

SS 251B, Autumn 2008
SOPHOMORE SEMINAR
Voices Against the Chorus
Room 04, MW 2:00 – 3:30 pm

Asma Abbas
2-V, Hall College Centre
aabbas@simons-rock.edu; x7215
www.simons-rock.edu/~aabbas
office hours: M, 4-5 pm, T, 9-11 am; & by appt.

This seminar explores the development of some of the ideas that have become central to the Western definition of the modern world. Its focus is on how nineteenth- and early twentieth-century thinkers in various disciplines confronted and challenged ideas and categories, and how, finally, they constructed radically different conceptions of the world around them. Class sessions will be supplemented by several evening lectures on the historical context and reception of the readings, presented by SRC faculty and guest lecturers. Course objectives include the development of the student's ability to read texts critically, to think clearly, and to express him/herself with clarity; the critical examination of the assumptions and ideologies that these writers and works opposed, as well as those they embodied; and the exploration of the historical and social context of these works.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Charles Darwin, *Selected Writings*, Norton Critical Edition, 3rd ed
W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)
Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930)
Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (1904)
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, d. E. Kamenka *The Portable Karl Marx*
Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1887)
Rabindranath Tagore, *Home and the World* (1916)
Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (1927)

EXPECTATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and Preparation

You are required to attend class having carefully prepared the assigned reading for the day. You must bring the text to class.

Active class participation is not only required, it is expected. The point is not to have understood everything before coming to class—your treasure is the questions, difficulties and issues that arise from what is read, because they eventually determine what course the class will take.

I will follow the college attendance policy, very strictly. Two unexcused absences will earn you an official warning. Three unexcused absences shall result in suspension.

Tardiness is disrespectful, and counts against you.

Written Work

The seminar will require successful completion of four projects, by the dates mentioned in the schedule below. The form of these projects can vary over the course of the term, and we will finalise this through class discussion and approval of the instructor. They will range from

expository and exegetical essays, to various forms of interpretation, each with an explicit writing component and elaborate **process notes** (which will require maintaining a journal throughout the semester). Each of these projects will be worth 20% of the grade. You will also submit a final self-evaluation with the last project (also requiring references to your process as contained within the journal), which will augment every project's stand-alone grade. *I will provide specific instructions and a choice of topics/questions/interpretive forms to be addressed.*

Films

Where possible, I have assigned films to supplement our readings. Please note the relevant weeks, and we will work together to find a time that works for everyone. This will probably be an evening outside of normal class time, anytime during the week for which it is assigned, especially if the film is a full-length feature.

For course policies on Academic Honesty and Religious Holidays, please refer to the SRC Catalogue, pp. 31-33. For issues of learning skills, and subsequent accommodations, please get in touch with me, and also contact Rebecca Fiske (rebecca@simons-rock.edu).

A sketch of your grade composition

Participation, Films, etc.	15%
Written work (4 projects, including process journals and final)	85%

CLASS SCHEDULE

All pagination refers to the required texts listed above. Readings marked with an asterisk will be made available via electronic reserve.

Monday, 25 August	Breaking Ice...
Wednesday, 27 August	NO CLASS (to be rescheduled)
	Darwin, pp. 2-20 22-29, 82-94
Monday, 1 September	Darwin, pp. 95-98, 111-135, 158-174
Monday, 1 September	Lecture 1, "Is There Evolution After Darwin?" Coggins
Wednesday, 3 September	Darwin, pp. 175-177, 222-254
Monday, 8 September	Marx, selected letters TBA, pp. 96-114, 158-161
Wednesday, 10 September	Marx, pp. 158-161, 163-173, 189-195
Monday, 15 September	Marx, pp. 203-244, pp. 533-555 OR selections from pp. 257-324 (Writings on France)
Wednesday, 17 September	Marx, pp. 432-465, 493-503, 329-355
Monday, 22 September	Journals + First Project Due (Marx/Darwin)
	Nietzsche, <i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i>
	Introduction & Essay I
Wednesday, 24 September	Nietzsche, Essay II
Monday, 29 September	Nietzsche, Essay III

Wednesday, 1 October	*Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History"
Monday, 6 October	NO CLASS—Fall Break
Wednesday, 8 October	NO CLASS—Fall Break
Monday, 13 October	DuBois, pp. 5-6, 9-61,
Monday, 13 October	Lecture 2, "DuBois's Work and Legacy," Prashad
Wednesday, 15 October	DuBois, DuBois, pp. 62-129
Monday, 20 October	DuBois, pp. 130-164
Wednesday, 22 October	Tagore, <i>Home and the World</i>
Monday, 27 October	Journals + Second Project Due (Nietzsche/DuBois)
	Tagore, <i>Home and the World</i>
Monday, 27 October	Lecture 3, Tagore in Film and Novel—Open Discussion, Abbas
Wednesday, 29 October	Tagore, TBA
Monday, 3 November	Freud, Parts I-IV
Wednesday, 5 November	Freud, Parts V-VIII
Friday, 6 November	Make-up Session—Freud, TBA
Monday, 10 November	Journals + Third Project Due (Tagore/Freud)
	Woolf, <i>To the Lighthouse</i> , "The Window"
Monday, 10 November	Lecture 4, "Boeuf en daube at the Center of To the Lighthouse," Tebben
Wednesday, 12 November	Woolf, <i>To the Lighthouse</i> , "Time Passes"
Monday, 17 November	Woolf, <i>To the Lighthouse</i> , "To the Lighthouse"
Wednesday, 19 November	Kafka, <i>The Trial</i> , pp. 3-79
Monday, 24 November	NO CLASS—Thanksgiving Break
Wednesday, 26 November	NO CLASS—Thanksgiving Break
Monday, 1 December	NO CLASS Kafka, <i>The Trial</i> , film part I
Wednesday, 3 December	NO CLASS Kafka, <i>The Trial</i> , film part II
Monday, 8 December	Kafka, 80-198
Wednesday, 10 December	Kafka, pp. 199-231
Friday, 12 December	Make-up Session (towards final assessment)
Wednesday, 17 December	Completed Journals + Fourth Project Due (Woolf/Kafka)