

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Philosophy 259 Lecture 01
Sex, Love, and Death
Winter 2011 – E. Brake

Instructor: Elizabeth Brake
Office: 1220 Social Sciences
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Lectures: MWF 12:00-12:50, A140

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Texts:

- 1) *The Philosophy of (Erotic) Love*, ed. Robert Solomon and Kathleen Higgins, University Press of Kansas, 1991
- 2) *Philosophy and Death*, ed. Samantha Brennan and Robert Stainton, Broadview Press, 2009
- 3) Additional assigned reading is available through Library e-journals. These are posted as pdf files on Blackboard under 'External Links', along with citation information.

Course description:

This course will examine the concepts of love, sex, death, and personhood as a prologue to addressing vital ethical questions. We will begin by studying the concept of erotic love and its historical development. Clarifying the different understandings of erotic love will allow us to address ethical questions about it. Does such love, for example, consist in finding the unique other person who can complete one, or is it symptomatic of neurosis? Answers to these questions will suggest views about the value of such love and its relation to sex. In considering these issues, we will focus on the case of same-sex marriage. We will then proceed to examine questions about the permissibility of sexual acts, focusing on sexual objectification. In the second part of the course, we will turn to death, beginning again by examining the basic concepts, in this case of death and personhood. Changing technology makes clarifying the concept of death of pressing importance: is a brain-dead person really dead, for instance, even though she continues breathing? After examining the concepts, we will turn again to questions of value and morality, addressing first the question of whether death can be bad for the person who dies, and second the question of what makes killing wrong, focusing on the case of assisted suicide.

Assessment:

<u>Weight</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Due dates</u>
5%	Tutorial participation	N/A
20% each	3 papers	Jan 31, March 14, April 4
25%	Mid-term	February 18
10%	In-class final	April 15

To pass the class, you must complete all assignments. Late work will be penalised 3 points a day, unless there is a documented excuse such as illness or family emergency. I will count e-mailed assignments as late until I receive a hard copy. Assignments handed in outside class must be placed in the drop box on the 12th floor of Social Sciences before 4:00 p.m.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any instance thereof – downloading papers from the Internet, copying or paraphrasing material from a book, web-site, or a fellow student – will be reported to the Faculty and I will assign an F for the course or the assignment. Even copying one or two sentences constitutes plagiarism.

As stated in the University Calendar, letter grades reflect the following standards:

A: Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.

B: Good — clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.

C: Satisfactory — basic understanding of the subject matter.

D: Minimal pass — marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.

F: Fail — unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.

The quality of writing will be a component in grading.

Grading scale:

A+	97-100	A	93-96	A-	90-92
B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
D+	67-69	D	60-66		
F	59 and below				

There is a Blackboard site for this course. Log in at <<http://blackboard.ucalgary.ca/>> using your U of C e-mail username and password. I will use Blackboard to store grades, to make announcement, and to post course documents.

I will accommodate students with disabilities. If you need accommodations, you should contact the *Disability Resource Centre* (220-8237) as well as informing me.

Reading schedule:

Part One: Love and sex

Week of Jan 10 Defining the concept: What is love? Plato, *Symposium*

Week of Jan 17 Plato, cont., and Nussbaum, “The Speech of Alcibiades”

Week of Jan 24 Changing understandings of love: Christian and courtly love, love as lust, union, and illusion: Ovid, Augustine, Capellanus, Shakespeare, Hegel, Stendhal, and Irving Singer

Jan 31 **Paper #1 due**

Week of Jan 31 Changing understandings of the relation of love and marriage and their relation to friendship: Abelard and Heloise, Milton, Nietzsche

Week of Feb 7 Critiques of love as pathology, ideology, or struggle: Freud, Horney, Goldman, Schopenhauer, Sartre

Week of Feb 14 Gender, love, and marriage: Rousseau, de Beauvoir, Firestone

Feb 18 **Mid-term**

Week of Feb 21 Reading Week

Week of Feb 28 Natural law and sexual ethics: John Finnis, “The Good of Marriage,” Stephen Macedo, “Homosexuality and the Conservative Mind” (on BB)

Week of March 7 Sexual Objectification: Martha Nussbaum (on BB)

Part Two: Death

March 14 **Paper #2 due**

Week of March 14 Defining the concept of personhood: The possibility of survival after death: Plato and Perry

Week of March 21 Defining the concept: What is death? Pojman and McMahan

Week of March 28 Can death be bad for the person who dies? Epicurus, Lucretius, and Nagel

April 4 **Paper #3 due**

Week of April 4 Under what conditions is killing wrong? The case of Euthanasia: Rachels, Steinbock, and The Philosophers’ Brief

Week of April 11 What makes killing wrong? Glover

April 15 **In-class test**

INTELLECTUAL HONESTY

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. As a result, cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is regarded as **an extremely serious academic offence**, the penalty for which may be an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. The University Calendar states that plagiarism exists when:

- *the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test);*
- *parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;*
- *the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source; and/or*
- *a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.*

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

STUDENTS' UNION REPRESENTATIVES

The Faculty of Arts Representatives are Laura Golebiowski (arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), Bhuvana Sankaranarayanan (arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), Lara Schmitz (arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), and Vincent St. Pierre (arts4@su.ucalgary.ca).

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial FOIP Act in all aspects of its operations as a publicly funded institution. The Department of Philosophy ensures the student's right to privacy by requiring all graded assignments be returned to the student directly from the instructor unless other arrangements have been made in writing and filed with the Department Administrator.

SAFEWALK: PROMOTING CAMPUS SAFETY AND AWARENESS

Twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, Safewalk volunteers walk people safely to their destination on campus. This service is free and available to students, staff, and campus visitors. Safewalks are done in male/female pairs. The volunteers walk anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). To request a Safewalk volunteer to walk with you, call 403-220-5333 (24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days a year) or use one of the Help Phones located across campus (they are not just for emergencies).