

Reading Marx, Nietzsche, & Freud

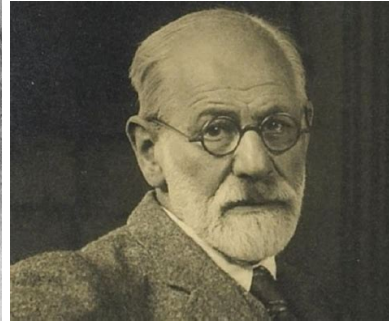
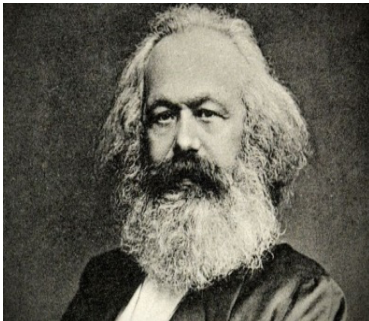
Spring 2022 / COORL1-50

T/TH 1:30 pm to 2:45 pm

GER 494 / SLC 494/ ENG 494 / HON 494 / PHI 494

Prof. Christopher D. Johnson (cdjohnson@asu.edu)

Office hours: T/TH 12:00 to 1:00 (LL 503e), or by appt. via e-mail



Course description

This interdisciplinary course investigates selected works Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud and their ground-breaking contributions to the understanding of society, culture, and the individual. Topics will include: Marx's debts to philosophical idealism, analysis of capital, and strategies for bridging theory and practice; Nietzsche's theory of metaphor, conception of the eternal return, and call for a transvaluation of values; Freud's theory of culture, views on the psychopathology of everyday life, and the meaning of dreams, symptoms, and the return of the repressed. We will also consider the different styles of thought these thinkers cultivated. Finally, we will a handful of influential texts interpreting their legacy from different perspectives.

Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes

1. Students will become familiar with three of the most important thinkers in Western thought.
2. Students will become better analytic and interpretive thinkers.
3. Students will sharpen their ability to discuss and write about philosophic, social-cultural, and literary topics.

Required texts (available at ASU bookstore):

- Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*, ed. Lawrence H. Simon (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994).
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Nietzsche Reader*, ed. Keith Ansell Pearson and Duncan Large (Malden, MA.; Oxford: Blackwell, 2006).
- Sigmund Freud, *The Penguin Freud Reader*, ed. Adam Phillips (New York: Penguin, 2006)

Supplemental Texts (on reserve in Hayden Library, except where indicated):

- Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." *Illuminations*. New York 1969 [pdf].
- Jon Elster, *Making Sense of Marx*. Cambridge 1985
- Rita Felski, "Critique and the Hermeneutics of Suspicion": <http://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/viewArticle/431>
- Barbara Johnson, *Moses and Multiculturalism*. Berkeley, 2010.
- Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*. London 1998.
- Peter Singer, *Marx. A very short Introduction*. Oxford 2000.

Office Hours:

I will hold office hours on Wednesday from 1:45-3:00 pm in LL 503e. My campus mailbox is located in SILC Administrative Office.

Course Requirements / Grading:

- Class preparation & participation in discussion (both in-class & on-line) = 25%. On-line discussion posts via CANVAS must be made before Thursday's class. No make-ups are possible.
- Weekly reading response papers (~250 words) = 25%. There will be 14 response papers in total; each response paper is due by Monday at 8pm. These will be on questions and issues that draw on course materials and class discussions. These assignments do not involve any external research – using course materials will suffice. (Detailed instructions and a rubric with specific grading criteria will be provided in a separate handout. A make-up paper is possible; but it must be turned in within a week of the original due date and will be docked one letter grade.
- Midterm take home essay = 20%
- Final essay (10-12 pages) = 30%

[Students taking the course for Honors credit will be asked to read one of the supplemental texts (listed above) and then offer an in-class presentation (15 minutes) on the chosen text to help the class interpret the other texts we are reading for that day. Your grade for the presentation will comprise 25% of your Class preparation & participation grade.]

Grade Scale:

A+ (>97-100); A (>94-97); A- (>90-94); B+ (>87-90); B (>84-87); B- (>80-84); C+ (>76-80); C (>73-76); D (>69-73); E (>60-69)

Course Policies

- Absence policy: 2 unexcused absences will result in a corresponding lower grade.
- Due dates for the midterm and final essay cannot be extended.
- Please do not be late to class: tardiness is disrespectful (and you may miss an in-class quiz or writing assignment, which you will not be allowed to make-up).
- **During class texting, surfing the net, use of social media, cell phones, recording devices, etc. is prohibited.** Such activities are disrespectful and disruptive of the learning environment. If it becomes apparent that you are violating this policy, you will be asked to stop; if you persist you will be given an unexcused absence for that day.

Plagiarism

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, academic transactions, and records. Passing another person's work as your own or failing to acknowledge your sources properly is a serious breach of academic integrity. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. Plagiarism, even if unintentional, is theft and cheating. Learn how to avoid it here:

-- ASU Academic Integrity: <https://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity/students>

-- The Governors of Acadia University's interactive video on plagiarism:

<http://library.acadiau.ca/sites/default/files/library/tutorials/plagiarism>

-- The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL):

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01>

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. The DRC Tempe office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: (480) 965-1234 (V) or (480) 965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc.

Religious Holidays and University Sanctioned Activities

ASU Board of Regents policy prohibits discrimination against any student, employee, or other individual because of such individual's religious belief or practice, or any absence thereof. Students should notify me at the beginning of the semester about the need to be absent from class due to religious observances. I will arrange for alternative assignments

to make up for the missed class time. Likewise, students who need to miss classes due to their participation in university sanctioned activities should notify me as early as possible (preferably, at the beginning of the semester) to arrange for alternative assignments to make up for the missed class time.

ASU Policy Against Threatening Behavior

All incidents and allegations of violent or threatening conduct by an ASU student (whether on-or off campus) must be reported to the ASU Police Department (ASU PD) and the Office of the Dean of Students. If either office determines that the behavior poses or has posed a serious threat to personal safety or to the welfare of the campus, the student will not be permitted to return to campus or reside in any ASU residence hall until an appropriate threat assessment has been completed and, if necessary, conditions for return are imposed. ASU PD, the Office of the Dean of Students, and other appropriate offices will coordinate the assessment in light of the relevant circumstances.

Title IX

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu>.

Course schedule

Week 1: Course Intro / Foucault, "Nietzsche, Freud, Marx"

Week 2 / The young philosopher

Marx: "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*" (pp. 27-39); *Theses on Feuerbach* (pp. 98-101); selections from *German Ideology* (pp. 102-156)

Week 3 / *Aux barricades!*

Marx: *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (pp. 157-186); selections from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (pp. 187-208)

Week 4 / *Sein Brot verdienen*

Marx: selections from journalistic and political writings; selected letters

- Theodor W. Adorno & Max Horkheimer. "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" (pdf)

Week 5 / Theory triumphs

Marx: Selections from *Das Kapital* (pp. 214-300)

Week 6 / Language and History

Nietzsche: "General Introduction" (pp. xvii-xl); "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense" (pp. 114-123); "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life" " (pp. 124-141)

Week 7 / A new humanism

Nietzsche: selections from *Human, All Too Human* " (pp. 161-190); from *The Gay Science* " (pp. 207-237)

- Midterm essay due.

Week 8 / *Übermensch*?

Nietzsche: selections from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (pp. 242-292)

Week 9 / A new morality

Nietzsche: selections from *Beyond Good and Evil* (pp. 293-361)

Week 10 / Self-knowledge

Nietzsche: selections from *Ecce Homo* " (pp. 500-516); selected letters " (pp. 517-524); Sarah Kofman, excerpts from *Camera Obscura of Ideology* (pp. 1-20; 29-48)); Gilles Deleuze, excerpt from *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (pp. 1-16; 39-57)

Week 11: Interpretation

Freud: "Introduction" (pp. vii-xvi); selections from *Interpretation of Dreams* (pdf)

Week 12: A new science

Freud: *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (pp. 1-63); *Fetishism* (pp. 90-95)

Week 13: Desires

Freud: *From the History of an Infantile Neurosis [The 'Wolfman']* (pp. 196-309)

Week 14: Love and Loss

Freud: *From the History of an Infantile Neurosis [The 'Wolfman']* (pp. 196-309); selections from *Mourning and Melancholia* (pp. 310-326)

Week 15: Wit

Freud: *Screen Memories* (pp. 541-560); *Humour* (pp. 561-566); Paul Ricœur, excerpt from *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation* (pp. 3-58)

- Final Essay due dtb.