**PHIL5850: Graduate Proseminar**

**Fall Term 2011, Mondays 11:30-2:20**

**PA3A36**

**Instructor** Heidi Lene Maibom

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**Office hours** Monday 14:30-15:30 or by appointment

**Course Description & Aim**

This course aims to impart knowledge of recent developments in the philosophy of mind, cognitive science, and moral psychology, with a focus on bringing evolutionary considerations to bear on philosophical issues. Should the fact that we are products of a long process of evolution structure the way we think about mind, culture, and morals? If yes, what methodology should be adopted? What content, if any, ought to be imported? If no, why not?

We begin with evolutionary psychology, and explore how it has affected the study of the mind. We then look at how to think of culture and its products in the light of biological evolution. After these more general issues, we move on to look at particulars. What role does game theory, anthropological research, and ethology play in helping us understand the evolution of morality? We end by looking at specific proposals concerning moral emotions and the role of emotions in morality generally. Although not all these approaches cleave close to evolutionary considerations, most are all deeply influenced by the recognition that to fully understand the human mind and its products we must consider their origin.

**Course Requirements**

ALL the materials must be read and class attended. These are necessary conditions for passing the course. This course is very intensive course. The readings are substantial and you are expected to do them all. This is required to get you up to speed with the recent developments and thinking in these areas. Even if you think your concentration will be in areas other than the ones covered here, you still need to learn all the materials. You cannot expect to be able to do good graduate work without a comprehensive understanding of the central disciplines of philosophy. They often cross-fertilize each other in unexpected ways.

If the above criteria are met, then the evaluation will be based on the following: 1. participation, including ability to answer questions on the text covered for the class (20%), 2. brief oral presentation of parts of the readings in a class (10 mins. presentation, 10%), 3. short critical paper on a reading or topic *not* covered in 2. but that is covered in class (3-4 pages, 10%), 4. oral presentation of final paper topic (10-15 mins., 10%), and 5. final paper (15-20 pages, 50%). Students must have decided on their project by 15 Nov., before which they are required to see me with an outline. A failure to do so will result in failing this part of the course. The last two classes will involve brief presentation by everybody on the ideas that they propose to write their final papers on.

Lastly, for your final paper, you are expected to do independent, but guided, research. As such, you should expect to read the equivalent of at least 5 full-length papers in addition to the ones that are listed on the syllabus. I will assist you in locating relevant literature, but I also expect you to do independent source research. You should consult with me prior to writing up you final paper, but subsequent to discussing your outline and conducting your independent research.

**Paper Submission**

Submit your essays using WebCT. Essays are due before midnight on the day they are due. Late essays will be penalized. *One point will be subtracted per day late, including weekend days*. Always keep a copy of your essay. It is department policy that it is every student’s responsibility to keep a copy of each essay submitted to a philosophy course. I reserve the right to deduct up to 20% of your final mark on each written presentation for spelling and grammatical errors.

**Evaluation**

Your papers must be free of grammatical and spelling errors. Your language should be clear and easy to read. Always give yourself enough time to leave the paper for at least one day before you need to submit it, so you can re-read it and correct it if necessary. This helps you spot errors that you would not otherwise discover. Most importantly, it allows you to see whether what you write makes sense and whether it is comprehensible to other people. If you cannot make sense of it some time after writing it, you need to rewrite. Obscure phrasing is not an alternative to not understanding the relevant ideas or arguments, nor is excessive quotation.

**Plagiarism and cheating** at the graduate level are viewed as being particularly serious and the sanctions imposed are accordingly severe. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the Carleton University Student Academic Integrity Policy (See <http://www2.carleton.ca/graduate-studies/policies-and-guidelines>). The Policy is strictly enforced and is binding on all students. Plagiarism and cheating – presenting another’s ideas, arguments, words or images as your own, using unauthorized material, misrepresentation, fabricating or misrepresenting research data, unauthorized co-operation or collaboration or completing work for another student – weaken the quality of the graduate degree. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Students who infringe the Policy may be subject to one of several penalties including: expulsion; suspension from all studies at Carleton; suspension from full-time studies; a refusal of permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program; academic probation; or a grade of Failure in the course.

**Students with Disabilities** requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by the deadlines published on the PMC website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

**Religious obligation**: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

**Pregnancy obligation**: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

**Class Schedule**

Background reading: (particularly helpful for understanding Cosmides & Tooby)

Philip Kitcher: ‘Giving Darwin His Due’. (http://www.columbia.edu/~psk16/)

David Buller: ‘A Guided Tour of Evolutionary Psychology’ (http://host.uniroma3.it/progetti/kant/field/ep.htm)

12/9 Cosmides & Tooby: ‘The Psychological Foundations of Culture’.

19/9 Dan Sperber & Lawrence Hirschfeld: ‘Culture and Modularity’. In: P. Carruthers, S. Laurence, S. Stich (Eds.): *The Innate Mind: Culture and Cognition*, OUP 2006, 149-64. Peter Carruthers: ‘Simple Heuristics Meet Massive Modularity’. In: P. Carruthers, S. Laurence, S. Stich (Eds.): *The Innate Mind: Culture and Cognition*, OUP 2006, 181-98. (Library Electronic Copies)

26/9 Richard Boyd & Peter Richerson: ‘Culture, Adaptation, and Innateness’. In: P. Carruthers, S. Laurence, S. Stich (Eds.): *The Innate Mind: Culture and Cognition*, OUP 2006, 23-38. (Library Electronic Copy)

Peter Richerson, Richard Boyd, and Joseph Heinrich: ‘Cultural Evolution of Human Cooperation’ (http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/

anthro/faculty/boyd/RichersonBoydHenrich%20Dahlem%2002.pdf)

3/10 Robert Axelrod & William Hamilton: ‘The Evolution of Cooperation’, *Science*, 211, 1390-96 (1981).

Sarah B. Hrdy: ‘How Humans Became Such Other-regarding Apes’

(http://onthehuman.org/2009/08/how-humans-became-such-other-regarding-apes/)

17/10 Jessica Flack & Frans deWaal: ‘Any Animal Whatever’, *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 7:1-2, pp. 1-29. Comments by Call, Railton, and Kagan.

24/10 Elliott Sober & David Sloan Wilson: ‘Summary of ‘Unto Others’’, *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 7:1-2, pp. 185-206. Comments by Batson, Harman, & Rosenberg.

**30/10 Deadline for short, critical papers**

31/10 Dan Kelly: ‘Moral Disgust and Tribal Instincts: A Byproduct Hypothesis’

(http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/KellyMoralDisgustTribalInstincts.pdf)

Heidi Maibom: ‘The Descent of Shame’, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, LXXX, 566-94 (2010).

7/11 Jesse Prinz: *The Emotional Construction of Morals*, Chap. 1, 3, 4 (pp. 138-41 & 158-69) OUP 2007. (Library Electronic Copy) (for those with little background in metaethics read the entry at Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

14/11 Richard Joyce: “Review of Prinz”, *Mind*, 118 (April 2008), Richard Joyce: *The Myth of Morality*, Chap. 1, 2 (Library Electronic Copy)

**14/11 Deadline for choice of topic for final essay; you must have seen me before this date with your proposed topic.**

21/11 Richard Joyce: *The Myth of Morality*, Chap. 6-8 (Library Electronic Copy)

28/12 Presentations

5/12 Presentations

**22/12 Deadline for final papers (midnight)**