

University of South Alabama  
History 541, Fall 2007  
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## MAJOR EUROPEAN THINKERS OF THE LAST FIVE HUNDRED YEARS

**OFFICE HOURS:** 8:30-9:30 pm, Wednesday and Thursday, or by appointment. *Please let me know ahead of time if you are planning to come on Wednesday evening (after my other evening class).* I can easily arrange to meet with you at other times. I OFTEN KEEP MY DOOR CLOSED DURING OFFICE HOURS; PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO KNOCK! MY OFFICE IS RATHER HIDDEN -- PLEASE SEE MAP ON LAST PAGE OF SYLLABUS.

## INTRODUCTION

This class is intended to give you a first hand acquaintance with five of the most important thinkers of the last several hundred years: Jean Jacques Rousseau, Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud and Simone de Beauvoir. It is intended to spark your interest in further exploring the thought of these individuals and in other important thinkers who could not be included due to time limitations. It is further designed to give you some insight into the circumstances in which each worked and to which each responded.

I have designed this class as a seminar class as I believe that your discussion and debate of the ideas of these authors and the circumstances in which they worked will give you a much stronger grasp of their ideas and their historical context than simply listening to me lecture. This means that virtually all class time will be devoted to student presentations and discussion by you, the students in the class. Thus this class depends upon your commitment to it and active participation in it. If you do so you will find it very rewarding.

However your lack of participation or absence from the class will hurt the other students as well as you. If you are unable to make the commitment to attend this class regularly and participate in it actively, you would do better not to remain enrolled in it. This is especially true for this summer session course. The grading for this class reflects my approach: significant percentages of your grade depend upon your active participation and your preparation of class presentations. Since this class meets twice per week, one absence is equal to missing class for an entire week. Thus I am allowing only TWO unexcused absences for the entire semester (the equivalent of missing almost six 50-minute classes or two whole weeks out of a fifteen week semester). Each absence beyond two will result in reduction of your final grade by one-half (A- to B, B- to C, etc.).

## REQUIRED READINGS

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Basic Political Writings*, Hackett  
James R. Otteson, ed., *Adam Smith: Selected Philosophical Writings*  
Philip Appleman, ed., *Darwin: Texts, Commentary*, Third Edition, A Norton Critical Edition  
Marx, *Selected Writings*, Hackett  
Freud, Peter Gay, ed. *The Freud Reader*, Norton  
Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, H.M. Parshley, trans., Vintage Books 1989 reissue.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- I. You will give several in-class presentations on readings for a class, depending on the size of the class.
- II. You will write a paper in which you will deepen your knowledge of one or more of the thinkers studied by reading further in that author's own writings and in the historical scholarship concerning the thinker(s) in question. Or, you may write on the relationship between two major thinkers, of whom at least one must be a person studied in this course. You will choose a particular issue from the body of ideas of the individual or individuals you are studying. You will also write a proposal for your project, a rough draft which I and your fellow students will critique, and a final draft of 15-20 pages. **WHEN YOU TURN IN YOUR PROPOSAL AND ROUGH DRAFT, PLEASE BRING ENOUGH COPIES FOR ALL STUDENTS IN CLASS.**

**The paper from this class can be used to satisfy the History M.A. research requirement, as long as a substantial part of the paper is devoted to analysis of major thinkers. However, if, in my judgment, your**

*paper does not meet the minimum requirements for a primary-source-based paper, you will not receive credit for the research requirement.*

## GRADING

Class Participation:	30%
Presentations:	25%
Paper proposal:	15%
Final Paper:	30%

**PLAGIARISM** -- the use of another person's ideas or words without citing that person -- is a very serious offense and can lead to a failing grade or expulsion from the University.

## THE FOLLOWING ARE ALL FORMS OF PLAGIARISM:

Using someone else's ideas without citing that person as the source. **NOTE THAT PUTTING SOMEONE ELSE'S IDEAS INTO YOUR OWN WORDS IS STILL CONSIDERED PLAGIARISM IF YOU FAIL TO CITE YOUR SOURCE.**

Using someone else's exact words without placing them in quotation marks even if you have cited that person as your source.

Using someone else's words without citing that person as the author.

Note that this means that you are required to cite each source every time you use it, not just when you are quoting from it directly.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with bona fide disabilities will be afforded reasonable accommodation. The Office of Special Student Services will certify a disability and advise faculty members of reasonable accommodations.

### *Tentative Syllabus*

#### I. Rousseau and the Enlightenment

##### The Theory of the Social Contract I

Readings: Translator's Note and Peter Gay's Introduction, vi-xvii; *On the Social Contract*, Books I & II; (141-172).

##### The Theory of the Social Contract II

Readings: *On the Social Contract*, Books III & IV, 173-227).

#### II. Adam Smith and the Theory of Capitalism

Readings: *Introduction* 1-10; *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Parts One through Four, 11-74

*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Parts Five through Seven, 76-90, *The Wealth of Nations*, Books I and II, 91-136

*The Wealth of Nations*, 136 – 178

#### III. Marx and the Revolutions of the Nineteenth Century

##### Marx's Theory of Society and Revolution

Readings: Introduction, pp.ix-xxxv; *Theses on Feuerbach* 98-101

*The Communist Manifesto* 157-187

*Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, pp. 209-213  
*Economic and Philosophical MSS.* 54-79

Marx Applies His Theories: Two Examples

Readings: *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, 187-208  
*The Civil War in France*, pp. 301-314

IV. Charles Darwin and the Theory of Evolution

The Development of the Theory

Readings: Philip Appleman, *Darwin: On Changing the Mind*, 3-20  
Sir Gavin de Beer, *Biology before the Beagle*, pp. 33-39  
Thomas Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, 39-40  
Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, 95-147, 158-174

Evolution and Human Beings in Darwin's View

Reading: Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, 175-255

Darwin's Influence

Readings: Articles on Social Darwinism by Hofstadter & Carnegie, 389-398  
Articles on Nature and Nurture by Wilson, Gould, Ehrenreich and McIntosh: 409-426  
Articles on Religion and Darwinism: United Presbyterian Church, 529-31, Institute for  
Creation Research, 555-557, Henry M. Morris 557-564, Thomas J. Wheeler, Review of  
Morris, 564-568

V. Freud and Psychoanalysis

The Theory of Psychoanalysis

Readings: Preface, Introduction, pp. xi-xxix (note also Chronology beginning p. xxxi)  
Freud, *On Dreams*, 142-172.  
Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, 239-292

The Practice of Psychoanalysis

Readings: Freud, *Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*, 172-239  
Freud, *From the History of an Infantile Neurosis ("Wolf Man")*, 400-426.

Social and Religious Implications

Readings: *Totem & Taboo*, 481-513  
*Civilization and its Discontents*, 722-772  
*Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 594-626

VI. Simone de Beauvoir and Feminism

Readings: Book One, Facts and Myths  
Introductions by author and translator, entire  
Part I: Destiny, entire  
Part II: History, entire

Book Two

Women's Lives Today, Selections  
Part IV, The Formative Years, entire  
Part V, Situation, chapter XVI, pp. 425-483

Book Two

Part V, Situation, chapters XVII and XVIII, pp. 484-554  
Part VII, Toward Liberation, entire

