
- Human Nature and Conduct* (HNC)
- The Public and its Problems* (PP)

<i>Art as Experience</i>	(AE)
<i>A Common Faith</i>	(CF)
<i>Democracy and Education</i>	(DE)

Schedule of Topics and Readings

1. September 13	<i>An Introduction to Pragmatism</i>	No Reading
2. September 20	<i>Dewey on Past Philosophy</i>	QC Chs. 1-6
3. September 27	<i>The Future of Philosophy</i>	QC Chs. 7-11
4. October 4	<i>Dewey's Epistemology</i>	EN Chs. 1-5
5. October 11	<i>The Self and its Values</i>	EN Chs. 6-10
6. October 18	<i>Ethics and Human Psychology</i>	HNC Pts. 1 and 2
7. October 25	<i>Ethics and Human Society</i>	HNC Pts. 3 and 4
8. November 8	<i>Social Philosophy</i>	PP (entire)
9. November 15	<i>Art</i>	AE (entire)
10. November 22	<i>Religion</i>	CF (entire)
11. November 29	<i>Education</i>	DE (entire)
12. December 6	<i>Democracy</i>	No Further Reading
13. December 13	<i>Dewey's Lasting Importance</i>	No Further Reading

Office Hours

My office hours will be: Monday 4.15-6 p.m. and Tuesday 2-4 p.m. From time to time I'll have extra office hours on Fridays. You can also make an appointment to see me. My e-mail is psk16@columbia.edu and my office phone is 4-4884.

My office is 717 Philosophy Hall.