

PHIL 134.000
Spring 2011
Bowden Hall 116
MWF 12:50-1:40 pm

Prof. Mitchell
314 Bowden Hall
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OH: M 2:00-4:00, W 2:00-3:00

Of Human Finitude:

How Does One Live a Life that Ends?

This course asks how does one live a life that ends? Rather than a morbid preoccupation with death, this course focuses on the nature and character of a finite, mortal existence. In a multifaceted approach to this question crossing disciplines, cultures, and genres, the course examines the quest for immortality in the ancient world, the role of finitude as condition for human relationships in the 16th-19th century, and the prospect of a more properly finite “immortality” through works of remembrance (the grave, the creative work, and the archive) in the 20th century. The course is complemented by a field trip to historic Oakland Cemetery, a guided tour of Alice Walker’s literary archive, and a parallel running film series.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Gilgamesh*. Ed. and trans. Stuart Kendall. Available on Reserves Direct.
- Plato. *Phaedo*. Trans. Eva Brann. Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 1998. ISBN: 0941051692.
- Ibn Tufayl. *Hayy Ibn Yaqzân*. Ed. and trans. Lenn Evan Goodman. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. ISBN: 0226303101.
- Montaigne, Michel de. “That Our Happiness Must Not Be Judged Until After Our Death.” In *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*. Trans. Donald M. Frame. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965. 54-55. Available on Reserves Direct.
- _____. “That to Philosophize Is to Learn to Die.” *Essays*, 56-68. Available on Reserves Direct.
- _____. “Of Judging of the Death of Others.” *Essays*, 458-62. Available on Reserves Direct.
- _____. “Of Vanity.” *Essays*, 721-66. Available on Reserves Direct.
- Pascal, Blaise. *Pensées*. Trans. A. J. Krailshiemer. New York: Penguin Books, 1995. ISBN: 0140446451.
- Tolstoy, Leo. *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*. In *The Death of Ivan Ilyich and Master and Man*. Trans. Ann Pasternak Slater. New York: Modern Library, 2004. 3-59. ISBN: 0375760997.
- Wagner, Richard. *Tristan & Isolde*. Trans. Andrew Porter. English National Opera Guide. London: Calder Publications Limited, 1981. ISBN: 0714538493.

- . *Tristan und Isolde*. Böhm, Bayreuther Festspiele. Nilsson, Windgassen. 1966. Deutsche Grammophon. 3 CDs. ASIN: B000001GXS. Alternate recordings available through streaming audio via the online Naxos Music Library at: <http://web.library.emory.edu/online-listening>. University log in required.
- Heidegger, *The Concept of Time*. Trans. William McNeill. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992. ISBN: 0631184252.
- Ariès, Phillipe. *Western Attitudes toward Death: From the Middle Ages to the Present*. Trans. Patricia M. Ranum. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975. ISBN: 0801817625.
- Harrison, Robert Pogue. “Hic Jacet.” Chapter 2 of *The Dominion of the Dead*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003. 17-36. Available on Reserves Direct.
- Rodoreda, Mercè. *Death in Spring*. Trans. Martha Tennent. Rochester, NY: Open Letter, 2009. ISBN: 1934824119.
- Blanchot, Maurice. “Literature and the Right to Death.” In *The Work of Fire*. Trans. Charlotte Mandell. Stanford: Stanford University Press: 1995. 300-44. Available on Reserves Direct.
- Duras, Marguerite. *The Malady of Death*. Trans. Barbara Bray. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1988. ISBN: 0802130364.
- Walker, Alice. “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens.” In *In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 2003. 231-43. Available on Reserves Direct.
- . *A Keeping of Records*. Lecture and reading upon the donation of her literary archive to Emory University, April 2009. Available online: <http://www.emory.edu/home/academics/libraries/alice-walker.html>.
- Sebald, W. G. *Austerlitz*. Trans. Anthea Bell. New York: Modern Library, 2001. ISBN: 9780375756566.

FILM SERIES

Two films will be screened for each unit of the class. Guest viewers will be invited to attend the films and co-lead discussion. Refreshments (pizza and soda) will be provided. Attendance at one of these films per unit is mandatory, part of your participation grade, and to be included in your Reading Notes assignment (see “Assignments & Grading” below). Extra credit may be earned by writing a 3-page paper on the other film of the unit not addressed in your Reading Notes. Copies of all films are on reserve in the Music and Media Library.

- Kurosawa, Akira. *Ikiru*. 1952. DVD. New York: Criterion Collection, 2004.
- Bergman, Ingmar. *The Seventh Seal*. 1957. DVD. New York: Criterion Collection, 2009.
- Kiarostami, Abbas. *Taste of Cherry*. 1997. DVD. New York: Criterion Collection, 1999.
- Schnabel, Julian. *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*. 2007. DVD. New York: Miramax, 2008.
- Resnais, Alain. *Night and Fog*. 1955. DVD. New York: Criterion Collection, 2003.
- Lee, Spike. *When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts*. 2006. DVD. New York: HBO, 2006.

FIELD TRIPS

During Unit 3 of the course we will take two class field-trips outside of normal class time. Attendance at these events is mandatory and part of your participation grade for the class as a whole. Extra credit may be earned by writing a 3-page paper relating the field trip in question to the course readings.

Oakland Cemetery (Saturday, March 19, 2011), meet at the Fishburne parking deck on campus at 10:00 am for transportation to the cemetery, where we will receive a guided tour of Atlanta's historic Oakland Cemetery. After the tour, lunch will be provided at Six Feet Under. Busses will return to campus at 2 pm.

Alice Walker Literary Archive (Saturday, April 16, 2011), meet in the Manuscript Archive and Rare Book Library on the 9th floor of Woodruff Library at 10:00 am, where we will receive a guided tour of Alice Walker's literary archive.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Attendance & Preparation	10%	Paper Conference	10%
Participation	10%	Term Paper	40%
Reading Notes	30%	Extra Credit	3%

Attendance & Preparation includes regular attendance in class, completion of daily reading assignments, and assistance in the creation of a positive classroom atmosphere.

Participation includes attendance at extracurricular events (field trips, film series) as well as performance in class discussions, group work, and activities.

Reading Notes are collected at the end of each unit. Reading notes assignments are in two parts: 1) a 3-page essay (with thesis statement) relating one of the unit's texts to one of the unit's films. 2) for every other text in the unit, students are to submit a 1-page response to a question of their own formulation addressed to the text in question. Reading Notes are checkmark graded (-, ✓, +)

Paper Conferences will be held during the week of March 21 for all students to meet with the professor for a 20 minute discussion of ideas for the term paper. Evaluation will be based on preparedness for the term paper (presence of a detailed outline, draft of the argument, etc.) and fluency in the course texts.

Term Paper, an essay of 15-20 pages (4500-6000 words) addressing 2-4 of the course texts, films, events on a topic of your choosing, subject to instructor approval. Papers are to be submitted electronically to Prof. Mitchell at the e-mail address above. Please see "Course Policy" below for submission details. No late work can be accepted for the term paper.

Extra Credit can be earned by submitting 3-page papers (approx. 900 words) on films not addressed in course assignments or on the course field trips. Each extra credit assignment is checkmark graded (-, ✓, +) and worth up to 1% of the final course grade. Up to three extra credit assignments may be turned in. Extra credit work is to be submitted on the Reading Notes due dates.

COURSE POLICY

Submitting Papers. All papers should bear a thoughtful title. All papers are to be stapled and without cover sheets or report folders of any kind. Include your name, the course number, your professor's name, and the assignment name at the top of your paper. Should you ever submit a paper by e-mail as an attachment, please give the file a unique name by using your last name and a brief descriptor, i.e. "PattonPap1.doc."

Paper Drafts. I am happy to read drafts of student work in advance of the due date (first two paragraphs for thesis and argument structure). However, no student work will be read the day before an assignment is due.

Late Papers. Papers are due at the start of class on the date specified. Late papers will be accepted up to one week after the original due date at a penalty of 1/3 letter grade per class date missed. After one week, the paper will be assigned a score of zero. No late work can be accepted on the final paper.

Writing Assistance. Clear and effective presentation of your ideas are essential to success in philosophy. Students who would like assistance with their writing skills are strongly encouraged to consult with the Emory University Writing Center, Callaway North 212, (404) 727-6451, <http://www.writingcenter.emory.edu>. Special support is available there for ESL students.

Citation and Plagiarism. Student work is expected to be of original creation. For proper citation procedure, see: http://guides.main.library.emory.edu/citing_your_sources. For our course it is sufficient to parenthetically note within the body of your essay the text (by abbreviated title) and page number in question. It is always better to turn in an essay of your own creation, however last minute, than to plagiarize. All cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Honor Council without exception. For further questions or clarification, please ask.

Disability Assistance. It is the policy of Emory University to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Students with any condition or disability such that the requirements of this class present a problem are requested to make this known to the instructor in person as soon as possible and to contact the Office of Disability Services for documentation: 110 Administration Building, (404) 727-9877, <http://www.ods.emory.edu/>

SCHEDULE

<i>Date</i>		<i>Reading</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Jan 19	W	Course Introduction	
Unit 1: The Problem of Finitude and the Quest for Immortality			
Jan 21	F	<i>Gilgamesh</i> , Tablets I-VI, 1-85	
Jan 24	M	<i>Gilgamesh</i> , Tablets VII-XI, 86-154	
Jan 24	M	Film: Kurosawa, <i>Ikiru</i> w/ Eddy von Müller (Film Studies) White Hall 207, 6:00-9:00 pm	Film Series
Jan 26	W	Plato, <i>Phaedo</i> , 57a-88c	
Jan 28	F	Plato, <i>Phaedo</i> , 88c-118a	
Jan 31	M	Discussion	
Feb 2	W	Tufayl, <i>Hayy Ibn Yaqzan</i> , 95-127	
Feb 2	W	Film: Bergman, <i>Seventh Seal</i> w/ John Lysaker (Philosophy) White Hall 207, 6:00-9:00 pm	Film Series
Feb 4	F	Tufayl, <i>Hayy Ibn Yaqzan</i> , 128-66	
Feb 7	M	Discussion	Reading Notes 1 Due
Unit 2: Embracing Finitude in Human Relations			
Feb 9	W	Montaigne, "That Our Happiness Must Not Be Judged Until After Our Death," "That to Philosophize Is to Learn to Die," "Of Judging of the Death of Others."	
Feb 11	F	Montaigne, "Of Vanity"	
Feb 14	M	Pascal, <i>Pensées</i> , 3-66	
Feb 16	W	Pascal, <i>Pensées</i> , 105-27	
Feb 18	F	Discussion	
Feb 21	M	Tolstoy, <i>Death of Ivan Ilyich</i>	
Feb 21	M	Film: Kiarostami, <i>Taste of Cherry</i> w/ Jill Robbins (Religion and Comp Lit) White Hall 207, 6:00-9:00 pm	Film Series
Feb 23	W	Wagner, <i>Tristan and Isolde</i> , Acts I & II	
Feb 25	F	Wagner, <i>Tristan and Isolde</i> , Act III	
Feb 28	M	Discussion	
Mar 2	W	Heidegger, "The Concept of Time"	
Mar 2	W	Film: Schnabel, <i>The Diving Bell and the Butterfly</i> w/ Matthew Bernstein (Film Studies) White Hall 207, 6:00-9:00 pm	Film Series
Mar 4	F	Heidegger, "The Concept of Time"	

Mar 7	M	Spring Break	No Class
Mar 9	W	Spring Break	No Class
Mar 11	F	Spring Break	No Class

Unit 3: Finite Immortality: The Work of Remembrance

Mar 14	M	Ariès, <i>Western Attitudes Toward Death</i>	Reading Notes 2 Due
Mar 16	W	Harrison, "Hic Jacet"	
Mar 18	F	Discussion	
Mar 19	S	Field Trip: Oakland Cemetery Please meet at Fishburne Parking Deck at 10:00 am	Field Trip
Mar 21	M	Rodoreda, <i>Death in Spring</i> , 3-68	Paper Conferences
Mar 23	W	Rodoreda, <i>Death in Spring</i> , 71-150	Paper Conferences
Mar 25	F	Discussion	Paper Conferences
Mar 28	M	Blanchot, "Literature and the Right to Death," 300-25	
Mar 30	W	Blanchot, "Literature and the Right to Death," 325-44	
Apr 1	F	Discussion	
Apr 4	M	Duras, <i>Malady of Death</i>	
Apr 6	W	Duras, <i>Malady of Death</i>	
Apr 8	F	Discussion	
Apr 11	M	Sebald, <i>Austerlitz</i> , 1-149	
Apr 11	M	Film: Resnais, <i>Night and Fog</i> w/ Peter Höyng (German Studies) White Hall 207, 6:00-8:00 pm	Film Series
Apr 13	W	Sebald, <i>Austerlitz</i> , 149-227	
Apr 15	F	Sebald, <i>Austerlitz</i> , 227-98	
Apr 16	S	Field Trip: Alice Walker Literary Archive Meet in MARBL, Woodruff Library, 9 th Floor	Field Trip
Apr 18	M	Discussion	
Apr 18	M	Film: Lee, <i>When the Levees Broke</i> , Parts 1-2 w/ Cathy Caruth (English and Comp Lit) White Hall 207, 6:00-9:00 pm	Film Series
Apr 20	W	Walker, "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens," <i>A Keeping of Records</i>	
Apr 20	W	Film: Lee, <i>When the Levees Broke</i> , Parts 3-4 w/ Leslie Harris (History & African American Studies) White Hall 207, 6:00-9:00 pm	Film Series
Apr 22	F	Discussion	
Apr 25	M	Course Conclusions	Reading Notes 3 Due
May 2	M	Term Papers to be submitted electronically by 5 pm	Term Paper Due

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