

Identity and Perspective

HUM 2010 Section 1 / André Lambelet

Semester 1, 2010

October 27 - November 19, 2010

M-F 12:20-3:20 / A.315

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Course Overview

Course Description

What does it mean to be human?

That question underlies much of what we do in the humanities—in literature, philosophy, history, and the fine and performing arts. In this course, one of three in the interdisciplinary Humanities foundation sequence, we will investigate changing notions of what it means to be human, focusing broadly on the notions of “identity” and “perspective” in the modern world. We will ask what it means to have an “identity”: who are we? Is our identity defined individually, or is it defined collectively? We will think critically about “perspective”: about our own perspective on ourselves, our perspective on others, and the variety of perspectives on the human condition. (And all of this in eighteen days!)

Instructor Information

Tutor: André Lambelet

Email: andre.lambelet@questu.ca. (Please note that I will check my email twice a day: once in the morning and once in the late afternoon. Please do not expect a reply over the weekend or after hours.)

Office hours: Mondays and Thursdays 10-11:30 a.m. and by appointment.

Telephone: 604 898 8026

Learning Objectives

The aim of this course is to encourage the students to engage in dialogue with the course material and with each other. Students who successfully complete the course will develop their skills as critical readers, attentive listeners, persuasive writers, and effective contributors to classroom discussion.

At the end of the course, students should have a deeper appreciation of the role of the humanities and of the place of the liberal arts in a well-rounded education. Students who complete the course will have a better understanding of the modern shifts in the notion of identity. They will be able to engage the question of identity from a variety of perspectives: literary, political, philosophical, psychological, and historical.

By closely studying texts and other works, students will engage directly with the arguments raised by some important modern thinkers. At a minimum, students will be able to discuss lucidly the major issues raised by those thinkers and place them in their broader intellectual and historical contexts.

Methods of Instruction

- Short lectures
- Large group discussion
- Small group discussion
- Student presentations

Required Texts: Available at the University Bookstore

Course Reader: *Identity and Perspective*.

Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Trans. James Strachey. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. 2010.

Levi, Primo. *Survival in Auschwitz*. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1996.

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. *The Communist Manifesto*. Oxford University Press, 2008.

Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2008.

Doing well in this course

Participation and Discussion

The tutor's role is to facilitate discussion and to act as a guide when necessary. Your responsibility is to be prepared to engage in serious discussion of the materials. Participation is a crucial part of this course—not just because you can show what you know and how you think, but also because your participation helps other students learn. You should come to class prepared to contribute to the discussion. This means that you must have read and reflected upon the assigned material; it also means that you should have formulated questions about the material. (It is good practice to write these questions down and bring them to class.) On the other hand (there is always an other hand, isn't there?), you should know that not every thought springs up full-grown like Athena from the brow of Zeus. Please do feel free to try to articulate an idea that is still not fully formed; part of our task as a group is to develop and test these ideas. Our aim is to make discussions free and unfettered.

Remember, too, that the point of discussion is to gain a deeper or better understanding of the topic at hand. In that spirit, we understand that what you say about a topic may not necessarily reflect your own likes, dislikes, politics, preferences, or prejudices.

Because discussion and engagement is a central part of what we do, participation counts for 20% of your grade. So how do you demonstrate your engagement?

- By being there every day and on time. (Note that unexcused absences will have a serious, even devastating, effect on your grade.)
- By being fully prepared; in other words, having read and thought about the material assigned for this class. (See the section on reading below.)
- By raising pertinent questions. ("Pertinent" does not mean complex or obscure; sometimes, simple questions work very well.)
- By taking your classmates' questions seriously, and taking the time to think about what they have said.
- By being willing to go out on a limb from time to time. (Not literally.)
- By treating your classmates and tutor with courtesy and respect.
- By volunteering to read passages for discussion.
- By having the courage to say (or ask) out loud what others may be thinking but are afraid to say (or ask): "I've lost the plot here." "I don't understand." "What does *eudemonia* mean?" And so on.

- By playing the devil’s advocate every now and then.

A general note on participation: Some people are shy. Some people find themselves tongue-tied in class. Some people think that other people are better at articulating their questions or comments. Nevertheless, taking part in a discussion is a useful, even vital, skill. You can prepare questions ahead of time. (Your journal will help you with this.) You can jot down important points before class begins. And you can wait for your tutor to call on you—which he will do (gently) at some point if he does not hear from you.

Reading

Reading is a vital part of your education. *It is not a passive activity.* You will be expected to understand and assimilate the assigned material. You will be asked to master the material in a comprehensive and sophisticated way.

Ask yourself the following questions when you read or study a work:

- Who wrote or created it?
- When was it written or produced?
- What does the work say?
- What questions is it attempting to answer?
- What is the author’s argument? What are the argument’s strengths and weaknesses?
- What kinds of evidence does the author provide for her or his argument? What kinds of sources does the author use?
- To what kinds of arguments is the author responding?
- Pay careful attention to the clues the author gives you:
- Read (and decipher) the title. What does it tell you about the piece you are reading?
- If the piece is a book, read the introduction and conclusion of the book; if the piece is an article or a chapter, read the first and last paragraphs. These should help you figure out what the piece’s argument is. Ask yourself what the thesis of the piece is.
- Read the entire work (or all of the assigned portions). Try to decide which parts or passages are most important. If you own the work, make notes in the margins next to important or interesting parts. (Do not do this in library books!)
- Write down your responses to the work in a notebook. Think of note-taking as a way of organizing your thoughts. You need not write down everything; instead, jot down notes about interesting ideas, problems in the argument, or surprising aspects of the piece. (This is actually a formal requirement—see the section on “Reading Journal,” below.) Constructing diagrams or flowcharts may help, too.
- Re-read the work. You will find that a second (and often, a third and fourth) reading greatly improve your understanding.
- Finally, summarize the author’s argument in a few lines. If you can complete a sentence beginning “The author of this book/article argues...,” you have read intelligently and productively.

If you do all this, you should be ready for *classroom discussion*.

N.B.: One of your assignments for the block is to keep a journal; see the section on “Assignments,” below. The steps above should help prepare you for this.

Writing

We expect your writing to meet standards for university writing. You may consult your tutor if you have specific questions; we also urge all students to make use of the Learning Commons and Peer Tutors. If you don't yet own a good dictionary, get one.

Papers for this course must be written in formal, standard English:

- You must punctuate properly.
- Your writing must be free of major grammatical errors.
- You must proofread your work: papers should be free of spelling errors.
- Your word choices must be appropriate. (If you are not certain of a word's precise meaning, look it up in a good dictionary before handing in your paper.)

Your work will be evaluated for argument, content and style. Arguments should be clear, logical, and well supported. Style matters: it makes your content accessible and your ideas intelligible. Good writing, you will scarcely need to be reminded, is *re-writing*. Plan to write at least two drafts before you submit an essay.

Course and University Policies

General Expectations

You are not on your own. You can expect your tutor to take an active interest in the course and in your work.

- If you have questions about any aspect of the course, do not hesitate to ask your tutor.
- Your tutor has consultation hours, which are posted on his door and on the D2L site for this course. (If you cannot meet with your tutor during consultation hours, you may make an appointment at a mutually convenient time.)
- Your tutor expects you to:
- Read the syllabus and all handouts and therefore be aware of policies, homework, and due dates.
- Check D2L and your Quest e-mail account frequently; changes to the syllabus and to assignments will be posted there.
- Attend every class.
- Arrive on time.
- Be prepared.
- Make use of the tutor's office hours.
- Obtain notes and handouts in the event of an absence.
- Unless otherwise specified, turn in assignments at the beginning of class on the due date given in the syllabus.

Please:

- Be courteous.
- Turn off your cell phone before class.
- Help keep the classroom neat and tidy.

Please do *not*:

- Bring food into the classroom. (Beverages are ok.)
- Use laptops, iPads, electronic tablets, netbooks, smart phones, stupid phones, Wii controllers, Gameboys, or other devices in class unless specifically authorized to do so by the tutor. (If you have a special need, please discuss this with the tutor.)

Special Needs

If you have a documented disability for which you seek accommodation, please let the tutor know as early as possible.

Absences

There are—infrequently—valid reasons to miss class: illness, family emergencies, war, famine, pestilence, and so forth. If you have a really good reason for missing class, your case will be stronger if you notify your tutor *before* you miss class. (Please be forewarned: unexcused absences may lead to a failing grade for the course.) You are in any event responsible for obtaining notes, handouts, and assignments.

Academic Integrity

As the Quest University Calendar notes, “Quest is committed to the principle of academic integrity, itself grounded in the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in all academic work.” (Quest University Calendar, p. 17.) We depend on the honesty and responsibility of all of our members—scholars and teachers alike.

In keeping with the Honour Principle, you will do your own work, and you will conscientiously and meticulously credit sources. Citing sources is not optional in academic work—it is a fundamental principle. As you should know, plagiarism is, broadly speaking, passing off someone else work or ideas as your own, failing to properly identify and credit the source of material you submit, or using cited material improperly. Please be aware that failure to observe the rules of citation will result in charges of plagiarism or academic dishonesty.

Charges of plagiarism or of academic dishonesty are not taken lightly, and may have dire consequences: failure on the assignment, failure of the course, and worse. To avoid this sort of unpleasantness, please be sure to read “University Policies: Quest Honour Principle and Protocol” on page 17 of the University Calendar. If you have questions about citation, crediting sources, or anything else relating to academic integrity, please ask *before* you turn in the work. (Information about plagiarism can also be obtained from the Learning Commons.)

If the *principle* of citation is the same across academic disciplines, the *particular format* of citation varies from discipline to discipline, and even within disciplines. Your tutor will discuss citation formats and principles with you in class; further guidelines will be posted on D2L.

Assessment

Your grade for the course will be based on five elements:

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Journal | 15% |
| Presentation | 10% |
| Participation | 20% |
| First Essay | 15% |
| Second Essay | 15% |
| Third Essay | 25% |

A letter grade will be assigned for the course. See the *Quest University Calendar 2010-2011*, p. 19, for details on the grades awarded.

We will be using teaching and marking rubrics in this course. We will go over their use in the first session.

You may, if you wish, opt *not* to have grades appear on your individual assignment. (Tell your tutor if you choose this option.) You will of course receive (non-grade) feedback and an evaluation of your work, and grades will still be recorded for the course.

Assignments

Journal Responses

You will keep a journal for this course; its purpose is to focus your attention on the works assigned for class, to spur you to think about what you read, and to provide you with material for classroom discussion.

As a rough guideline, you should write between 250 and 500 words, or one to two pages, for each journal entry. Please bring your journal with you to class every day. This is not “formal” writing: you need not write an essay, but you must write clearly and intelligibly. (You must still cite your sources; if only one text is assigned, you may refer to the page number without bothering with the other stuff that goes in a formal citation; if there is more than one text assigned, please be sure to identify which text you are citing.)

Your response should indicate:

- The main point(s) of the assigned work
- The author’s purpose in writing or creating the assigned work
- Your reaction to the assigned work. (Do you like the piece? Why or why not? Do you agree with it? Why or why not?)
- Your assessment of the significance of the assigned work. (Is it important? Why or why not? To whom?)
- Questions that the assigned work raises for you—or for others.

Five times during the block (chosen at random—you will not be forewarned), your tutor will collect your response for that day’s assigned reading. Each response collected is worth 3% of your overall grade. Late responses will not be accepted.

Presentation

You will be called upon to make a presentation in this course. You will be assigned a partner with whom you will provide a five- to seven-minute talk on a topic related to the day's discussion. This will be a *spare* presentation: no PowerPoint, no audio, no video. Just lucid, clear talk and sharp questions. You should carefully prepare your presentation, rehearse it before you give it, and respect the time limit.

Your presentation should situate the assigned reading. You might include biographical material about the author, historical material about the period or place, and information about the importance of the work or author.

Assignments will be made during the first meeting of the block; we will go over the details of the presentation in the first class.

Dates for presentations:

| |
|-----------------------------|
| Friday, 5 November 2010 |
| Monday, 8 November 2010 |
| Tuesday, 9 November 2010 |
| Wednesday, 10 November 2010 |
| Thursday, 11 November 2010 |
| Tuesday, 16 November 2010 |
| Wednesday, 17 November 2010 |
| Thursday, 18 November 2010 |
| Monday, 22 November 2010 |
| Wednesday, 24 November 2010 |
| Thursday, 25 November 2010 |

Essays

You will be asked to write two essays for this course: two short essays (1000-1200 words or so each) and a somewhat longer essay (approximately 1500-1800 words).

Topics will be handed out one week before the final draft is due.

Rough (but **complete**) hard-copy drafts of these papers are due *at the beginning of class*; part of class will be devoted to peer editing.

Final drafts are due by 5 pm. (You must submit a paper copy *and* submit an electronic copy on D2L.)

| Topics handed out | Rough draft (due at the beginning of class) | Final draft (due at 5 pm) |
|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Monday, 29 November 2010 | Thursday, 4 November 2010 | Friday, 5 November 2010 |
| Friday, 5 November 2010 | Thursday, 11 November 2010 | Friday, 12 November 2010 |
| Friday, 12 November 2010 | Thursday, 18 November 2010 | Friday, 19 November 2010 |

Course Schedule

Please note that this schedule is subject to change; any changes will be announced in class and posted on D2L.

Key:

Books are in **boldface**.

*In *Course Reader*.

†Available online.

Oct. 27: Introduction: The Humanities, Identity, and Perspective

Read this syllabus.

Oct. 28: John Locke and Thomas Reid

*John Locke, "Of Identity and Diversity," chapter 6 of *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*

*Thomas Reid, "Of Mr. Locke's Account of our Personal Identity," *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*

Oct. 29: Communist Manifesto

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. *The Communist Manifesto*. Oxford University Press, 2008. Please read the entire book. (*Do* read the various "Prefaces" included at the end of the book.)

Nov. 1: Rites of Spring

*Eksteins, Modris. "Paris." Chapter I of *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*. Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1989. 9-54.

Nov. 2: The Great War and Modern Memory - I

*Fussell, Paul. "Adversary Proceedings." Chapter III of *The Great War and Modern Memory*. London: Oxford University Press, 1975. 75-114.

Nov. 3: The Great War and Modern Memory - II

*Céline, Louis-Ferdinand. *Journey to the End of the Night*. New York: New Directions, 1983. 3-38.

*Akhmatova, Anna. "July 1914." In Jon Silkin, ed. *The Penguin Book of First World War Poetry*. Penguin Classics, 1996. 274-5.

The following poems are available online at the "Modern History Sourcebook" (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1914warpoets.html>):

†Owen, Wilfred. "Anthem for Doomed Youth." September-October 1917.

†Owen, Wilfred. "Dulce et Decorum Est." October 1917-March 1918.

†Sassoon, Siegfried. "How to Die." 1918.

†Philip Larkin. "MCMXIV." 1964.

Please also read:

†Eliot, T. S. "The Hollow Men" - <http://poetry.poetryx.com/poems/784/> and <http://aduni.org/~heather/occs/honors/Poem.htm>

Further reading

Wilfred Owen's *Poems*, posthumously published in 1921, is widely available on the Internet. You will find a PDF of the original volume at the Internet Archive:

<http://www.archive.org/details/poemswilf00owenuoft>.

The poems of Siegfried Sassoon are also available at the Internet Archive:

<http://www.archive.org/details/warpoemsofsiegfr00sassrich>.

If the world of Robert Graves, Siegfried Sassoon, and Wilfred Owen interests you, you might consider Pat Barker's World War I trilogy: *Regeneration* (1991), *The Eye in the Door* (1993), and *The Ghost Road* (1995).

Novels / memoirs:

Barbusse, Henri. *Under Fire*. Penguin Classics, 2004. Published during the war. Prize-winning fictionalized account of Barbusse's own experience.

Graves, Robert. *Goodbye to All That*. Penguin Group, 2009. A classic.

Hasek, Jaroslav. *The Good Soldier Svejk: and His Fortunes in the World War*. Penguin Classics, 2005. Satirical novel about a soldier in the Austro-Hungarian army.

Jünger, Ernst. *Storm of Steel*. Penguin Classics, 2004. A gripping account of the war by a soldier for whom war was a thrilling experience.

Remarque, Erich Maria. *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Ballantine Books, 1982. A classic anti-war account based loosely on Remarque's experience. Made into a film that was quickly banned in Germany.

Sassoon, Siegfried. *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*. London: Faber and Faber, 2000. Another lightly fictionalized account of the war by an important poet.

Nov. 4: Being and Time I

*Heidegger, Martin. "The Possible Being-a-Whole of Da-sein and Being-toward-Death." In *Being and Time: A Translation of Sein and Zeit*. Reprint. State University of New York Press, 1996. 219-228.

Nov. 5: Being and Time II

*Heidegger, Martin. "The Possible Being-a-Whole of Da-sein and Being-toward-Death." In *Being and Time: A Translation of Sein and Zeit*. Reprint. State University of New York Press, 1996. 229-240.

Nov 8: Metropolis

In-class viewing:

Metropolis. Dir. Fritz Lang. UFA, 1927. DVD. Kino International Corporation, 2002.

Nov. 9: Woolf I

Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2008. Please read (carefully): "Biographical Preface" (vii-xi), "Introduction" (xii-xxviii), and Chapters I-III (3-74). Please also skim the chronology at the beginning of the book.

Nov. 10: Woolf II

Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2008. Please read Chapters IV-VI (75-149).

Nov. 11: Freud I

Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Trans. James Strachey. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. 2010. Please read Peter Gay's short biography: "Sigmund Freud: A Brief Life," pp. ix-xxiii; the "Editor's Introduction" (4-9); and Chapters I-IV (10-63).

Further readingBy Freud:

Freud, Sigmund. *Case histories I: "Dora" and "Little Hans"*. Harmondsworth Eng.: Penguin Books, 1977.

---. *On Dreams*. Ed. James Strachey. W. W. Norton & Company, 1952.

---. *The Freud Reader*. Ed. Peter Gay. W. W. Norton & Company, 1995.

---. *The Future of an Illusion*. New York: Norton, 1975.

---. *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages And Neurotics*. Ed. James Strachey. W. W. Norton & Company, 1950.

Freud, Sigmund, and Wilhelm Fliess. *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess, 1887-1904*. Ed. Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985.

Secondary Works:

Burke, Peter. "Freud and Cultural History." *Psychoanalysis and History* 9.1 (2007): 5-15.

Gay, Peter. *Freud: A Life for Our Time*. 1st ed. New York: Norton, 1988.

Hughes, H. *Consciousness and society: the reorientation of European social thought, 1890-1930*. Brighton Sussex: Harvester Press, 1988.

Jones, Ernest. *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*. Abridged ed. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993.

Nov. 12: Freud II

Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and its Discontents*. Trans. James Strachey. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. 2010. Please read Chapters V-VIII (64-112).

Nov. 15: Levi I

Levi, Primo. *Survival in Auschwitz*. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1996. Please read pages 9-86.

Nov. 16: Levi II

Levi, Primo. *Survival in Auschwitz*. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1996. Please read pages 87-187.

Nov. 17: Who Gets to Tell the Story?

*Hines, Samuel. "Everybody's War." In *The Soldiers' Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War*. New York: Allen Lane / Penguin Press, 1997. 108-152.

Nov. 18: de Beauvoir

*de Beauvoir, Simone. "Author's Introduction" and "Facts and Myths" (excerpts). In *The Second Sex*. Vintage, 1989. xli-lv; 27-38.

Nov. 19: Perspectives on Human Rights

†Roosevelt, Eleanor. "The Struggle for Human Rights." Speech delivered 28 September 1948, Paris, France. Available at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/eleanorroosevelt.htm>.

†*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. December 10, 1948. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>.