

Syllabus Fall 2017
PHIL721 Advanced Seminar in Philosophy:
Kant's *Critique of Judgment*

Tuesday, 4:30pm - 7:10pm
Nguyen Engineering Building 1110

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Office Hours: Tuesday 12.30pm - 2.30pm, or by appointment

1. Course Outline

In this seminar, our central focus will be Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, and in particular, his accounts of reflective and teleological judgment and how they inform his approach to the human subject, nature, and aesthetics. We will engage in a close reading of the text while moving outwards in two directions: first, by reading some of Kant's other writings on anthropology, history, and the political, including 'Idea for a universal history with a cosmopolitan aim' (1784), 'Of the different races of human beings' (1775), 'Determination of the concept of a human race' (1785), and 'On the use of teleological principles in philosophy' (1788); and second, by reading the work of more recent thinkers who both criticize Kant and find resources in his work, including Hannah Arendt (on imagination and *sensus communis*), Jean-François Lyotard (on the postmodern sublime), Christine Battersby (on gender, race, and the sublime), Robert Bernasconi (on the concept of race), Achille Mbembe (the critique of black reason), and David Harvey (on cosmopolitanism and critical geography).

We will pay particular attention to the ways in which questions of difference, as they play out in relation to gender and race, complicate and undercut both the humanism and the universalism of Kant's project. Drawing in particular on Mbembe and Harvey, we will ask whether and how a post-Kantian humanism or universalism might (or should) be maintained. Together we will seek not just to understand Kant's project in the *Critique of Judgment*, but to explore the extent to which the problems and ideas examined there remain relevant and philosophically generative for us today.

NB you will need your own copy of the *Critique of Judgment* for this seminar: we will be using the Cambridge University Press edition, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (CUP 2001). Other writings by Kant and his commentators will be provided as pdfs via BlackBoard.

2. Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course students should have acquired:

- A good, critically informed understanding of Kant's *Critique of Judgment*.
- An ability to articulate and engage with the concepts, arguments and philosophical problems that arise within the *Critique of Judgment*.
- Familiarity with some of the most important recent philosophical responses to the *Critique of Judgment*, including those by Arendt, Lyotard, and Battersby.
- An appreciation of the continued relevance of the *Critique of Judgment* and surrounding texts by Kant for philosophical questions and concerns today.

- An enhanced capacity to produce rigorous conceptual analysis, nuanced textual interpretation, and sustained critical argument.
- An enhanced capacity to produce philosophical writing at a high level, in keeping with the Philosophy program's standards for good writing:
<http://philosophy.gmu.edu/undergraduate/writing-standards>

3. Key Texts

The key reading for each week is listed in the **course schedule** below. You will need your own copy of the *Critique of Judgment* in the Cambridge edition, translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (CUP 2001). You may wish to compare this translation with either the original German text (if you are able to read in German) or with other English translations (the Pluhar translation, published with Hackett, is good; avoid Bernard and Meredith).

The following texts by Kant will be made available on BB:

Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View (on the character of the sexes / peoples / races) [1798]

'Determination of the concept of a human race' [1785]

'Idea for a universal history with a cosmopolitan aim' [1784]

'Of the different races of human beings' [1775]

'On the use of teleological principles in philosophy' [1788]

If you would like your own copy of these essays, you may wish to purchase the following:

Anthropology, History, and Education (the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant), trans. R. Louden and G. Zöller et al (Cambridge: CUP, 2011).

The following texts on Kant will be made available via BB:

Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* (selections)

Battersby, *The Sublime, Terror and Human Difference*, chapters 3-5.

Bernasconi, 'Who invented the concept of race? Kant's role in the Enlightenment Construction of Race'

Harvey, *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom* (selections)

Lyotard, '*Sensus Communis*'

Lyotard, 'Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?', in *The Postmodern Condition*

Lyotard, *The Inhuman*, Essay 7: 'The Sublime and the Avant-Garde'

Mbembe, *Critique of Black Reason* (selections)

Please note, you will be asked to engage with at least one of the above authors writing on Kant in some depth for your final paper; I will expect you to engage with that text in ways that go beyond the specific chapters/sections that we focus on in class (in the case of Lyotard or Bernasconi, this will mean finding additional, related texts by the same author). You may therefore wish to purchase (or at least borrow from the library) a complete copy of whichever text(s) you choose to work with for your final paper.

Further reading: suggested (selective) further reading is listed at the end of this syllabus.

However, part of your practice as a graduate student should include using the GMU library resources (as well as the internet, with appropriately cautious judgment) to help you find the kinds of secondary readings that are of most help and relevance to you, depending on your prior knowledge of Kant, your specific philosophical interests, and the final paper topic you wish to pursue. You should of course also 'mine' the bibliographies of secondary texts on Kant for further reading suggestions.

4. Course Requirements

a) Attendance and Participation

As this is a graduate level course, there is no mark for attendance and participation as such. The course will be run primarily as a seminar – I will give some lecture-type talks to provide context and frameworks, but much of our work will be done collaboratively through discussion, based on close readings of the texts. How well this works depends on how much time and thought everyone gives to the texts before each session - I will expect everyone to be prepared to participate actively, with questions and comments. By sharing our questions, problems, criticisms, frustrations (etc!) we will all emerge with wider, more informed perspectives and deeper understandings (as well as more thoughts and questions to follow up).

b) Assignments

Conceptual analyses: 2 x 10%

Interpretative analysis: 10%

Response papers: 2 x 10%

Final Paper 50% (2.5% presentation of topic; 2.5% participation in peer review; 45% final paper)

In addition, your final paper grade will replace the lowest grade attained for the five short preparatory papers (unless the final paper grade is lower than all of those grades).

Conceptual Analyses (2 x 10%): you will write two short papers (c.4 pages each) offering analyses of key concepts in the *Critique of Judgment*. These papers are designed to lay the groundwork for your engagement with the course by allowing you to establish a rigorous grasp of some of the key concepts that structure Kant's project in the third Critique, and to develop a facility with working with these concepts in your own writing. Further information will be distributed in weeks 2 and 4.

Interpretative Analysis (10%): you will write one short interpretative analysis (c.4-5 pages). This paper will be based on a chapter or article that offers a critical interpretation of and response to Kant's account of the sublime (a list of texts to choose from will be distributed in week 8). Your task is to summarize the interpretation offered, and to assess its strengths and weaknesses. This paper is designed to familiarize you with an example of contemporary critical engagement with Kant, paying attention to style and register as well as interpretative and conceptual concerns, and to allow you to develop your work with secondary sources (this will be a required feature of the final paper). Further details will be distributed in week 8.

Response Papers (2 x 10%): you will write two short response papers (c.4 pages each) on two of the main commentators that we are engaging with on the course. These can be of your choice, but your response should be submitted within 1 week of the relevant class session. The paper should be centered on a specific question, issue or problem addressed in the relevant text that is of philosophical interest to you. Only around 25% of the response paper should consist of summary of the original text: the rest should consist of analysis, evaluation and critical discussion. The final day for submission of response papers is our last class, in week 15. Further information will be distributed in week 5.

Final Paper (50%)

2.5% oral presentation of topic; 2.5% participation in peer review; 45% final paper

Your final paper will explore a philosophical question, issue or problem that has emerged out of your engagement with the *Critique of Judgment*. This question/issue/problem maybe internal to Kant's work, or show how Kant's work has continued relevance for an area of contemporary philosophical concern. In either case, the paper must include close work with CJ, making direct use of the text, as well as with at least one of the key commentators whose work is explored on

the course. In addition, all papers will be expected to make use of at least two further secondary sources, at least one of which should have been published within the last 20 years. Your skills of conceptual analysis, exegesis and interpretation, and sustained critical argument should here be combined.

I will hold individual meetings with students (in person if possible, if not via email and/or skype) to discuss their final paper proposals in weeks 10 -12. You will also give a brief oral presentation (5-10 minutes) on your final paper topic in week 13: the aim of this presentation is partly to help you to crystallize your thoughts, and partly to share your topics with each other, so as to gain suggestions and feedback from others (e.g. about possible conceptual connections, or further reading ideas).

A draft of the final paper will be submitted on BB no later than Friday of week 14 (midnight, Friday 1st December); students will work in groups to conduct a peer review of each other's drafts (peer review discussion will take place in our final class on Tuesday 5th December). Students may also request my feedback on their draft if they wish, again, providing the draft is submitted no later than Friday 1st December (this is to allow time for feedback in a meaningful way, and also so that you are able to incorporate any suggestions in your final submission).

Final Paper Due: midnight, Friday 15th December (upload on Blackboard)

c) Submission of Written Work

All papers should be uploaded on Blackboard (a link will be provided for each assignment). Please also bring a hard copy to class when possible.

In general, deadlines are non-negotiable. Extensions can be given where there is a very good reason for submitting the work late. **Wherever possible, extensions should be arranged with me in advance.** Extensions cannot be given beyond the last day of the exam period.

5. Course Schedule

NB This is a provisional schedule of key readings – depending on how discussions unfold, we may progress through the material more slowly, and/or switch readings around. Any significant changes will be posted on the Blackboard site for the course and signalled via an email notification (using your GMU email address). If in doubt, or if you miss a class, please email me to check what is coming up at the next session!

All references to the *Critique of Judgment* (CJ) are to the CUP edition specified above.

Week 1, August 29th: Introduction and Revision of Key Concepts from Critique of Pure Reason (CPR)

Reading: Syllabus

Week 2, Sept. 5th: Reflective vs Determinative Judgment

Reading: CJ, Preface (pp.55-58) and First Introduction (CJ, pp.3-51).

Instructions for Conceptual Analysis 1 distributed

Week 3, Sept. 12th: Analytic of the Beautiful

Reading: CJ, First section, first book: Analytic of the beautiful (CJ, §1-22, pp.89-127).

Conceptual Analysis 1 due

Week 4, Sept. 19th: the Deduction of Pure Aesthetic Judgments; the Antinomy of Taste
Reading: CJ, Deduction of pure aesthetic judgments (CJ, §30-42, pp.160-182); Dialectic of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment, §55-58 (pp.213-225).

Instructions for Conceptual Analysis 2 distributed

Week 5, Sept. 26th: sensus communis

Reading: Lyotard, '*Sensus Communis*' (BB)

Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* (lectures 1-2, 9-13; 'The Imagination'; selections on BB)

Conceptual Analysis 2 due

Week 6, October 3rd: fine art, genius, and aesthetic ideas

Reading: CJ, §42-53 and 'Remark' (pp.182-212); Dialectic of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment, §59, 'On Beauty as a symbol of morality' (pp.225-228).

Week 7, October 10th (no class, Mon. classes take place Tues. due to Columbus Day holiday)

Week 8, October 17th: the sublime

Reading: CJ, Analytic of the Sublime, including the General Remark (CJ, §23-29, pp.128-159).

Lyotard, 'Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?', in *The Postmodern Condition* (BB)

Instructions for Interpretative Analysis distributed

Week 9, October 24th: Negative Presentation / Sublimity, gender and race

Reading: Lyotard, *The Inhuman*, Essay 7: 'The Sublime and the Avant-Garde' (BB)

Battersby, *The Sublime, Terror and Human Difference* (London, NY: Routledge, 2007), chapters 3-5 (BB)

Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (on the character of the sexes) (BB)

Week 10, October 31st: Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment 1

Reading: CJ, Analytic and Dialectic of the Teleological Power of Judgment (§61-78, pp. 233-284).

Interpretative Analysis Due; consults on final paper topics

Week 11, November 7th: Teleological Judgment 2

Reading: CJ, Methodology of the Teleological Power of Judgment (§79-91, pp.285-346).

Consults on final paper topics

Week 12, November 14th: teleological judgment, race and history

Reading: Kant, 'Of the different races of human beings' (1775), 'Determination of the concept of a human race' (1785), and 'On the use of teleological principles in philosophy' (1788) (all on BB)
Bernasconi, 'Who invented the concept of race? Kant's role in the Enlightenment Construction of Race' (BB)

Consults on final paper topics

Week 13, November 21st: the legacy of Kant's concept of race

Reading: Mbembe, *The Critique of Black Reason*, Preface, Chapter 1 and chapter 2 (extract) (BB)

Presentation of Final Paper Topics (5-10 minutes per person)

Week 14, November 28th: history, geography, cosmopolitanism

Reading: Kant, 'Idea for a universal history with a cosmopolitan aim' (1784)

Harvey, *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom*, Prologue and chapters 1 & 2 (BB)

Submission of drafts for peer review (and my feedback if requested): midnight, Friday 1st December. Please note this is a 'hard' deadline - no exceptions! - as others need time to read your work!

Week 15, December 5th: critical geographies, critical humanisms

Reading: Mbembe, *The Critique of Black Reason*, chapters 3 & 6 (extracts) and epilogue (BB)

Harvey, *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom*, Geographical Reason & Epilogue (BB)

Peer review of final papers; last day for submitting response papers

Final Paper Due: midnight Friday 15th December (upload on Blackboard)

6. Commitment to Diversity

The Philosophy Department seeks to create a learning environment that fosters respect for people across differences. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and ability. We encourage all members of the learning environment to engage with the material personally, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different than their own.

Each course offers an opportunity for us to develop this commitment together, not just as an attitude but a mode of critical practice that can involve, amongst other things:

- being willing to listen to other perspectives and to hear criticism of one's own views;
- expressing criticisms and differences of opinion in ways that are not personal or hurtful and that leave space for other voices (and the possibility that one is wrong!);
- not rushing to judgment: being willing to evaluate different positions while being unsure where one stands;
- having good reasons for one's views, but being willing to be unsettled and change one's mind;
- basing critical comments or questions on as good an understanding of another person (or text or theory) as one can manage;
- *and* being willing to accept that at any particular time, there will always be things one cannot see or understand (we all have blindspots).

An important aspect of the commitment to diversity is that it does not mean not being critical: respecting others' views means taking them seriously, i.e., treating them as both worthy of critical interrogation and as potentially calling into question one's own views and commitments.

7. Academic Integrity and the Honor Code

As members of the academic community, you are expected to be attentive to issues of academic integrity, particularly as they relate to the acknowledgement of sources and appropriate citation and reference practices.

If you have questions about referencing practices, please do not hesitate to ask me, and/or to consult the resources housed on the Writing Center webpage: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

This course is conducted in accordance with the GMU Honor Code as set out on the University website: "Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work."

<http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>

You are expected to be familiar with and to abide by this code; any violation will be reported to the Honor Committee for adjudication.

8. Student Support & Further Resources

Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS): (703) 993-2380; <http://caps.gmu.edu/>

Office of Disability Services: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me within the first 2 weeks of the semester and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to ensure you receive the required support: 703-993-2472. All academic accommodations must be arranged through ODS: <http://ods.gmu.edu/>

Student Support and Advocacy Center: <http://ssac.gmu.edu>

University Libraries: <http://library.gmu.edu/>

Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

9. Suggested (and highly selective!) Further Reading

Burnham, Douglas, *An Introduction to Kant's 'Critique of Judgement'* (Edinburgh University Press, 2000).

Chadwick, Ruth and Cazeaux, Clive eds., *Immanuel Kant - Critical Assessments: vol 4 - Kant's Critique of Judgement* (London: Routledge, 1992)

Courtine, J-F et al eds, *Of the Sublime: Presence in Question*, trans. J. S. Librett (SUNY, 1993)

Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy* (London: Athlone Press 1984)

Gasché, Rodolphe, *The Idea of Form: Rethinking Kant's Aesthetics* (Stanford University Press, 2003)

Gibbons, Sarah, *Kant's Theory of Imagination: Bridging Gaps in Judgement and Experience* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994)

Ginsborg, Hannah, *The Normativity of Nature: Essays on Kant's Critique of Judgment* (Oxford: OUP, 2015)

Gracyk, Theodore A., "Kant's Shifting Debt to British Aesthetics", in *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 204-217, Summer 1986.

Guyer, Paul ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Kant* (Cambridge University Press, 1992).

Guyer, Paul, *Kant and the Claims of Taste* (London: Harvard University Press, 1979).

Guyer, Paul, ed., *Essays in Kant's Aesthetics* (Chicago: Chicago U.P., 1982).

Guyer, Paul, "Kant's Distinction between the Beautiful and the Sublime", in *Review of Metaphysics*, 35, pp. 753-84, 1982.

Hughes, Fiona, *Kant's Critique of Judgment: A Reader's Guide* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010).

Huhn, Thomas, "The Kantian Sublime and the Nostalgia for Violence", in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 53(3), pp. 269-275, Sum 1995.

Hutchings, Kimberly, *Kant, Critique and Politics* (London: Routledge 1996).

Kemal, Salim, *Kant and Fine Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).

Knox, Israel, *The Aesthetic Theories of Kant, Hegel and Schopenhauer* (New York: Humanities Press, 1958).

- Lyotard, Jean-Francois, *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime*, trans. E. Rottenberg (Stanford University Press, 1994).
- Makkreel, Rudolf, "Imagination and Temporality in Kant's Theory of the Sublime", in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 42, Spring 1984, 303-415.
- Makkreel, Rudolf, *Imagination and Interpretation in Kant: The Hermeneutical Import of the Critique of Judgment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).
- Matthews, Patricia, "Kant's Sublime: A Form of Pure Aesthetic Reflective Judgement", in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 54(2), Spring 1996, 165-80.
- Piché, Claude, 'The Philosopher-Artist: A Note on Lyotard's Reading of Kant', in *Research in Phenomenology*, 22, 152-160, 1992.
- Readings, Bill, *Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics* (Routledge, 1991).
- Silverman, Hugh, ed, *Lyotard: Philosophy, Politics and the Sublime* (Routledge, 2002).
- Zammito, John H, *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgment* (University of Chicago Press: 1992); see esp. chapter 14.
- Zuckert, Rachel, *Kant on Beauty and Biology: An Interpretation of the Critique of Judgment* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007)