



Philosophy East and West

The literal meaning of the term “philosophy” is “the love of wisdom”(from the Greek *philein-sophia*.) However, Philosophy has been defined in many ways: as a search for first principles that underlie and constitute the universe, as the clarification of our fundamental concepts and the justification of our basic beliefs, and as the systematic organization of the results of all the special sciences; it has also been defined as the attempt to resolve the basic mysteries of existence and to provide guidance as to how our lives should be lived. William James, the American Philosopher, understood philosophy to be simply, “the unusual obstinate effort to think clearly.” Both Eastern and Western Philosophies would confirm this claim.

A general rule of thumb for any philosopher is to resist assuming that Eastern or Western philosophy can be easily lumped into its own unified field of thought. One can never make simple philosophical generalizations without hearing someone react by saying, “Yeah, but not all Western (or Eastern) philosophers see it that way!” There are always exceptions to every generalization, but generalizations can provoke the philosopher to dig deeper. With that caveat, I move on to make several heuristic (albeit simplistic) generalizations.

More often than not, when one speaks of Western Philosophical

Foundations one uncovers the following notions: Mind-Body Problem, the existence or not of Soul, Self, God, Will, Nature/Essences. One also finds many who think that objective-rational thought is the best way of discerning the will, knowing the Truth and defending its ac-

“In order to be able to see clearly, one needs to first see HOW she or he is seeing in a self preoccupied way.”

curacy through the right arguments, principles and laws. The majority of Western philosophers seem to see philosophy as closely aligned to science in its spirit of objectivity if not in its precise methods.

When one makes generalizations about Eastern Philosophical thought in this similar type of caricature, one may find other notions: Non-dual-

ity, Heart-Mind as one word, no-soul, no essence, impermanence, interdependence, emptiness, insubstantiality, the wisdom of spontaneity and intuition, context-driven truths. Many Eastern philosophers have seen their philosophies as easily affiliated and explicated in art and ritual. William James referred to this division in terms of the “tough-minded” versus the “tender-minded” when comparing Western with Eastern Philosophy--this reading of difference is deeply influenced by turn-of-the-century ideas about Western superiority.

For years, Western philosophers thought philosophers from India, China and Japan were not TRUE philosophers because they could not see their own (Western) terms and preoccupations in the Eastern and South Asian texts. This philosophical chauvinism only accepts what mirrors us. In order to be able to see clearly, one needs to first see HOW she or he is seeing in a self-preoccupied way and then begin to bracket narcissistic expectations. In order for Western students to enter into

In this Issue

- Focus on Students
- Philosophical Birthdays
- Fall 2002 Philosophy Courses
- The Philosophy Major
- Philosophical Society
- The Book Corner

continued from page 1

dialogue with Eastern thought, self-seeking agendas must be exposed, new terms must be defined and patiently explored, as if one were learning a new language.

In the latter half of the 20th century and early 21st century, more and more, one finds Western philosophy programs opening up to dialogue with Eastern Philosophical Thought. Here at the University of West Georgia, the Philosophy Program is dedicated to the idea that philosophy is not the exclusive province of the West, and that indeed other traditions have a depth, range, and distinctive character that need to be recognized if for no other reason than to enrich considerably our own philosophical background and to enable us to understand better our own traditions. We now live in a global society with highly interdependent cultures and economies, and since many nations, including most conspicuously the United States, are rapidly becoming multicultural, to survive well in such a situation we need to know a great deal about different world traditions. As true lovers of wisdom, we think better and more creatively when we understand and appreciate the rich and diverse ways in which basic issues have been dealt with, identified, and defined in different cultures. Moving, philosophically, from West to East and from East to West and back again is worthwhile if we are to ever transform the smallness of our age-old, self-satisfied perceptions.

Dr. Jennifer Manlowe
Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Department of Philosophy

Department Office: Humanities 154
Telephone: 770-836-6848
Department Office Hours: M-F, 8 am-1 pm
Fax: 770-830-2322
Website: www.westga.edu/~engdept

Philosophy Faculty Offices

(all offices are located in Humanities)

Auble, Joel	143
Donohoe, Janet	148
Manlowe, Jennifer	147
Smith, Shawn	151

Do You Know These Philosophers?

Jean-Paul Sartre

Plato



Friedrich Nietzsche

John Stuart Mill



...ome see them Spar

NG OF THE MINDS

...rgia Philosophical Society will be pre-
of the Minds. That's a meeting of the
attendance will be Plato, John Stuart
Nietzsche, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Luce
Irigaray. OK, not really, but those philosophers will be
represented by students who are even now preparing to
become a philosopher for an evening. The philosophers
will be engaging in a round-table discussion about "the
just society." The students will debate the question as if
they are the philosopher whom they represent. It will be
an opportunity to imagine how great philosophers would
engage in a debate on such an important and compelling
issue. The students have prepared themselves to be able
to answer questions in the manner of their philosopher's
character. Will Mill and Nietzsche vigorously disagree?
Will any of the philosophers think that a democracy is a
just form of society? You can find out if you attend this
lively event. Audience members will have the opportu-
nity to engage in the discussion following the presenta-
tion by the philosophers. The event will take place
Wednesday, April 10, 2002 in Cathy Kashen Hall at
7:00pm.

Summer 2002 Courses in Philosophy Session II, June 10-August 2, 2002

Philosophy 2110-01 Critical Thinking
MWF 12:00-1:45 p.m. (HUM 227)

Dr. Joel Auble

Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area C.

This course addresses the basics of how to think critically and how to evaluate arguments. By looking at the fundamentals of logic, and addressing contemporary cultural debates, we will focus on how to argue well and how to identify the fallacies of weak arguments.

Fall 2002 Courses in Philosophy

Philosophy 2100-02 Introduction to Philosophy
TR 9:30-10:45 a.m. (HUM 312)

Dr. Joel Auble

Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area C.

Using Christian's text, this course is an excellent introduction to the subject matter and methods of philosophy. A synoptic approach to doing philosophy is taken, which means that information from all relevant areas is to some extent considered when attempting to make headway on any philosophical problem. Freedom/determinism, ethics, philosophy of religion, metaphysics, and epistemology are among the areas covered.

Text: James L. Christian, *Philosophy—An Introduction to the Art of Wondering*, 7th edition, Harcourt Brace Publishers

Philosophy 2100-01 Introduction to Philosophy
MWF 10:00-10:50 a.m. (HUM 230)

Dr. Janet Donohoe

Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area C.

This course takes an historical look at major philosophical questions through the primary texts of such important philosophers as Plato, Aristotle, Boethius, Descartes, Kant, Camus and Foucault. Students are exposed to questions of what it means to be a human being, how to live the good life, what we can know, and why we are here.

Philosophy 2100-03 Introduction to Philosophy
TR 11:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m. (HUM 230)

Dr. Jennifer Manlowe

Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area C.

An historically framed introduction to philosophy, highlighting major developments that have defined Western philosophical inquiry.

Philosophy 2110-01 Critical Thinking
MWF 11:00-11:50 a.m. (HUM 229)

Dr. Joel Auble

Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area C.

This course addresses the basics of how to think critically and how to evaluate arguments. By looking at the fundamentals of logic, and addressing contemporary cultural debates, we will focus on how to argue well and how to identify the fallacies of weak arguments.

Philosophy 2120-01 Introduction to Ethics
MWF 9:00-9:50 a.m. (HUM 227)

Dr. Robert Lane

Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area C.

Everyone has beliefs about morality, and to some extent we all agree about what actions are right and wrong; for example, we all agree that murder is wrong and that helping those less fortunate than us is right. But there are many moral questions about which people disagree: is abortion immoral? what about human cloning? homosexuality? is it wrong to spend money on expensive cars and homes when people in other parts of the world are dying from malnutrition? This course will enable you critically to evaluate your own beliefs about concrete ethical issues like these. We'll also be dealing with more theoretical questions, such as: where does morality come from? (God? society? or somewhere else?); what makes an ethical argument good or bad?; and what general rules or principles ought we to live by? No prior experience in philosophy is necessary, so if you want to start thinking critically about morality, this course is a great place to begin.

Philosophy 2160-01 Philosophy and Literature**Dr. Janet Donohoe****MWF 11:00-11:50 a.m. (HUM 225)**

This course examines both philosophical and literary texts for philosophical themes. By reading and discussing plays, novels, and poetry, in conjunction with more traditional philosophical texts, we will see how philosophy can be presented in different ways and how literature can provide insight into philosophical issues.

Philosophy 3120-01 American Philosophy**Dr. Robert Lane****MWF 1:00-1:50 p.m. (HUM 229)**

What is truth? What's the best way for me to form beliefs about the world? Is absolute certainty possible, or must we be satisfied with beliefs that are merely well-supported but not certain? If there is no solid evidence for or against the existence of God, is it legitimate to believe that God exists? What is philosophy, and what is its relationship with science? This course tackles those questions and others by examining how they were treated by the thinkers who founded America's distinctive philosophical tradition: pragmatism. In particular, we will study the works of the classical American pragmatists, including Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey, as well as the contemporary American pragmatist Richard Rorty.

Philosophy 3230-01 Philosophy of Religion**Dr. Jennifer Manlowe****TR 2:00-3:25 p.m. (HUM 229)**

This course is a philosophical consideration of the nature of religion. Our aim is to explore major questions in the philosophy of religion. By the end of this semester, each student will be able to: highlight four major developments that have shaped the philosophical inquiry of religion; Identify the religio-philosophical perspectives of major religious traditions; Answer such questions for ourselves that include: What is religion? What is the relationship between matters of reason and matters of religion? What makes something religious? Does one need to experience faith or god(s) to be religious?

Philosophy 4110-01 Philosophical Issues in Criminal Justice**Dr. Joel Auble****MWF 9:00-9:50 a.m. (HUM 228)**

This course will examine the relationship between legal practice and the ethical justifications for that practice, as well as a number of applied ethical issues that relate to the law: just how far should lawyer/client confidentiality go? Should convicted sex offenders be required to notify the members of the community in which they live of their record? Should the insanity defense be abolished?

Philosophy 4120-01 Professional Ethics**Dr. Robert Lane****MWF 12:00-12:50 p.m. (HUM 229)**

Is it a violation of my right to privacy when my job requires that I be tested for drugs? What should I do if I know that my employer is making an unsafe product? Are there ever circumstances in which doctors should lie to their patients? Do corporations have any responsibilities beyond making a profit for their shareholders? This course will seek to answer such questions. We'll examine issues that affect workers and professionals across various occupations, issues such as: lying and deception; privacy and confidentiality; whistleblowing; and social responsibility and justice. Our examination of these issues will draw on case studies from a number of different professions, including medicine, law, and business. We may also look at ethical questions that arise for individuals in specific professions, such as education (for example, what moral obligations does a college professor have as an educator? as a researcher?)

Philosophy 4385W-01 Asian Philosophy**Dr. Jennifer Manlowe****TR 3:30-4:45 p.m. (HUM 229)**

This course is a survey of Asian Philosophical texts on "non-duality." Our aim is to examine key philosophical texts of three separate regions of the globe: China, India and Japan. By the end of this course students will be able to: highlight four major texts on Asian Philosophy; Identify basic religio-philosophical perspectives of Confucianism, Taoism, Indian Vedanta, and Zen Buddhism; and answer such questions for ourselves that include: What is of value? What is really real? Who exists? and What is skillful seeing/living?

Note: Philosophy 2100 is a prerequisite for courses Philosophy 3100 through 3240, 4100, 4381, and 4385, except Philosophy 4120.

Focus on a Student: Cody Lumpkin

When I took my first philosophy class in the fall of 1998, I had nary the notion of what I was actually getting myself into at the time. I naively assumed that it would be like any other college course and that I would be rewarded with a good grade through hard work and by showing a modest amount of cleverness in class discussion. Instead of finding enlightenment and further reinforcement of all my pre-suppositions, my head was cluttered with a myriad of fuzzy thoughts and ideas that would never ever come to any satisfactory conclusion. It seems such a cliché, but I was left with more questions than answers. The professor was unapologetic about the difficulties of reading a philosophical text and constantly pushed the class to think with that elusive critical eye. By the end of the semester, I was fueled by a desire to learn and my philosophical life had begun.

In taking up the quest for truth and understanding, my philosophical mind did not merely function during the short time span of class, but it permeated all aspects of my life. It propelled me to re-examine not only my past, but also all the foundations and ideas that I had held so dear. One class in particular, Feminist Theory, brought into question notions of masculinity and femininity that I had never even considered. To say the least, it was a painful experience. To find out that I was consciously and unconsciously falling

“In fact, there has not been a philosophy class that I have taken that has not changed my life in some way”

into the socially constructed pitfalls that perpetuated a masculine dominance over femininity was clearly bruising to my ego and the view of myself as a sensitive guy. It was painful, but necessary. Necessary to not let things of this magnitude go unexamined in my life. Even now I find the seduction of falling

into mere acceptance an easy and inviting thing to do, but the philosophical eye will not let me linger there too very long. This is a conflict that is fast becoming a life struggle, as it should be.

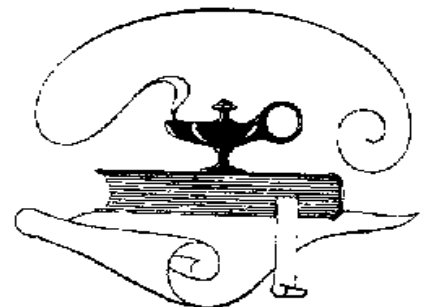
In fact, there has not been a philosophy class that I have taken that has not changed my life in some way. Whether it is in the way I look at the world or how I should act both morally and ethically when certain situations arise in my life, the study of philosophy has provided me with a far more fulfilling life than I would have had otherwise. Everything from Critical Thinking to Philosophical Issues in Criminal Justice to Existentialism has expanded and problematized my view of the world.

I have read in a few publications that America’s next great radical move would be to elect a philosophical president that, be the president man or woman, would engage the country in a philosophical examination of what we stand for as a nation, and would cause us to re-evaluate our own individual motives. Perhaps at the very least, would encourage us to tear asunder the engrained two-party sanctioned Liberal-Conservative matrix that has come to dominate all forms of our media and culture. Whatever brave soul attempts to undertake such a task will need to be elected by people of like minds who also have a critical eye for all things. Of course if that ever happened, we could never turn back and who would want to? This is just something that happens whenever someone decides to take up the philosophical life.

---Cody Lumpkin

The Philosophical Society at West Georgia

The Philosophical Society of West Georgia is a group of students and faculty who gather every other week for philosophical discussion and social interaction. It is an open forum for students to present work they have completed, or work in progress and to get feedback from their peers and from faculty. Some meetings also involve an open discussion of a philosophical topic previously agreed upon. It is a good opportunity to get to know other students interested in philosophy and to interact with faculty in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. This semester the society meets at noon in Humanities 211. April 10, 2002 the philosophical society will be hosting a meeting of the minds colloquium where students will be representing some of the major philosophers in a debate on what constitutes the Just Society. Keep an eye on the philosophy bulletin board, outside Humanities 154, for meeting dates, times, and place. If you have any questions or want more information about the philosophical society, contact either Dr. Janet Donohoe, Humanities 148, 770-838-3012, email jdonohoe@westga.edu, or Dr. Jennifer Manlowe, Humanities 147, 770-838-3038, email jmanlowe@westga.edu



Philosopher's Birthdays

April 8, 1859	Edmund Husserl, founder of phenomenology
April 22, 1724	Immanuel Kant, German philosopher
April 26, 1711	David Hume, Logical positivist.
May 5, 1813	Soren Kierkegaard, existential philosopher.
July 6, 1935	His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Philosopher's Wisdom

“He who knows others is learned; He who knows himself is wise. He who conquers others has power of muscles; He who conquers himself is strong. He who is contented is rich. He who is determined has strength of will. He who does not lose his center endures, He who dies yet his power remains has long life.”

--Lao Tse

The Book Corner

The philosophy faculty have a few suggestions of things to read over the summer. These books are things that the faculty think would be interesting and entertaining reading for all those interested in philosophical and religious issues.

Dr. Auble suggests:

World Religions—a historical approach, by S.A.Nigolian
The Beast That Shouted Love At The Heart Of The World by Harlan Ellison.

Dr. Donohoe suggests:

The Name of the Rose by Umberto Eco
Time and the Other by Emmanuel Levinas

Dr. Manlowe suggests:

Intimacy or Integrity: Philosophy and Cultural Difference by Thomas P. Kasulis
The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation by Henry Rosemont (Translator), Roger T. Ames (Translator)

Summer Reading Group

Anybody interested in reading some philosophy and discussing it this summer should contact Dr. Janet Donohoe, Humanities 148, (770) 838-3012. If there is a group of people interested we can jointly decide on a convenient meeting time and text of interest to us all.

The Philosophy Major

The philosophy major is designed to give students a solid foundation in the history of philosophy with opportunities to explore a variety of courses and special programs. All philosophy majors complete the following requirements:

- 42 hours of Core Areas A, B, C, D, and E
- 18 hours of Core Area F
 - PHIL 2100—Introduction to Philosophy
 - PHIL 2110—Critical Thinking
 - PHIL 2120—Introduction to Ethics
 - Additional Humanities Course
 - Foreign Language 2001/2002
- 24 hours of Upper-Division Major Courses
 - PHIL 3100—Ancient and Medieval Philosophy
 - PHIL 3110—Modern Philosophy
 - PHIL 4385—Special Topics (e.g. Feminist Theories, Political Philosophy)

Students may also earn a minor in Religious Studies by completing the following courses:

- PHIL 3200—Biblical Studies
- PHIL 3210—Christian Theology
- PHIL 3220—Biblical Hermeneutics
- PHIL 3230—Philosophy of Religion
- PHIL 3240—World Religions

For more information about either the philosophy major or the religious studies minor, please stop by the English and Philosophy Department office at Humanities 154 where the administrative staff will be happy to give you more information. The philosophy faculty members are also available to talk with you about the options. Feel free to set up an appointment with any one of them by calling 770-836-6848.

Please direct any questions or comments about this newsletter to Dr. Janet Donohoe, 770-838-3012.

