

The Will to Power: The Philosophy of Friederich Nietzsche

Part I

**Professor Robert C. Solomon
and
Professor Kathleen M. Higgins**



THE TEACHING COMPANY ®

Robert C. Solomon, Ph.D.

Robert C. Solomon is Quincy Lee Centennial Professor of Business and Philosophy at the University of Texas at Austin and the recipient of several teaching awards and honors, including the 1973 Standard Oil Outstanding Teaching Award, the University of Texas Presidential Associates' Teaching Award (twice), a Fulbright Lecture Award, University Research and National Endowment for the Humanities Grants and the Chad Oliver Plan Iwe Teaching Award (1998). He is also a member of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers. He is the author of *The Passions* (Doubleday, 1976), *In the Spirit of Hegel*, *About Love*, *From Hegel to Existentialism* and *A Passion for Justice*. He has authored and edited articles and books on Nietzsche, including *Nietzsche* and *Reading Nietzsche* with Kathleen M. Higgins. His most recent books, also with Kathleen Higgins, are *A Short History of Philosophy* and *A Passion for Wisdom*. His books have been translated into more than a dozen languages. He also writes about business ethics in *Above the Bottom Line*, *It's Good Business*, *Ethics and Excellence*, and *New World of Business* and *A Better Way to Think about Business*. He regularly consults and provides programs for a variety of corporations and organizations concerned about business ethics. He studied Biology at the University of Pennsylvania and Philosophy and Psychology at the University of Michigan. He is married to Kathleen M. Higgins. He has taught at Princeton University, the University of Pittsburgh, and often teaches in New Zealand and Australia.

Kathleen M. Higgins, Ph.D.

Kathleen Higgins holds the rank of Professor at the University of Texas–Austin. She has a B.A. in Music from the University of Missouri–Kansas City and earned her doctorate in Philosophy (Modern Studies concentration) at Yale University. She has taught at University of California–Riverside and also at the University of Auckland for several summer terms. Among her academic honors are her appointment as Resident Scholar, The Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Study and Conference Center and two University Research Institute Awards.

A prolific writer and recognized Nietzsche scholar, her books include *The Music of our Lives* (Temple University Press) and *Nietzsche's Zarathustra* (Temple University Press), which was named one of the Outstanding Academic Books of 1988-1989 by Choice. She has co-edited numerous books with her husband, Professor Robert Solomon, including *Reading Nietzsche*, *A Short History of Philosophy*, *A Passion for Wisdom*, *The Philosophy of (Erotic) Love*, and the *Routledge History of Philosophy, Volume IV: The Age of German Idealism*. Additionally, she has authored many articles in scholarly journals, focusing on Nietzsche, but also covering a wide range of other issues in philosophy.

Table of Contents

The Will to Power: The Philosophy of Friederich Nietzsche

Part I

Professor Biography	i
Foreword	1
Lecture One	Why Read Nietzsche? His Life, Times, Works, and Themes . 5
Lecture Two	Quashing the Rumors about Nietzsche 9
Lecture Three	The Fusion of Philosophy and Psychology 13
Lecture Four	“God Is Dead”—Nietzsche and Christianity..... 16
Lecture Five	Nietzsche and the Greeks 19
Lecture Six	“Why the Greeks Were So Beautiful”—Nietzsche on Tragedy 22
Lecture Seven	Nietzsche and Schopenhauer on Pessimism..... 25
Lecture Eight	Nietzsche, Jesus, Zarathustra 28
Lecture Nine	Nietzsche on Reason, Instinct, and Passion 31
Lecture Ten	Nietzsche’s Style and the Problem of Truth..... 34
Lecture Eleven	Nietzsche on Truth and Interpretation..... 37
Lecture Twelve	“Become Who You Are”—Freedom, Fate, and Free Will... 40
Timeline	43
Glossary	45
Biographical Notes	46
Annotated Bibliography	48

The Will to Power:

The Philosophy of Friederich Nietzsche

Part I

Scope:

Nietzsche is perhaps the best-known and most often quoted philosopher of the last two centuries. He is also probably the most misunderstood, the most misquoted, the most maligned. He is believed to be the Antichrist by some Christians. He is considered power-mad by many pacifists and gentle souls, and by those who themselves are power-mad. He is often thought to have been crazy and it is said to be a tragic irony that sexless Nietzsche died of syphilis. In fact, Nietzsche was deeply religious, that is spiritual, although to be sure he hated the hypocrisy of the Christian church and many of its leaders. (He might better be called an anti-Christian than the Antichrist.) His views on power are complex and much better understood in terms of self-discipline rather than brute force. His sex life is a matter of some debate which we will not delve into, but the diagnosis of the disease that demented and then killed him is by no means straightforward either. The truth is that Nietzsche was and still is the most deeply insightful, personally radical, complex philosopher of modern times.

Nietzsche displayed none of the systematic compulsion of the other great German philosophers, Kant, Fichte and Hegel. Indeed, he argued that the need for a system in philosophy betrayed a "lack of integrity." He shared none of the political radicalism of his near contemporary Karl Marx. Indeed, insofar as Nietzsche pursued any political agenda at all, it might best be described as wishing for a society that appreciated and encouraged creative thinkers like himself. His work is a hodgepodge of reflections, experiments, accusations, bits of psychoanalysis, church and secular history, philosophical counter-examples, advice to the lovelorn, moral reminders, tidbits of gossip, everything but the philosophical kitchen sink. But underlying the hodgepodge is a subtle and intended strategy, and there are profound themes that organize the whole of his work.

In the following lectures, I try to display and work with these themes. Some are well-known but in fact relatively minor threads in his writings. Others are not so well-known and provide the fabric of his thinking. Among the former are certainly his most famous invention, the *Übermensch* and what he calls the Will-to-power. Among the latter are his deep psychological probings that would have such a powerful impact on his successor, Sigmund Freud. Nietzsche specialized in criticism—his attack on Christianity, his repudiation of what is called "morality," his "campaign against guilt and sin," his assault on the modern sensibility, his "critique of Modernity," his personal attacks on his contemporaries and predecessors. But behind all of this is an affirmative fervor, a genuine spirituality, even a religious sensibility. Nietzsche was a lonely man, a

self-exile from his German roots who in perpetually poor health depicted a vision of healthy humanity. He was a gentle, extremely polite, thoroughly compassionate man who ruthlessly perceived his own weaknesses and flaws and saw through his own pretensions and virtues. Like Socrates who proclaimed his own ignorance and used this as a platform to expose the ignorance of everyone else around him, Nietzsche begins by insisting on his own “self-overcoming” and challenges us to do the same. But even at his most brutal and most provocative, Nietzsche exudes an enthusiasm, and a love of life that is really the heart of his philosophy. To love and accept one’s life, to make it better by becoming who one really is, that is what Nietzsche’s philosophy is ultimately all about.

In the first of these twenty-four lectures, We begin by describing, very briefly, Nietzsche’s rather unremarkable life and the rather more remarkable times in which he lived. He was born just a few years before the tumultuous revolutions of mid-century (1844), and he died in the first summer of what he predicted would be a new and most violent century. I then describe, also briefly, the sequence of works that has come down to us, also noting the suspicious forgeries of his works by his nefarious sister. We then begin to unfold the grand themes of his philosophy. In the second lecture, I discuss (with the help of my wife, fellow Nietzsche scholar Kathleen Higgins), various “rumors” about Nietzsche, beginning with the rumor that he was crazy and rumors about his sex life. We then move into some of the more subtle misunderstandings about his attitudes toward religion in general, toward Christianity in particular, toward the Jews, toward German nationalism and patriotism, and his complex relationship with the great operatic composer Richard Wagner. In the third lecture, we discuss Nietzsche’s fusion of philosophy and psychology and relate this back to some of the great figures in philosophy, notably Socrates and Schopenhauer, Plato, and Jesus. We also discuss the uncanny connection between anti-Christian Nietzsche and the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, a Christian fundamentalist whom Nietzsche never had the chance to read. Comparisons with Dostoevsky, Marx and Freud are also mentioned.

The next several lectures concern Nietzsche’s famous announcement that “God is Dead.” We try to explain what this means—it is by no means merely a thesis about religion and religious belief, and how it relates to the larger themes of Nietzsche’s philosophy. We discuss Nietzsche’s Lutheranism, his rejection of it and also the way that it continues to influence his thinking. We discuss in what sense Nietzsche is a champion of spirituality, and in what senses he is not. In the fifth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche’s intimate relation with the ancient Greeks. Indeed, Nietzsche’s love of philology and his near-worship of ancient Greeks has been argued to be the underlying motive if not also the theme of his whole philosophy. But Nietzsche is not the only German who displayed what one author has called “the tyranny of Greece over Germany.” Nietzsche’s relation to the ancient Greeks was complex, however. He loved the ancient tragic playwrights Aeschylus and Sophocles, but he despised their younger colleague Euripides. He displayed great admiration for the pre-Socratic philosopher

Heraclitus but had evident contempt for the great philosophers Socrates and Plato. But even his contempt was complex and mixed. It is obvious that he envied Socrates even as he ridiculed him. Socrates, along with Jesus, was something of a role model for Nietzsche. Indeed, not only Socrates' success but his reputation for virtue was something that Nietzsche admired. Nevertheless, the very heart of Socrates' (and Plato's) philosophy, the celebration of reason, was one of Nietzsche's primary targets for abuse. In the sixth lecture, we discuss in more detail Nietzsche's conception of tragedy, and along with it his conception of comedy, comparing the former with his predecessors Aristotle, Hegel and Schopenhauer. We introduce Nietzsche's famous opposition between the Apollonian and Dionysian aspects of Greek culture, and we discuss the sense in which the Greeks "accepted" suffering and made something "beautiful" out of it. The contrast, for Nietzsche, is with Christianity, which tries to deny the meaning of suffering by way of the invocation of another, better "otherworldly" life. (So, too, Nietzsche says, did Socrates and Plato.)

In the seventh lecture, we provide arguments for and against pessimism, with an emphasis on Nietzsche's early hero, Schopenhauer. We discuss Nietzsche's efforts to embrace "cheerfulness," if not optimism, and his discussion of the aesthetic viewpoint, of life as art. We also discuss the role of reason and passion in the meaning of life. In the eighth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's emphasis on instinct, his debunking of reason and consciousness, his notion of reason as a tyrant, his insights into the nature of passion. In the ninth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's style, his use of "*ad hominem* arguments" and other informal fallacies, such as his appeal to emotion. We then move into Nietzsche's often exaggerated views about truth and interpretation. In the tenth lecture, we discuss in more detail Nietzsche's views on these matters and his "perspectivism," his idea that there is no privileged, objective, absolute, or "God's eye" view of the world or human affairs.

In the eleventh lecture, we discuss in more detail Nietzsche's intimate and envious relation to the prophets of old, Jesus, Socrates and the Persian sage Zoroaster or Zarathustra. We discuss Nietzsche's oddest but best known book, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, a Biblical parody in which the Persian prophet rejects Christianity and all "otherworldly" ways of living and introduces the idea of the *Übermensch*. He also introduces the supposedly hateful idea of "the last man," the probable successor of modern man, the ultimate *bourgeois*, the perfectly happy couch potato. In the twelfth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's politics (such as they were), his individualism, his harsh views on socialism and democracy, his notorious views on "the great man." Accordingly, we also discuss Nietzsche's mixed reviews of Darwin's theory of evolution, which he clearly embraced in general outline even as he quibbled violently with the details. We also discuss his relation to Hegel, an important predecessor whom he evidently knew only by reputation. Hegel is often said to have anticipated Darwin (a debatable claim), but he clearly both anticipated and countered some of Nietzsche's main concerns. (In their reaction to Hegel, Nietzsche and Kierkegaard show themselves to be particularly kindred spirits.) We also

discuss Nietzsche's subtle views on freedom and free will, his celebration of fate (*amor fati*) and his insistence that one should "become who [you] are."

In the thirteenth lecture, we discuss in much more detail Nietzsche as a philosophical psychologist and his many insights and provocations concerning such basic human emotions as pity (compassion) and love. We discuss more generally Nietzsche's "moral psychology" and how it provides a counter to the more traditional philosophical attempts to justify (rather than explain) morality. In the fourteenth lecture, we discuss in more detail Nietzsche's views (and experiences) about love.

In the fifteenth lecture, we run through a dozen or so of Nietzsche's *ad hominem* analyses and attacks on various figures, first discussing those figures whom he (more or less) admires, and then those whom he (more and even more) despises. In effect, we (with Kathleen) produce two "top (and bottom) ten" lists, Nietzsche's favorites and Nietzsche's targets. In the sixteenth lecture, we discuss the grounds on which he makes such harsh evaluations, discussing Nietzsche's view of the use and abuse of history, his hopes for human evolution, his pervasive concern with what is healthy and what is "sickly," his celebration of *life*. In the seventeenth lecture, we discuss his views on nihilism, making the point that Nietzsche himself was no nihilist. Indeed, nihilism might well be described as the most general target of his entire philosophy.

In the eighteenth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's ranking of values, his view of morality and moralities, and his critique of modernity. In the nineteenth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's "immoralism" and the senses in which he both was and was not a moralist. We argue that Nietzsche is embracing an ancient rather than a modern view of ethics, what has been called an "ethics of virtue" rather than an ethics of rules and principles, rather than an ethic that looks mainly to the spread of well-being and happiness ("utilitarianism"). In the twentieth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's polemic on weakness, his archaeological history ("genealogy") of morality, and his analysis of master and slave (or "herd") morality. In the twenty-first lecture, we discuss master and slave morality in more detail and analyze Nietzsche's notion of *ressentiment* that provides the basis of his moral psychology. In the next lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's analysis of resentment, revenge, and justice, and we follow this with a diagnosis of asceticism, the thorough-going self-denial that is often an extreme form of religious practices. In the twenty-third and twenty-fourth lectures, we discuss three of Nietzsche's most famous doctrines, the Will to Power, the *Übermensch*, and eternal recurrence, and we end by evaluating Nietzsche's emphasis on saying "Yes!" to *Life* and at the same time "philosophizing with a hammer."

Lecture One

Why Read Nietzsche? His Life, Times, Works, and Themes

Scope: Nietzsche is, perhaps, the most exciting philosopher—ever! Not just because he is so obviously smart. Not just because he writes so beautifully. Not just because of all the enthusiasm and exclamation points. Not even just because of his peculiar ideas and themes and topics. But because Nietzsche forces us to think and rethink, more than anyone else in the modern Western tradition. He provokes us. He teases us. He seduces us. Nietzsche changes lives (true, in the case of young students, often in transient, mildly delusional ways). But for others, he offers nothing less than new life. And it is this lonely, frantic, self-styled prophet who flips the switch into the tumultuous, horrendous twentieth century.

In this lecture, we begin by describing, very briefly, Nietzsche's rather unremarkable life and the rather more remarkable times in which he lived. The times included the rise of Bismarck and the unification of Germany, a short but dramatic war (in which Nietzsche briefly served), some remarkable advances in science and new ways of thinking about art and culture. Nietzsche's life, for the most part, was lived through and defined by his writing. He was a brilliant student who became a brilliant young professor. He became ill soon after the Franco-Prussian War, spent most of his adult life "wandering" between the most beautiful mountain towns and resorts in Southern Europe, writing and thinking ferociously and, for the most part, alone. He proposed marriage twice, but was turned down, as he must have known that he would be.

Outline

- I. To make sense of Nietzsche, we present a quick tour of his major ideas; these will be developed more fully in the subsequent twenty-three lectures:
 - A. *Übermensch*
 - B. Nihilism
 - C. Will-to-power
 - D. Apollonian and Dionysian
 - E. The Attack on Christianity
 - F. The Repudiation of Morality
 - G. The War against Guilt and Sin
 - H. The Love of Fate (*Amor Fati*) and of Living Dangerously
 - I. The Critique of Modernity

- J. Saying “Yes!” to Life
 - K. The Eternal Recurrence
- II. Nietzsche’s life (1844-1900) was short and, in the heroic sense, uneventful.
- A. During Nietzsche’s life, Otto von Bismarck took control first of Prussia and then of a united Germany. Germany defeated France in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71.
 - 1. Nietzsche participated as a medical orderly. He became seriously ill during this time.
 - 2. Although a very gentle person, he never lost his fascination for and admiration of the discipline of the military.
 - B. Nietzsche’s productive life was very short. He spent most of his adult life, from his teaching in Switzerland to his final collapse in Italy, outside Germany (in some of the most beautiful places in Europe).
 - C. For many people, Nietzsche’s mustache is his defining physical feature.
 - 1. His mustache represented military discipline for him.
 - 2. It served him as a mask; it allowed him to hide.
 - D. Nietzsche fell in love with (and was rejected by) Lou Salomé during 1882, when he was beginning sketches for *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*; he began to suffer serious bouts of depressions.
 - E. As a young professor, Nietzsche met and befriended composer Richard Wagner and his wife, Cosima.
 - 1. For several years, Nietzsche was a worshipful and sometimes fawning follower.
 - 2. When the friendship ended a few years later, Nietzsche was devastated and alone.
 - 3. Nietzsche cut off relations with his sister Elizabeth after she married a proto-Nazi.
 - 4. Nietzsche collapsed in Turin in January of 1889 and spent the rest of his life hopelessly insane.
- III. Nietzsche’s work passes through several indistinct stages.
- A. First, there is the heavily classical emphasis in the Greeks, culminating in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872).
 - B. *The Untimely Meditations* follow:
 - 1. One was on a contemporary historian who considered the life of Jesus historically.
 - 2. The second was on historical knowledge and its value for the present era.
 - 3. The third was on Schopenhauer as Nietzsche’s educator.
 - 4. The third was a paean to Richard Wagner, which appeared as their friendship was nearing its end.

- C. Nietzsche's aphoristic style dominates the experimental works: *Human, All Too Human* (1878), *Daybreak* (1881), and *The Gay (Fröhliche) Science* (1882). In these works, Nietzsche begins his "campaign against morality."
- D. His quasi-biblical epic poem, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, was written in several outbursts and published in parts from 1883 through 1885; Zarathustra became Nietzsche's alter ego and spokesperson.
- E. In *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886) and *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1887), Nietzsche became more systematic.
- F. In his last active year, 1888, Nietzsche miraculously produced four books: *The Wagner Case*, *Twilight of the Idols*, *The Antichrist*, and an autobiography, *Ecce Homo*.

Essential Reading:

R. J. Hollingdale, ed., *A Nietzsche Reader*, Preface, pp. 15-25, *Ecce Homo*, "Why I am so Wise," "Why I am so Clever."

Supplemental Reading:

B. Magnus, K. Higgins, "Introduction to Nietzsche's Works" in *Cambridge Companion*, pp. 21-68; R.J. Hollingdale, "The Hero as Outsider" in *Cambridge Companion*, pp. 71-89. Three full-length biographies: R. Hayman, *Nietzsche* (an excellent biography); D. Krell, *The Good European* (a stunning collection of photographs and letters); L. Chamberlain, *Nietzsche in Turin* (a moving account of Nietzsche's last years).

A Note on the Recommended Reading:

Nietzsche was not a systematic philosopher and did not (in general) divide or subdivide his books into distinct topics or themes. For this reason, the recommended reading will consist mostly of fragments. For convenience (and expense), we have made recommendations from several sources, including collections and books of selections. So, too, in the Supplemental Reading, we have sometimes referred the reader to collections of essays (on Nietzsche) as well as to whole books on a topic. (Publication details are in the bibliography.)

Recommended Reading:

R. J. Hollingdale, ed., *A Nietzsche Reader*.

Walter Kaufmann, ed., *The Portable Nietzsche*.

Walter Kaufmann, ed., *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*.

Richard Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections*.

(We have not given page numbers for any of Nietzsche's full works, because editions and translations vary.)

Supplemental Reading:

Bernd Magnus and Kathleen M. Higgins, *Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*.
Richard Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections and Genealogy, Morality*.
Robert C. Solomon, ed., *Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays*.
Robert C. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgins, eds., *Reading Nietzsche*.
Robert C. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgins, *What Nietzsche Really Said*.
Kathleen M. Higgins, *Nietzsche's Zarathustra*.

Additional Recommended Original Work in Full:

Gay Science, Daybreak.

Questions to Consider:

1. Could a thinker like Nietzsche have appeared anytime earlier in Western philosophy? Could someone like Nietzsche appear with similar impact today?
2. Is it possible to be a moral person even while declaring oneself an atheist, an "immoralist," an *Antichrist*? What is the connection (if any) between a person's beliefs and his or her moral character?

Lecture Two

Quashing the Rumors about Nietzsche

Scope: In this lecture, we discuss (with the help of my wife, fellow Nietzsche scholar Kathleen Higgins), some of the malicious and misplaced “rumors” about Nietzsche that have come down to us through the years. In particular, we want to quash the charge that Nietzsche was crazy and so not to be taken seriously as a philosopher and the often vicious personal charges: that he hated women; that he was a Nazi; an anti-Semite and a nihilist who believed that “everything is permitted”; that he condoned war, murder and cruelty; that he had no sex life, yet died of syphilis. We also want to set aside the ways in which Nietzsche did and did not hate Christianity and religion in general. Philosophically, his thought should also be carefully distinguished with such “red-flag” doctrines as egoism and relativism. We briefly take up the issues surrounding Nietzsche’s unorthodox and controversial style.

Outline

- I. The rumors and responses to them are as follows:
 - A. Nietzsche was crazy.
 1. Nietzsche was mentally ill during the last twelve years of his life.
 2. His writings do not support the speculation that he was already mad during his creative period.
 - B. Nietzsche had syphilis.
 1. Nietzsche was diagnosed with syphilis in the asylum in Jena in 1889.
 2. Interest in the source of this disease is disappointed by Nietzsche’s discretion about his sex life.
 - C. Nietzsche had no sex life.
 1. It has recently been suggested that Nietzsche was gay, with some evidence.
 2. Again, Nietzsche’s discretion disappoints interests in his sex life.
 - D. Nietzsche was hostile toward women.
 1. He grew up in a household of women.
 2. He was aware of the influence of family relationships (particularly his relationship with his mother) on his attitude toward women.
 3. Nietzsche rejected the aims of the contemporary feminist movement.
 4. Nietzsche opposed the uni-sex, one-size-fits-all ideal.
 - E. Nietzsche was hostile toward Christians.
 1. Nietzsche disliked some things about Christianity, particularly what Kierkegaard calls “Christendom,” the Christian mob.

2. Nietzsche admired those exceptional Christians (including Jesus) who really lived what they claimed to believe in.
 3. He objected to the hypocritical and self-righteous attitudes that some Christians take toward their religious beliefs.
- F. Nietzsche was hostile toward Jews.
1. Nietzsche has this reputation because he sometimes refers to the Jews in unflattering terms—as he does everyone else—and because Wagner was an anti-Semite.
 2. However, he analyzes Christianity as a sect of Judaism.
 3. Nietzsche’s critique of Judaism is an aspect of his critique of Christianity.
 4. It is also an aspect that would be very galling to anti-Semites.
- G. Nietzsche was a Nazi.
1. The Nazi party wasn’t formed until 1919, nearly twenty years after Nietzsche’s death.
 2. His sister Elizabeth married a proto-fascist, and she created his (Nietzsche’s) reputation.
 3. Nietzsche was largely non-political, and certainly did not admire the German state.
- H. Nietzsche was power-mad.
1. His concept of the “will to power” has led many to think he applauded military conquest.
 2. Most of the time, Nietzsche uses the term psychologically.
 3. Power motivates many human activities beside war and quests for conquest, art for example.
- I. Nietzsche favored war, murder, cruelty.
1. Nietzsche served as an orderly, not a soldier. He was not pro-war (but not a pacifist either).
 2. He saw cruelty in himself, as in everyone, and was honest (and worried) about that.
- J. Nietzsche admired barbarians.
1. Nietzsche admired the ancient Athenians, and one might call them “barbarians.”
 2. However, he did not encourage brawn without brain.
- K. Nietzsche defended eugenics.
1. So did most other intellectuals of his time (e.g., George Bernard Shaw).
 2. The term “eugenics” sounds distasteful to us because of the Nazis’ experiments.
- L. Nietzsche suggests the *Übermensch* as evolutionary goal.
1. Nietzsche was ambivalent about Darwin.
 2. He accepted evolution and enjoyed pointing out our animal nature.

3. He did not believe that progress of the (human) species was assured.
 4. The *Übermensch* is rarely mentioned in Nietzsche's writing.
 5. The *Übermensch* is an ideal for spiritual development—a willingness to take risks for the sake of creating something great, something beyond oneself.
- M.** Nietzsche was a nihilist.
1. Nihilism (the term comes from Russia) is the rejection of all values.
 2. Nietzsche is no nihilist, but rejects nihilistic values.
- N.** Nietzsche was a relativist.
1. He endorsed relativism in the innocent sense that values are always contextual, relative to a time, a people, a place, and particular circumstances.
 2. He rejected relativism in the vulgar sense that insists that every view is as valid (or invalid) as any other.
- O.** Nietzsche defended selfishness.
1. He rejected the distinction between “selfish” and “selfless.”
 2. He rather asked, “whose ego?” What is selfish depends on the person.
- P.** Nietzsche used fallacies in argumentation, such as *ad hominem*.
1. He did indeed, including personal attacks and bald appeal to the emotions of his readers.
 2. Nevertheless, these “fallacies” play an important role in his philosophy—and are not fallacies at all.
- Q.** Nietzsche was a bad historian.
1. In fact, Nietzsche knew history extremely well. He had a good education, an excellent philological background, and training in historical theology.
 2. Some contemporary philosophers have dismissed Nietzsche's accounts for their irresponsible representations of history.
 3. Some of Nietzsche's accounts are too simplistic if taken to be history. However, Nietzsche tells these tales to bring out particular (polemical) points, particularly in connection with his critique of Christianity.
 4. These might be seen as allegories or parables, usually aimed at getting us to see things differently. They are simplistic in order to reverse customary ways of looking at things.
- R.** Nietzsche wrote only aphorisms.
1. Nietzsche employed a broad range of styles, experimenting throughout his career.
 2. His aphoristic style has a very special aim, to force the reader to think for him or herself.

Recommended Reading:

Prefaces to *Daybreak*, *Gay Science*, *Beyond Good and Evil*.

Supplemental Reading:

R. Schacht, *Selections*, Intro., pp. 21-68.

I. Soll in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections; Genealogy, Morality*, pp. 168-192.

Solomon, Higgins, *What Nietzsche Really Said*, Chapter 1.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why does Nietzsche seem open to so many radically different interpretations of his work and his ideas? How does he render himself so prone to abuse?
2. Even if Nietzsche were shown to be crazy during his productive years, would that force us to alter our view of his work?

Lecture Three

The Fusion of Philosophy and Psychology

Scope: Nietzsche prided himself on his fusion of philosophy and psychology. At one point, he even absurdly brags, “I am the first philosopher to also be a psychologist.” He attempts not to justify human beliefs and practices but, like a psychoanalytically trained anthropologist, to *explain* them in terms of personality and character. He is not alone in this method. His near contemporary, the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, was also a brilliant philosopher-psychologist. So was his English nemesis, John Stuart Mill, and his German mentor, Schopenhauer. But Nietzsche anticipated Freud and psychoanalysis in a way that was, as Freud admitted, uncanny.

Outline

- I. Nietzsche synthesized philosophy and psychology and used psychological analyses to explain (rather than justify) philosophical doctrines and arguments.
 - A. Nietzsche pioneered the psychoanalysis of morals, arguing that morality must be understood in terms of the aspirations and fears of the people who embrace it rather than its supposedly divine or rational origins.
 - B. He insisted on naturalistic explanations of morality and religious belief and he was not concerned to justify morality, as Kant was.
 - C. Nietzsche believed that compassion, pity, and benevolence constitute an assertion of power over others.
- II. Nietzsche rejected the English Utilitarian view of ethics.
 - A. The English Utilitarians assumed that happiness or pleasure (and the avoidance of pain) was the ultimate motive of all human behavior. Nietzsche suggests that it is “the will to power.”
 - B. In his treatment of pity (compassion, *Mitleid*), Nietzsche shows us how a seemingly innocent and noble moral attitude can in fact be seen as disturbing and base.
- III. Nietzsche diagnosed some of the prevalent moral theorists as well.
 - A. He came to view Schopenhauer’s pessimism as a psychological problem.
 - B. He diagnosed Socrates as a man who ultimately hated life and sought respite in the “otherworldly.”
 - C. He most famously diagnosed Christian morality as a “slave morality,” and Christians as weak human beings.

1. Nietzsche held that people accepted Christian morality because of their fear of being shunned by others.
 2. The Christian virtues are virtues of weakness.
- IV. Nietzsche echoes and anticipates some of the most profound psychologists of modern times.
- A. Nietzsche has deep insights into the relation between religion and *angst*.
 1. Nietzsche can be compared with his Danish colleague Søren Kierkegaard. Unlike Nietzsche, however, Kierkegaard was devoutly religious; nonetheless, the thinkers shared many beliefs.
 2. For example, they had similar views about Christendom and Christianity as a “herd religion” animated by peer pressure more than by spiritual concerns.
 3. Nietzsche can also be compared with his Russian contemporary, Fyodor Dostoevsky.
 4. Both Kierkegaard and Dostoevsky analyzed dread or “*angst*,” and they were aware of its importance in human life.
 - B. He also bears comparison to Feuerbach, Marx, and Freud in his development of his attitude of “deep suspicion.”
 1. Like Feuerbach (who influenced Marx), Nietzsche interpreted the world materialistically, in terms of this world, rather than another.
 2. Like Marx, Nietzsche insisted that what people believe depends upon their conditions of life.
 3. Like Freud, Nietzsche insisted that most of what motivates our behavior is unconscious; both were skeptical of people’s stated motivations.

Essential Reading:

Daybreak and *Human, All Too Human* in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections* (*Daybreak*, Book II).

Beyond Good and Evil, Sect. I.

Hollingdale, ed., *A Nietzsche Reader*, “Philosophy and Philosophers,” pp. 29-52, and “Psychological Observations,” pp. 149-166.

Supplemental Reading:

Frithjof Bergmann, in Solomon, Higgins, *Reading Nietzsche*, pp. 29-45.

B. Williams and M. Nussbaum in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections*; *Genealogy, Morality*, pp. 139-167 and 237-247.

Questions to Consider:

1. Are compassion and pity always or even usually noble or commendable emotions? In what ways can they go wrong?
2. Do you think that people basically live for pleasure (and the avoidance of pain)? Does it make sense to say that what they live for is *power*?

Lecture Four

"God Is Dead"— Nietzsche and Christianity

Scope: Nietzsche famously announced that "God is Dead." This is by no means merely a thesis about religion and religious belief. It relates to the whole mind-set of the West, the insistence on Eternity, the obsession with unity and coherence, the demands for predictability and justice in a world that is neither predictable or just. To do away with God, Nietzsche argues, we would have to do away with (Indo-European) grammar. But more urgent, and more readily possible, is to rid ourselves of the pathologies of guilt and sin. Spirituality does not mean sacrificing one's soul to the "other-worldly."

Outline

- I. Nietzsche said "God is Dead."
 - A. This has deep implications, and not only for religion.
 - 1. God provides the foundation of morality (the Ten Commandments). He provides and sanctions moral rules and He punishes those who transgress them.
 - 2. God serves as a "Postulate" of Morality (Kant).
 - 3. God serves as the foundation for truth and rationality. Could there be any knowledge at all if there were no God?
 - B. The notion of God, Nietzsche tells us, is built right into Indo-European grammar.
 - 1. Language shapes our view of the world, our metaphysics.
 - 2. Language shapes our notion of science and truth.
 - C. God provides the organization of society.
 - 1. The organization of society is based on a self and social identity.
 - 2. Our sense of self and our social identities are predicated on our relation to God.
- II. Nietzsche never escapes his Lutheran upbringing and some basic themes of the Lutheran religion.
 - A. He sees the need for a new myth to replace Christianity.
 - B. He often uses images from Luther.
 - 1. For example, Nietzsche's "philosophizing with a hammer" draws on Luther's interpretation of the reference in Jeremiah to God's hammer, which creates by means of destroying.
 - 2. Nietzsche's notion of masks also derives from Luther, who speaks of God's masks.
 - 3. Nietzsche's talk of affirmation in terms of "Yes-saying" reflects Luther's description of the "Yes" that wells up when grace enters the sinner's soul after pride is crushed, and despair has resulted.

4. Nietzsche borrows and secularizes Luther's image of "overflow," which Luther employed to describe the manner in which good works emanate from the soul filled with grace.
- C. Nietzsche rejected Christianity, but he also accepted it as a necessary step in human evolution. It served an important historical function.
1. Nietzsche praised the spirituality of Christianity.
 2. He saw the original teaching of Jesus as having been perverted by the Church.
- III. Nietzsche declared war on the concepts of guilt and sin.
- A. Like Freud, he finds guilt and sin psychologically debilitating.
1. Guilt is a metaphysical blemish: we all have blemished souls. Nietzsche rejects the idea that human beings are intrinsically blemished or flawed, or that we are guilty.
 2. Nietzsche views "sins" as the foibles that make human beings interesting. For example, the seven deadly sins are manifestations of natural human instincts.
 3. It is outrageous to speak of these as metaphysical faults. They are simply part of human behavior.
- B. Accordingly, guilt and sin are metaphysically dubious and theologically contemptible.
- C. Nietzsche did retain the notion of conscience.
1. Nietzsche did not give up spirituality but transformed it.
 2. Nietzsche wants to return us to a state of innocence, as opposed to guilt.
 3. He wants to return us to self-esteem, after science has shown us that we are not the center of the universe or the pinnacle of nature.
 4. Nietzsche calls for a spirituality of this world.

Essential Reading:

Hollingdale, ed., *A Nietzsche Reader*, "Religion," pp. 167-193.

Supplemental Reading:

M. Heidegger, "Nietzsche as Metaphysician" in Solomon, ed., *Nietzsche*, pp. 105-113.

W. Kaufmann, "The Death of God and the Revaluation" in Solomon, ed., *Nietzsche*, pp. 9-28.

J. Salaquarda, "Nietzsche and the Judeo-Christian Tradition" in *Cambridge Companion*, pp. 90-118.

Questions to Consider:

1. What does it mean to say, “God is dead”?
2. In what sense does Nietzsche continue to be a “spiritual” person?

Lecture Five

Nietzsche and the Greeks

Scope: Nietzsche was obsessed with the ancient Greeks. He discovered them as a schoolboy and they remained his ideal throughout his life. His last crazed note was signed “Dionysus.” In this fascination, Nietzsche displayed what E. Butler has called “the tyranny of Greece over Germany.” Nietzsche loved the ancient tragic playwrights Aeschylus and Sophocles, but he (very unfairly) despised their younger colleague Euripides. He displayed great admiration for the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus, but expressed contempt for the great philosophers Socrates and Plato. But he envied Socrates too.

Outline

- I. Nietzsche’s obsession with the ancients was widespread in educated Germany (“the tyranny of Greece over Germany”).
 - A. Nietzsche was a brilliant philologist.
 - 1. He viewed Greece as a model for life and not merely as antiquity.
 - 2. Nietzsche despised most of his fellow scholars (“scholarly oxen”) and sharply contrasted them with the people they studied.
 - 3. Nietzsche took Homer as his focus and the Homeric warriors as his heroes. The Bronze Age, rather than the age of Socrates, was his focus.
 - 4. The Greeks viewed tragedy very differently than modern people do, and this can be seen in Greek tragedy (e.g., *Oedipus the King*, *Antigone*).
- II. Nietzsche’s first published work (1872) was *The Birth of Tragedy*.
 - A. The book concerned the origins and nature of Greek tragedy. It also contained a philosophy of life.
 - 1. The Greeks are contrasted with Christians.
 - 2. Philosophy is juxtaposed against the Greek view of tragedy.
 - B. Greek tragedy involved the dialectical opposition of opposing principles, the Apollonian and the Dionysian.
 - 1. The Apollonian presents the world as orderly, with definite boundaries. It suggests a sense of self as an individuated ego.
 - 2. The Dionysian presents the world as dynamic and chaotic. It undercuts the impression that one exists as a separate individual and suggests a sense of self as part of the dynamic whole.
 - C. Greek tragedy became possible when two vital forces became integrated; e.g., the wild ecstasies of the Dionysian cults and rational thinking as represented by the God Apollo.

1. The Apollonian presents the world as orderly, with definite boundaries. It suggests a sense of self as an individuated ego.
 2. The Dionysian presents the world as dynamic and chaotic. It undercuts the impression that one exists as a separate individual and suggests a sense of self as part of the dynamic whole.
 3. The best examples of this fusion of opposites were the dramas of Aeschylus and Sophocles.
- D. Nietzsche conceived of Greece as an *agonistic* society.
1. It flourished through competition.
 2. It rejected the claim that people are equal. Life consisted of winners and losers.
 3. Nietzsche thought this agonistic perspective was what made the Greeks beautiful (if also what ultimately caused them to decline).
- E. Nietzsche condemned Euripides as causing the demise of Greek tragedy.
1. He (Euripides) fell under the spell of Socrates, who wanted rational explanation of everything.
 2. Sophocles, by contrast, had seen life as a mystery.
 3. In Euripides, the rational, Apollonian side took full control. Tragedy was “rationalized,” and the tragic sense of life came to an end.
 4. According to Nietzsche, Socrates hated life and saw it as something to be overcome.
 5. Nietzsche thought that life should be accepted and enjoyed for exactly what it is.
 6. His interest in the myth of eternal recurrence reflects his sense that life should be appreciated for its own sake.
- III. Nietzsche did not see Greek philosophy as a great step forward for mankind. Rather, he saw it as a decline and a loss of nerve.
- A. The philosopher whom Nietzsche most admired was the Pre-Socratic Heraclitus, the philosopher of “flux,” the sage with the “dark sayings.”
- B. By contrast, the Pre-Socratic Parmenides, Socrates and his student Plato appealed to an eternal reality and downgraded ordinary experience.
1. Zeno, for example, even claimed that movement is an illusion.
 2. Plato’s ideal world was another world, a world without change. Plato’s “Myth of the Cave” suggests this.
- C. Nietzsche saw Socrates in particular as a problem, as the man who made “reason into a tyrant.” But he also saw him as something of a role model, and viewed him with a mixture of love, loathing and envy.

Essential Reading:

“Homer’s Contest,” “Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks,” and *Birth of Tragedy* in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections*.

Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, “The Problem of Socrates.”

Supplemental Reading:

W. Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, “Nietzsche’s Attitude toward Socrates.”

Ackermann, *Nietzsche*, Chapter 1.

A. Nehamas, *The Art of Living*, Chapter 5.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why were the ancient Greeks so appealing to the Germans, especially to Nietzsche ?
2. In what sense is Socrates a “decadent,” according to Nietzsche?

Lecture Six

"Why the Greeks Were So Beautiful"— Nietzsche on Tragedy

Scope: Nietzsche's conception of tragedy provided the famous contrast between the "Apollonian and Dionysian," between the God of light and the prince of darkness. The Apollonian and Dionysian are two aspects of Greek culture, and their synthesis explains the genius of Greek tragedy. Through tragedy, the Greeks "accepted" suffering and made something "beautiful" out of it. Christianity, by contrast, tries to deny the meaning of suffering by way of the invocation of another, better "otherworldly" life. Socrates and Plato also tried to deny the reality of suffering by beginning the long-running Western argument that there is a "reason" for everything. Aristotle's theory of tragedy presented a version of this theme. Nietzsche was anticipated, however, by Hegel and Schopenhauer.

Outline

- I. Nietzsche's conception of tragedy involved the acceptance of life as suffering.
 - A. In this, he followed his pessimistic mentor Schopenhauer.
 - 1. He confronted Schopenhauer's pessimism by considering the Greek story of the demigod Silenus, who claimed that the best thing for a human being was not to be born; the second best, to die quickly.
 - 2. Schopenhauer preached withdrawing from life.
 - 3. The Greeks rejected withdrawal from life; they celebrated life, despite its suffering.
 - B. Tragedy (for Nietzsche) is the synthesis of the Dionysian and the Apollonian.
 - 1. Life has to be seen from two sides.
 - 2. One view was from the Dionysian frenzy of life as a dynamic but integrated whole; Dionysus was associated with music and the Dionysian condition was represented by the Greek chorus.
 - 3. The other view was from the Apollonian efforts of the individual characters (e.g., Oedipus, Antigone) to make sense of their suffering.
 - C. The Greeks merged the Apollonian and Dionysian ways of viewing the world.
 - 1. The chorus was originally the entire drama; its chanting drew the audience into the Dionysian condition of participation in something larger.
 - 2. Gradually actors and plot became part of Greek tragedy.

3. But the effectiveness of the “Apollonian” spectacle depended on the audience already having been captivated by the music of the chorus.
 4. The Dionysian ideal was joy in life.
 5. Dionysus is opposed to individuality: in one account, he was torn to bits by the Titans; his devotees sought to reintegrate his severed parts, implying a reintegration of individuals into an original unity.
- D. The early Greeks could accept the suffering of life.
1. They realized that they ultimately could not rationalize tragedy.
 2. But Socrates, and then Plato and Aristotle, tried to do just that.
- II. Socrates, Plato and Aristotle rationalized tragedy by focusing attention, not on this life, but on another.
- A. Basically, they tried to find a safe respite from life’s tragedies.
1. Aristotle did not accept the domination of another world (*cf.* Raphael’s famous painting, “The School of Athens”).
 2. Aristotle, like Nietzsche, was very “this worldly”; both thought of tragedy in similar ways.
- B. Finding reasons for tragedy (“why bad things happen to good people”).
1. Aristotle rationalized tragedy with his theory of the “tragic flaw.”
 2. Oedipus ultimately deserved what happened to him because of his stubbornness and his arrogance. However, Oedipus was a good man; he is proud, arrogant, stubborn, but these are kingly qualities.
 3. Aristotle thus allows us to rationalize tragedy by identifying a tragic flaw, which enables us to blame the victim.
- C. Christianity (to Nietzsche) is the ultimate rationalization.
1. It provides a paradigm of the “otherworldly.”
 2. Nietzsche claimed that “Platonism is Christianity for the masses.”
 3. Nietzsche criticized as horrendous the commonplace idea that the terrible and undeserved suffering of some individuals is part of God’s plan.
 4. Unlike contemporary Christians, the Greeks did not try to rationalize away tragedy and suffering.
- III. Tragedy can be viewed from a number of very different perspectives.
- A. Hegel’s dialectical theory views tragedy as a cosmic conflict between super-human forces, not as the consequence of a tragic flaw.
1. Sophocles’ drama *Antigone* is a good example of this view.
 2. We only make sense as a unity.
 3. We should understand tragedy, not by seeing a tragic flaw, but by seeing that people are caught in contending historical forces.
- B. Schopenhauer’s pessimistic view is that tragedy is an unavoidable manifestation of the irrational cosmic Will. All we can do is not take ourselves or our lives all that seriously.

- C. Nietzsche rejects Schopenhauer's pessimistic view. For him, tragedy is unavoidable, but we should *love* it, nevertheless.

Recommended Reading:

Birth of Tragedy in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections*.

Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* ("What We Owe to the Ancients").

Supplemental Reading:

I. Soll, "Pessimism and the Tragic View of Life" in Solomon, Higgins, eds., *Reading Nietzsche*, pp. 104-131.

Julian Young, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of Art*, pp. 25-57.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is tragedy? Do we today still have a sense of what that is?
2. Is life more pain than pleasure, more suffering than gratification? How is life worth living if it necessarily ends in suffering? If it does not have an ultimate meaning?

Lecture Seven

Nietzsche and Schopenhauer on Pessimism

Scope: Arthur Schopenhauer was and is the most outspoken defender of pessimism in philosophy. He was also Nietzsche's early mentor ("the first honest German atheist"). In this lecture, we provide arguments for and against pessimism, with an explanation of Schopenhauer's view and Nietzsche's struggle with it. Even when he most vigorously rejected pessimism, Nietzsche seems to have been caught in its web all through his career. As an antidote, he embraced "cheerfulness" and "gay" (*fröhliche*) science, but it is not convincing.

Outline

- I. What is pessimism? Life is more pain than pleasure. It is also meaningless.
 - A. As atheists, both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche viewed the world as lacking the meaning that a providential plan would bestow.
 1. Schopenhauer compared human beings' cycle of life and death to that of insects.
 2. Life simply repeats itself endlessly without meaning, as it does for irrational animals.
 3. Humans occupy just another stage in the evolution of life; they are nothing special.
 - B. Schopenhauer's pessimism turns on his idea of the Will as ultimate reality. Schopenhauer viewed all existence as one (he was the first Western philosopher to take the religion of the Far East seriously).
 - C. In his book, *The World as Will and Idea*, Schopenhauer distinguished the world as representation (Immanuel Kant's "phenomenal" world), which is illusion, and the world as it really is, a dynamic but purposeless Will, which is singular but conflicted.
 1. For Kant, the world as it really is (the "noumenal" world) is the realm of God and human freedom; the phenomenal world is the everyday world.
 2. Schopenhauer's "noumenal" world is chaotic, unintelligent, and driven.
 3. The entire phenomenal world is just a manifestation of the Will.
 - D. Schopenhauer's conception of the Will is clearly one of the sources of Nietzsche's Dionysian.
 1. The world as Will without purpose manifests in each of us as desire, most dramatically as sexual desire. It is thus "the will to life," and what we take to be our individual desires are in fact the desire of life itself to continue itself.
 2. But what this means is that our desires cannot possibly be satisfied, that seeming satisfaction will always be followed by

further desire, that our desire for a finally fulfilling life is impossible. Life ends with death and the ultimate frustration of desire.

- II. There is no meaning of life in a world without purpose. Schopenhauer is an atheist, and in this he clearly differs from his mentor Kant. For Kant, God gives purpose and meaning to the world.
 - A. But death has no significance in a world of Will without purpose either.
 - 1. The death of the individual is an illusion.
 - 2. The Will itself lives on.
 - B. There is a respite from the Will in art and aesthetic contemplation.
 - 1. Schopenhauer draws on Plato's ideas of the Forms, which are the prototypes for individual things (e.g., many individual things participate in the Form of Beauty).
 - 2. Schopenhauer claimed that artists present the Forms, the universal nature of types of things, when they represent individual objects in their works.
 - 3. When we view things aesthetically, we view them not as individual things but as instantiations of a universal form. The subject is will-less and de-individuated at such a moment. We are temporarily liberated from desire.
 - 4. Unlike the representational arts, music is the direct manifestation of the Will and its dynamic movements.
 - 5. It bypasses external things and touches directly on what is universal within us.
 - 6. The arts thus allow us a respite from our desires temporarily.
 - 7. Schopenhauer draws on the Buddhist notion of life as suffering and on the idea of transcending desire as the only means of ending suffering.
- III. Nietzsche takes the aesthetic perspective to be not just an escape from suffering life but as the very meaning of life.
 - A. In *Birth of Tragedy*, he tells us, "only as an aesthetic phenomenon is the world justified."
 - 1. Nietzsche contends that Schopenhauer's pessimism is not convincing. Nietzsche suggests "cheerfulness" and creativity, which he manifests in his own life and works.
 - 2. Optimism based on white-washing is also no solution.
 - B. For Nietzsche, reason will not provide an answer to "the meaning of life." Rather, the meaning of life is to be found in the passions.

Essential Reading:

Birth of Tragedy in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections*.

Supplemental Reading:

J. Young, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of Art*, Chapter 4.

Questions to Consider:

1. Is death something to be feared? Why should we fear non-being?
2. In what sense is aesthetic contemplation a relief from our struggles in the world? How does it provide this?

Lecture Eight

Nietzsche, Jesus, Zarathustra

Scope: Nietzsche was a scholar not only of ancient Greece (and Rome) but also a scholar and both fan and harsh critic of the Old Testament Prophets and Jesus and the Gospels. He was also well read on the history and teachings of the Persian sage Zarathustra (Latin name, Zoroaster). Nietzsche's best known book is *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, a Biblical parody in which the Persian prophet is depicted as rejecting all "otherworldly" ways of living, notably Christianity. It is in *Zarathustra* that Nietzsche introduces the idea of the *Übermensch*. He also introduces the idea of "the last man," the perfectly happy "couch potato."

Outline

- I. Nietzsche follows the Old Testament prophets in his attempt to understand the failings of his era ("modernity") and anticipate the consequences to come.
- II. Nietzsche may attack Christianity but he retains his admiration for Jesus. He also attacked Socrates but nevertheless obviously admires him (for example, in connection with Socrates' emphasis on rule by wise individuals).
 - A. Nietzsche saw in Jesus a prophet who accurately diagnosed many of the weaknesses of both the Roman and the Jewish ways of life but was misunderstood.
 - B. He also came to see Socrates as a prophet of sorts who tried to radically change society in some directions that Nietzsche found quite congenial.
 - C. Nietzsche's view of both Jesus and Socrates is a mixture of disapproval, admiration, and envy. He does not, as did Hegel, starkly contrast them.
 - D. Nietzsche appreciated the Gospels, as he appreciated Plato, as the true creators of the Jesus and Socrates legends, respectively.
- III. Nietzsche used the Persian prophet Zarathustra to create a similar legend, but to very different ends.
 - A. Zarathustra, unlike Jesus and Socrates, preached *against* the otherworldly in favor of "love of the earth."
 - 1. Zarathustra is a counterpart to Jesus and Socrates.
 - 2. In the opening of Nietzsche's work, Zarathustra is compared to the philosopher in Plato's "Myth of the Cave" and to Jesus as he prepares for his mission.
 - B. Nietzsche drew from what is known about the historical Zarathustra.

1. Zarathustra lived during a changing political situation.
 2. He offered a new way to interpret the success that invading nomads had against the Persians' established agrarian settlements.
 3. Zarathustra discouraged worship of the traditional deities who were also worshipped by the Persians' enemies to the East. Although acknowledging the existence of other deities, he called for worship of a Supreme God, Ahura Mazda.
 4. Zarathustra is therefore described as the founder of Western monotheism.
- C. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* is an epic poem in quasi-Biblical style in which the central character, Zarathustra, repeatedly emerges from his mountain solitude to meet and persuade the odd caricatures of humanity of his doctrines.
1. Nietzsche's Zarathustra is based on the real historical figure, but one of the central theses, the rejection of the distinction between good and evil, is the opposite of one of Zarathustra's most famous teachings.
 2. Zarathustra emphasized the need for distinguishing between good and evil. But Nietzsche does not think Zarathustra would stop with this simplistic dichotomy, as did the subsequent moral tradition.
 3. Zarathustra made his distinction in response to the situation of his time. In our time, he would be proposing new ideas for living meaningfully without the dead myth of the Christian God.
 4. Nietzsche was thus continuing the original Zarathustra's work; Zarathustra has evolved into Nietzsche.
- D. Nietzsche next introduces the "Three Metamorphoses," from camel to lion to child.
1. The camel takes on the burdens of the tradition.
 2. The lion declares his superiority to the received tradition.
 3. The child approaches the world with a keen sense of play and inventiveness; this is a vision of a new innocence.
- E. Nietzsche also introduces the *Übermensch*. The *Übermensch* appears only in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.
1. The *Übermensch* is not an evolutionary goal.
 2. The *Übermensch* is more comparable to the image of the child in "The Three Metamorphoses." The *Übermensch* represents vitality and risk-taking.
- F. Nietzsche also introduces "the last man," an image of where we may actually be headed as a species.
1. The last man has no ambition, takes no risks, represents the end of the continual cycle of regeneration.
 2. Zarathustra's own efforts indicate his opposition to the last man's selfish obsession with comfort.

- IV. In the opening of the book's Prologue, Zarathustra says he will "go under." This is a play on the German word "*untergehen*," which is used for both the setting of the sun (which cyclically recurs) and for dying.
- A. Zarathustra is willing to throw himself and his life fully into his work, his mission to humanity, despite its risks. He recognizes that he will eventually perish in the process.
 - B. Zarathustra's efforts are more often frustrated than successful, perhaps a confession and an anticipation on Nietzsche's part of his own influence.
 - C. Zarathustra often fails to make himself understood (e.g., his hearers misunderstand his reference to "the last man") and he often feels himself to be a failure.

Recommended Reading:

Thus Spoke Zarathustra, in Schacht, ed. *Nietzsche: Selections*.

Supplemental Reading:

K. Higgins, "Reading *Zarathustra*," in Solomon, Higgins, eds., *Reading Nietzsche*, pp. 132-151.

Kathleen M. Higgins, *Nietzsche's Zarathustra*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Could we view Nietzsche as a prophet? What is his prophecy?
2. How do you envision Nietzsche's *Übermensch*? What does it represent?

Lecture Nine

Nietzsche on Reason, Instinct, and Passion

Scope: Against the grain of philosophy since the Greeks, Nietzsche rejects the primacy of reason in human life. Shifting instead to biology, he defends a powerful notion of instinct and emphasizes the importance of unconscious drives in human behavior. From his early *Birth of Tragedy* to his late work *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche debunks the celebration of reason and consciousness. He accuses Socrates of turning reason into a tyrant. Accordingly, Nietzsche might well be considered a “romantic” in his celebration of passion (although Nietzsche rejected romanticism as being “shallow”). We will argue that Nietzsche had great insight into the nature of emotion.

Outline

- I. The primacy of reason dominates Western philosophy. The passions are typically demeaned (e.g., by Socrates, medieval philosophy, Enlightenment thought, and modern philosophy).
 - A. Rationality has no clear, singular meaning.
 1. It refers, for example, to the fact that we can think, reflect and use language.
 2. It refers to the fact that we can do mathematics, “do sums” (in the words of Bertrand Russell)—emphasized by the ancient Greeks.
 3. It refers to the fact that we can do things by “figuring things out,” by calculation, by “instrumental reasoning” (e.g., game theory).
 4. It refers to having the right goals as well as adopting the right means to reach them (e.g., Aristotle’s claim that reason helps us to want the right things).
 - B. Socrates “turns reason into a tyrant,” by treating reason as the royal road to truth.
 1. He uses it to refute the half-baked beliefs of his contemporaries.
 2. He argues for an absolute set of standards that are comprehensible by reason alone.
 - C. The eighteenth century Enlightenment renewed the priority of reason.
 1. The Enlightenment was opposed to the medieval notion of *faith*. It had its own faith, faith in science and reason to solve our problems.
 2. Kant considered religious faith to be necessary.
 3. But most Enlightenment thinkers opposed traditional religious faith.
 4. Some Enlightenment philosophers emphasized sentiment, but not the passions.
 5. The Enlightenment stressed the Apollonian over the Dionysian.

6. The Enlightenment was inherently universalist.
- D. The Enlightenment had a problematic reception in Germany. Romanticism was dominant in Germany.
 1. Romanticism, as a set of tendencies, can be traced back to ancient times.
 2. Jean-Jacques Rousseau was a powerful influence on German Romanticism. So were the British thinkers David Hume and Adam Smith, who developed theories of the sentiments.
 3. In Germany, the Enlightenment was considered vulgar (e.g., by Hegel and Schopenhauer).
 4. The Romantics put their faith not in reason, but in the passions.
- II. Nietzsche shocks philosophers by emphasizing the importance of drives and instincts in human behavior. This has become more commonplace since Freud, but it is a precocious recognition of unconscious and non-rational motives in the midst of the rationalist Enlightenment.
 - A. Nietzsche insists that we can find our life's meaning in our instincts and drives, what we share with other animals.
 1. This reflects Darwin's influence on Nietzsche.
 2. This also links Nietzsche with Freud.
 - B. Nietzsche anticipates the Unconscious.
 1. Freud later writes, "philosophers before me discovered the Unconscious."
 2. Nietzsche claimed that consciousness originated because of our need to communicate with others.
 3. Nietzsche (more than Freud) argues that consciousness is dispensable. As individuals, we each have our own instincts.
 4. Conscious thought can blind us to our own creativity. Thinking and consciousness are dangerous.
 5. However, perhaps consciousness can play a more positive role at a later stage of human development.
 - C. Nietzsche's emphasis on the importance of the passions and his diminution of reason links him to Romanticism.
 1. Nietzsche, like the Romantics, praised the passions and the irrational.
 2. But Nietzsche, like the great poet Goethe, finds romanticism "sickly" and shallow. ("They muddy the waters to make them look deep.")
 - D. Nietzsche comes to see that the passions should not be sharply opposed to reason, but rather both include and encompass reason.
 1. He writes, "as if every passion did not include its quantum of reason."
 2. He suggests that reason is nothing but a confluence of the passions.

Essential Reading:

Twilight of the Idols, “‘Reason’ in Philosophy,” “Morality as Anti-Nature,” and “Four Great Errors.”

“Art and Aesthetics” in Hollingdale, ed., *A Nietzsche Reader*, pp. 125-148.

Supplemental Reading:

R. Solomon, “100 Years of *Ressentiment*” in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections; Genealogy, Morality*, especially pp. 102-106.

R. Schacht, “Nietzsche’s Kind of Philosophy” in *Cambridge Companion*, pp. 151-179.

Questions to Consider:

1. Can a person be *too* rational? What does this mean?
2. The passions are often said to be irrational and destructive, even a bit of insanity. Is there a fair evaluation of the passions?

Lecture Ten

Nietzsche's Style and the Problem of Truth

Scope: What is most striking about reading Nietzsche, before one even gets to the polemics, is his famous style. He often writes in aphorisms, small explosions of insight without explanation. He uses as many exclamation points, emphatic italics and “scare quotes” as a *Glamour* magazine journalist. Against every canon of “logical correctness,” Nietzsche makes extensive use of *ad hominem* arguments, arguments directed against the person rather than the thesis or the argument. He also appeals to emotion, another form of fallacious argument. Perhaps it is not surprising, given Nietzsche's denigration of reason and his fallacious arguing, that he has skeptical views about the central philosophical notion of *truth*.

Outline

- I. Nietzsche's style is experimental, shifting from eccentric classical scholarship to aphoristic to Biblical parody to polemic essay and mock autobiography.
 - A. These experiments complicate interpretation of his works. Their purpose is to incite our own thought, and to shock us into a different way of seeing things.
 1. For example, Nietzsche sometimes utilizes fictional characters, such as one of Zarathustra's interlocutors, the “Ugliest Man.”
 2. The Ugliest Man claims to have killed God.
 3. This is a playful image that tells a story; it is not presented as an assertion. Instead, it is suggestive.
 - B. Nietzsche employs “musical” characteristics of writing, such as tempo.
 - C. The strategy of the aphorism is to provoke thought. Nietzsche wants his readers to be active.
 1. For example, consider the famous aphorism “*Out of life's school of war*. What does not destroy me, makes me stronger.”
 2. This can mean many different things. Nietzsche does not tell us which possible meaning he endorses, or whether he endorses more than one.
- II. Nietzsche often employs what most philosophers would consider fallacies, classic examples of bad arguments.
 - A. In particular, he uses *ad hominem* arguments.
 1. An *ad hominem* argument is personal and aimed at the person.
 2. It is unlike “respectable” philosophical arguments, which are impersonal and concern only the logic of the argument.

- B. He also employs “appeals to emotion.” Whereas most philosophers follow Socrates in insisting that we should not be swayed by our passions. Nietzsche writes with such passion.
- III. If Nietzsche is so skilled at rhetoric, what happens to the truth?
- A. We need to consider that argument is a form of art.
 - 1. Many deductive arguments lack persuasive power.
 - 2. Philosophy is not logic but rhetoric.
 - 3. Many of Socrates’ arguments are logically bad, but powerful for other reasons.
 - 4. Nietzsche is doing art, not science.
 - B. The question of rhetoric’s relation to truth is a question that Socrates raised against the Sophists, but Nietzsche’s answer is even more radical. Nietzsche says, “There is no truth; there are only interpretations.”
- IV. Like most intellectuals in the late nineteenth century, Nietzsche was fascinated with and knowledgeable about science. Sometimes he even praised his own work as “most scientific.”
- A. Nietzsche’s views about science display a number of variations.
 - 1. He sometimes views science as essentially experimental, and in this sense he has considerable admiration for it. He wants to experiment with ideas, just as scientists experiment.
 - 2. He also views science as naturalistic, which is not to say materialistic, but opposed to any explanations that invoke the supernatural. With this, too, he is obviously in agreement.
 - 3. He sometimes praises science for its non-dogmatic nature, the fact that no conclusion is final, the door to new evidence and new hypotheses and theories is always open. Our knowledge of the world is always tentative. Again, Nietzsche registers nothing but approval.
 - 4. Sometimes, especially early in his work, he opposes science to an aesthetic view of the world. Only occasionally does he identify the two, as many scientists would, in finding aesthetic beauty in understanding how the world works.
 - B. Later in his career, he turns against science.
 - 1. He accuses science of being ascetic, a form of self-denial, an obsession with truth to the detriment of life. His fellow scholars were obviously included in this indictment.
 - 2. When science becomes dogmatic, it loses its virtue.
 - 3. Nietzsche also comes to identify science with positivism, an exclusive emphasis on the facts. But since he insists that “there are no facts,” this conception of science is obviously inadequate.

Essential Reading:

“Truth and Lies in an Extra-Moral Sense,” in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections*.

Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, “The Problem of Socrates.”

Supplemental Reading:

A. Nehamas, *Nietzsche*, Chapter 1.

R. Solomon, “Nietzsche *Ad Hominem*” in *Cambridge Companion*, pp. 180-222.

Questions to Consider:

1. Can rhetoric show us the way to the truth? Why does Nietzsche so prefer rhetorical devices (overstatement, personal insults) to the standard philosophical logic and argumentation?
2. Can an *ad hominem* argument in fact throw light on a philosophical thesis? Can calling Socrates “ugly” show us anything whatsoever about his philosophy?

Lecture Eleven

Nietzsche on Truth and Interpretation

Scope: Nietzsche's views on truth and interpretation are not always consistent and he shifted his perspective several times in his career. Early on, he described truth as "a mobile army of metaphors." Later on, he became both enamored with and disappointed with science and the scientific method. He sometimes seems to accept the idea that truth—if there were to be any—would require a match between our beliefs and reality as it is "in itself." Other times he accepted the more modest and consequently more reasonable but relativistic view that truth depends on one's perspective. Nietzsche's "perspectivism" implies that there is no privileged, objective, absolute, or "God's eye" view of the world. The perspectivist view is readily combined with a "pragmatic" view of truth, that truth is disclosed in our serviceable practices and habits rather than in the abstract realm of reason. Truth is interpretation, whether the conscious interpretation of experience (via "the facts") or through the practicalities of what we do.

Outline

- I. "There is no truth," "there are no facts," "there are only appearances."
 - A. Why is truth important? Why are we interested in it? Why are we willing to pay the costs of attaining truth?
 - B. The search for truth can't be isolated; it's part of how we live our lives.
 - 1. It is bound up with status.
 - 2. Truth is related to the search for other goals (e.g., "The truth will make you free").
 - 3. Truth is a means.
 - 4. The idea of truth lends itself to a sense of the absolute.
 - 5. The search for truth is related to the search for power.
- II. When Nietzsche claims there is no truth, only interpretations, he suggests that there is no way to get to the bottom of things.
 - A. We can compare this situation to that of the Bible, which is the product of a series of interpretations. To understand anything is to interpret it.
 - B. Appearances depend on the things of which they are appearances.
 - 1. How do you get behind the appearance? This was, for example, Descartes' question.
 - 2. Kant distinguishes between our experience and the way the world is in itself.
 - C. Nietzsche claims that when we discard the idea of a "real" world, distinct from the world of appearances, the apparent world also disappears. The distinction is bogus; only our experience exists.

- D. When Nietzsche says, “there are no facts,” he is not denying the obvious.
 - 1. He is rather making a point: all facts are already conceived within a language, within a culture, within a perspective, within the constraints and expectations of a theory.
 - 2. To say that “there are only interpretations” means that there is no non-perspectival, entirely atheoretical view of a “naked” (uninterpreted) state of affairs.
 - E. When Nietzsche says, “there is no truth,” he is not denying that some claims about the world are warranted whereas others are utterly without evidence.
 - 1. He is making the well-rehearsed philosophical point that we are never in a position to check our perceptions and beliefs against the world “in itself.”
 - 2. All of our checking is within the realm of our experience, noting that some perceptions cohere, others do not; some beliefs follow from one another, others contradict one another.
 - F. When Nietzsche says, “there are only appearances,” he is again making the point that we never encounter the world “in itself.”
 - 1. We can only know the world of our experience.
 - 2. This is a claim that traces back to Kant and Schopenhauer.
 - G. The claim that there is no truth leads to paradox.
 - 1. Is the claim that there is no truth *true*? If so, then it is false.
 - 2. But this is a misunderstanding of the claim, which is mistakenly presented as a “truth about truth.”
 - 3. It is rather a claim made within the realm of truth, the realm of experience, denying any possible knowledge external to that realm.
 - H. There is no “God’s eye” view of the world.
 - 1. Even if there were a God, he would have to have a viewpoint.
 - 2. But then, how does Nietzsche get his distance? He describes the world and his experience not by going outside of them, but rather by moving around rapidly within them.
- III. Nietzsche’s view of truth might be called “perspectivism.”
- A. Perspectivism is just this view that every claim, every experience, every belief, every philosophy, is tied to some perspective.
 - B. But there are multiple perspectives, and we can adopt many of them; some with ease (if only we are not dogmatic), others only with difficulty.
 - 1. There is the possibility of different moral perspectives (for example, Nietzsche distinguishes master and slave morality as two different perspectives on the world).

2. Perspectivism is not the same thing as relativism; not all perspectives are equal.
 3. The philosopher should adopt as many perspectives as possible, according to Nietzsche. This has led some philosophers to accuse Nietzsche of inconsistency.
 4. Nietzsche avoids committing himself to a single fixed position.
- C. Nietzsche adopts a pragmatic view of truth.
1. What is philosophical truth? It is understanding how these different perspectives all tie together.
 2. You must be able to hold competing perspectives at the same time.
 3. Nietzsche's view of truth is similar to Darwin's view of fitness.
 4. What we believe to be true is just what works in our struggle for survival and self-realization.

Essential Reading:

Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, "On the Prejudices of Philosophers," and "The Free Spirit."

Hollingdale, ed., *A Nietzsche Reader*, "Logic, Epistemology, Metaphysics," pp. 53-70.

Supplemental Reading:

M. Clark, *Nietzsche on Philosophy and Truth*.

A. Nehamas, *Nietzsche*, Chapter 2.

B. Leiter, "Perspectivism in Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*" in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections; Genealogy, Morality*, pp. 334-357.

Questions to Consider:

1. Nietzsche defends many different views of science as a discipline. Which one(s) do you think is (are) most justified?
2. Nietzsche says "there is no truth." What can he possibly mean by this? Is he right (that is, is his claim *true*)?

Lecture Twelve

"Become Who You Are"— Freedom, Fate, and Free Will

Scope: "Freedom" was the watchword of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but what it meant was a matter of great controversy. In politics, freedom was interpreted (e.g., by Enlightenment "liberals") mainly in terms of *laissez-faire*, "leave us alone." By contrast, many thinkers followed a less negative sense of freedom in terms of the freedom to participate, to elevate oneself in society, to create. Nietzsche's political views cannot be easily stated or separated from the times in which he formulated them: the age of Bismarck, militant German unification under Prussia, German chauvinism, the strong socialist and democratic currents sweeping through Europe, the influence of Darwin. Against German chauvinism, the statism and military Reich of Bismarck, Nietzsche declared himself "a good European." Insofar as Nietzsche had a political philosophy, it was centered on the freedom to create. Nietzsche is well known for his individualism, his notorious views on "the great man." But there was, and is, another dimension to freedom, a metaphysical dimension, which has to do with whether or not an individual can ever be free at all, that is free from his or her heredity, upbringing, and circumstances. Nietzsche, who is often linked to the freedom-loving "existentialists," nevertheless denies any such freedom.

Outline

- I. Nietzsche is often presented as a champion of freedom, as one of the existentialists. This is in some senses true, in other senses false.
 - A. Nietzsche rejects the "negative" political view of freedom (*laissez-faire*), which he views with alarm as mere lack of discipline and as license.
 1. More popular in Germany was a positive view of freedom, the freedom to do or be something else.
 2. This amounts to freedom within limits.
 - B. Nietzsche rejects democracy and with it the freedom for all to participate in the determination of values.
 1. Only the rare few are in a position to create values or determine the course of history.
 2. Nietzsche shares this anti-democratic view with Socrates, but he does not endorse the idea of "Philosopher-Kings."
 - C. What Nietzsche clearly believed in was the freedom to create.
 1. Nietzsche did not believe that the state was in any position to spur or encourage creativity.

2. He did not think that one was free to become creative if one was not already born with talent.

II. Nietzsche is well-known for his individualism.

- A. Individualism is a “modern” creation.
 1. It originated in the twelfth century with the invention of “courtly love.”
 2. The Renaissance promoted individualism after it rediscovered the ancients.
- B. We should distinguish between the individual’s ability to create and to choose alternative actions.
 1. Kierkegaard emphasizes the choice.
 2. Sartre emphasizes the individual’s absolute freedom to choose. We are responsible for who we are and what we do.
- C. For Nietzsche, there are constraints on the determinants of our behavior.
 1. The individual is not free to choose whatever he or she will do.
 2. In this sense, Nietzsche is *not* like the existentialists, e.g., Jean-Paul Sartre.
 3. Nietzsche is a biological determinist. He thinks that what we are, we are for the most part from birth.
 4. What he does allow is that we are free to “become who we are” (a phrase from the Greek poet Pindar). We can and should realize our natural talents and character.
 5. In this view of character, he follows Schopenhauer, who thought that every person was unique. Nietzsche, unlike Schopenhauer, really does see us as individuals, not as manifestations of one Will.
 6. Nietzsche asks: Do we *decide* to behave in certain ways? For him, the “self” is naturalistic and empirical.

III. Nietzsche rejects the idea of the Will, but he also rejects the idea of free will. Free will presupposes a notion of the subject or self that is a metaphysical fiction.

- A. Nietzsche’s view of the self is purely naturalistic and empirical.
- B. The notion of agency is therefore a problem for him.
 1. How much do we actually choose to do, and how much is simply an expression of our natures?
 2. How do we know that we are the agents of our own action?

IV. Nietzsche, like the early Greeks and unlike most moderns, believes in fate.

- A. He thinks that we each have a destiny, based on our given natures.
- B. This is why he defends *amor fati*, “the love of fate.” It harks back to his earlier views on tragedy and accepting our life, even in the midst of suffering, loving it. In short, the individual must take responsibility for who he/she is.

Essential Reading:

Twilight of the Idols, “Four Great Errors,” and “What We Owe to the Ancients.”

Supplemental Reading:

T. Strong, “Nietzsche and Politics” in Solomon, ed., *Nietzsche*, pp. 258-293.

T. Strong, “Nietzsche’s Political Misappropriation” in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections; Genealogy, Morality*, pp. 119-150.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is an individual, according to Nietzsche? How does this jibe with our more ordinary sense of what it is to be an individual?
2. Do you believe in fate? Why does Nietzsche? What does it mean to believe in fate?

Timeline

1844 October 15	Nietzsche is born in Röcken, Saxony (Prussia).
1849	Nietzsche's father dies at the age of 36.
1858-69	Nietzsche studies the classics and music.
1869	Nietzsche meets and befriends the composer, Richard Wagner.
1869	Nietzsche becomes a professor of classics (philology) at Basel, Switzerland.
1870	Bismarck unifies Germany. The Franco-Prussian war. Nietzsche enlists as an orderly.
1872	Nietzsche publishes <i>The Birth of Tragedy</i> , idolizing the Greeks and Wagner.
1873-74	Nietzsche publishes three "Untimely Meditations," including an essay on the German pessimist Arthur Schopenhauer.
1876	Nietzsche publishes an essay on Wagner, as the break is becoming evident between them. Intermittent depression begins.
1878-79	Nietzsche publishes <i>Human, All Too Human</i> (his first book of aphorisms), quits his job at Basel, but stays in Switzerland.
1881	Nietzsche publishes <i>Daybreak</i> .
1882	Nietzsche has a short but intense love affair with Lou Salomé. He publishes <i>The Gay Science</i> . Depression intensifies.
1883-85	Nietzsche writes and publishes <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> . His sister Elizabeth marries a proto-Nazi. Nietzsche is appalled and breaks with her.
1886	Nietzsche publishes <i>Beyond Good and Evil</i> and expands his <i>Gay Science</i> .
1887	Nietzsche publishes <i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i> , briefly considers a larger work to be called <i>The Will to Power</i> .

1888	Nietzsche publishes <i>The Wagner Case</i> , <i>Twilight of the Idols</i> , <i>The Antichrist</i> , and a quasi-autobiography, <i>Ecce Homo</i> .
1889 January	Nietzsche collapses in Turin. He is moved in with his mother. He is now terminally demented.
1893	Nietzsche's sister returns from a failed fascist experiment in South America and takes over her brother's literary estate.
1897	Nietzsche's mother dies.
1900 August 25.....	Nietzsche dies in Weimar.
1916	<i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> becomes the most popular book in the German trenches of World War I. The book is denounced in England and elsewhere.
1933	Elizabeth invites the newly elected Hitler to visit the newly built Nietzsche archives.
1950	German-born refugee Walter Kaufmann expunges Nietzsche's now notorious association with fascism and the Nazis. Serious American Nietzsche scholarship begins.

Glossary

Ad hominem: an argument against the person, not the position.

Agape: Christian love, love without *eros*, “the love of humanity.”

Apollonian: the rational individuating element in Greek thought.

Dionysian: the frenzied, irrational, holistic element in the Greek spirit.

Eros: erotic (sexual) love.

Eternal recurrence: the idea that time and lives will repeat themselves, over and over.

“God is dead”: Nietzsche’s summary (borrowed from Luther and Hegel) that summarizes the end of monotheistic structure of Western thought.

Immoralism: anti-moral, or, in Nietzsche, the rejection of rule-bound ethics.

Last man: the evolutionary potential for the ultimate, satisfied *bourgeois*, Zarathustra’s nightmare.

Macht: power, but especially the power of self-discipline and personal strength.

Master morality: a value system in which one’s own nobility plays the central role.

Philia: love as friendship.

Reich: political power, “realm.”

Ressentiment: a reactive but ineffective emotion, rejecting another’s success.

Slave morality: a value system in which one’s relative impotence plays the central role.

Transvaluation: turning a value system upside down, so that what was good is now evil, what was bad is now good.

Übermensch: the “superman,” an evolutionary possibility, Zarathustra’s dream.

Will to power: the ultimate motivation of human (and much animal) behavior.

Biographical Notes

Aeschulus (525-456 B.C.E.). Greek playwright, author of *Seven against Thebes* and *Prometheus Bound*. One of Nietzsche's favorite tragedians.

Bismarck, Otto von (1815-1898). Prussian statesman, consolidated the German *Reich*, ruled Germany for most of Nietzsche's adult life.

Darwin, Charles (1809-1882). English naturalist, father of the theory of evolution, author of *Origin of Species* and *The Ascent of Man*.

Descartes, René (1596-1650). French philosopher, mathematician, scientist, rationalist, "we think therefore we am," the man who "tyrannized consciousness," according to Nietzsche.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo (1803-1882). American philosopher, essayist, "Self-Reliance," admired by Nietzsche.

Euripides (480-405 B.C.E.). Greek playwright, author of *The Bacchae* and *Medea*. Nietzsche's least favorite tragedian.

Goethe, J. W. (1749-1832). German poet, culture hero, author of *Faust*. Nietzsche's most often-cited example of "the higher man."

Hegel, G.W.F. (1770-1831). History-minded German philosopher, cosmic rationalist, author of *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) with its "Master-Slave" dialectic.

Heraclitus (540-480 B.C.E.). Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher, Nietzsche's favorite Greek philosopher.

Kant, Immanuel (1724-1804). German philosopher, uncompromising rationalist, author of the three Critiques, the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788) and the *Critique of Judgment* (1790). Nietzsche's most frequent target among philosophers.

Kierkegaard, Søren (1813-1855). Danish religious philosopher and first "existentialist." Many important parallels with Nietzsche, despite their very different positions on the desirability of Christianity.

Luther, Martin (1483-1546). German theologian, reformer, major figure in Nietzsche's Lutheran background.

Marx, Karl (1818-1883). German philosopher and socialist, author (with F. Engels) of *The Communist Manifesto* (1848).

Mill, John Stuart (1807-1858). English philosopher, one of Nietzsche's favorite targets (though rarely by name).

Nietzsche, Elizabeth Förster- (1846-1935). Nietzsche's sister, literary executor and self-appointed public relations agent.

Nietzsche, Franziska (1826-1895). Nietzsche's mother, often his closest friend and his devoted nurse for most of his last decade.

Nietzsche, Karl Ludwig (1813-1849). Nietzsche's father, a Lutheran minister, who died when Nietzsche was only four.

Paul of Tarsus (?-68). An apostle and one of the founders of Christianity, who attracts Nietzsche's harshest accusations for his attitudes toward the human body, sex, marriage, and human justice.

Pindar (522-438 B.C.E.). Greek poet, from whom Nietzsche gets his phrase "Become who you are."

Plato (428-347 B.C.E.). Greek philosopher, student and follower of Socrates, author of many dialogues with Socrates as key character, uncompromising rationalist. He shares much of the blame with his teacher for the over-rationalization of life.

Ree, Paul (1849-1901). German philosopher, friend of Nietzsche, author of a book on the moral sentiments.

Salomé, Lou Andreas (1861-1937). German philosopher, writer, friend of Nietzsche, author of one of the first books on Nietzsche.

Schopenhauer, Arthur (1788-1860). German philosopher, profound pessimist, author of *World as Will and Idea* (1819). Nietzsche's first and most profound modern philosophical influence.

Socrates (470-399 B.C.E.). Greek philosopher, gadfly, perished (didn't publish), Nietzsche's favorite target, also in many ways his role model.

Sophocles (525-456 B.C.E.). Greek playwright, author of the Oedipus trilogy. One of Nietzsche's favorite tragedians.

Spinoza, Baruch (1632-1677). Dutch philosopher, pantheist, determinist, author of the *Ethics*. Nietzsche eventually comes to consider him a "predecessor."

Wagner, Richard (1813-1883). German composer, Nietzsche's one-time friend and hero, creator of *Tristan and Isolde*, *Lohengrin*, the *Ring* cycle, and *Parsifal*.

Zarathustra (Zoroaster) (628-551 B.C.E.). Persian prophet, founder of Zoroastrianism, employed by Nietzsche as the protagonist of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

Annotated Bibliography

Nietzsche's Works: German Editions

Kritische Gesamtausgabe Werke. Edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1967 onwards. The new standard edition.

Werke in Drei Bänden. 3 vols. Edited by Karl Schlechta. 3rd edition. Munich: Carl Hansers, 1965. The old standard edition.

Nietzsche in English Translation

Nietzsche's individual works (in chronological order, original publication dates in parentheses):

The Birth of Tragedy (with *The Case of Wagner*). Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage, 1966. (1872)

Untimely Meditations. Translated by R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

David Strauss, Confessor and Writer. (1873)

On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life. Also translated by Peter Preuss. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980. (1874)

Schopenhauer as Educator. (1874)

Richard Wagner in Bayreuth. (1876)

Human, All Too Human. Translated by R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. (1878)

Human, All Too Human II. Translated by R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. (1879)

Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality. Translated by R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982. (1881)

The Gay Science. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage, 1974. (1882)

Thus Spoke Zarathustra. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. In *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking, 1954. (1883-85)

Beyond Good and Evil. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage, 1966. (1886)

On the Genealogy of Morals. Translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale. (Together with *Ecce Homo*, translated by Walter Kaufmann.) New York: Vintage, 1967. (1887)

The Case of Wagner (with *The Birth of Tragedy*). Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage, 1966. (1888)

Twilight of the Idols. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. In *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking, 1954. (1889)

The Antichrist. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. In *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking, 1954. (1895)

Nietzsche contra Wagner. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. In *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking, 1954. (1895)

Ecce Homo. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. (With *On the Genealogy of Morals*, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale). New York: Vintage, 1967. (1895)

Letters and Unpublished Works

Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche. Edited and translated by Christopher Middleton. Indianapolis: Hackett Publ. Co., 1996.

Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's. Edited and translated by Daniel Breazeale. Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1979.

The Will to Power. Translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale. New York: Vintage, 1967 (compiled from the *Nachlass*, originally edited by Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche).

Collections of Nietzsche's Works

The Portable Nietzsche. Translated and edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking, 1954. Includes (complete) *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, *Twilight of the Idols*, *The Antichrist*, *Nietzsche contra Wagner*.

Basic Writings of Nietzsche. Translated and edited with commentaries by Walter Kaufmann. New York: The Modern Library, 1968. Includes (complete) *The Birth of Tragedy*, *The Case of Wagner*, *Beyond Good and Evil*, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, and *Ecce Homo*.

Selections from Nietzsche's Works

A Nietzsche Reader. Edited and translated by R. J. Hollingdale. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977. A good selection of short snippets, organized by topic.

Nietzsche: Selections. Ed. Richard Schacht. New York: Macmillan, 1993. A good collection of excerpts from all of Nietzsche's works, published and unpublished, arranged chronologically. Particularly handy for some of the hard-to-get early essays—we have used these two extensively in the readings for the lectures.

Biographies and General Surveys

Ackermann, Robert John. *Nietzsche: A Frenzied Look*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990. (An offbeat but fascinating account of Nietzsche as continually obsessed with the Greeks.)

Chamberlain, Leslie. *Nietzsche in Turin*. New York: Picador, 1998. (A moving account of Nietzsche's last years.)

Clark, Maudemarie. *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. (The best book on Nietzsche's general philosophical stance and his theory of knowledge.)

Danto, Arthur. *Nietzsche as Philosopher*. New York: Macmillan, 1965. (The first book to "translate" Nietzsche into the language of contemporary Anglo-American philosophy.)

Gilman, Sander L., ed. *Conversations with Nietzsche*. Trans. David Parent. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. (Excerpts from letters and reminiscences.)

Hayman, Ronald. *Nietzsche: A Critical Life*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. (Perhaps the best single biography of Nietzsche, with an exaggerated sense of his impending madness.)

Heidegger, Martin. *Nietzsche*. 2 vols. Pfullingen: Neske, 1961. Trans. David Farrell Krell. 4 vols. New York: Harper and Row, 1979-86. (A book that has had tremendous influence on Nietzsche studies in Europe, dubiously interpreting Nietzsche as "the last metaphysician.")

Higgins, Kathleen Marie. *Nietzsche's Zarathustra*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987. (A sensitive and sympathetic reading of Nietzsche's most dramatic work as a work of literature as well as philosophy.)

Hollingdale, R. J. *Nietzsche*. London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973. (A good solid biography by one of Nietzsche's best translators.)

Hunt, Lester H. *Nietzsche and the Origin of Virtue*. London: Routledge, 1991. (An original interpretation of Nietzsche as a virtue ethicist and an "immoralist.")

Jaspers, Karl. *Nietzsche*, trans. Charles F. Wallraff and Frederick J. Schmitz. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1965. (A classic work, important for introducing Nietzsche to early twentieth century philosophy.)

Kaufmann, Walter. *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*. 3rd ed., New York: Vintage, 1968. (The first ground-breaking work on Nietzsche in English, shattering the Nazi and German chauvinist myths and establishing Nietzsche as a respectable philosophical figure.)

Krell, David Farrell. *The Good European*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. (A stunning collection of photographs and letters, tracing Nietzsche's wanderings through Southern Europe from his childhood and teaching in Basel to his last lonely years in northern Italy.)

Magnus, Bernd. With Jean-Pierre Mileur, Stanley Stewart. *Nietzsche's Case: Philosophy as/and Literature*. New York: Routledge, 1993. (A radical attempt to interpret Nietzsche in a postmodernist vein and understand his philosophical works as important works of literature.)

Nehamas, Alexander. *The Art of Living*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. (A study of Socrates' influence, with special attention to Nietzsche's admiration and use of him.)

———. *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985. (One of the most elegant and influential attempts to interpret Nietzsche along postmodernist lines.)

Salomé, Lou. *Nietzsche*. Edited and translated by Siegfried Mandel. Redding Ridge, Connecticut: Black Swan Books, 1988. (One of the first Nietzsche studies, by the one woman who might have claimed to be Nietzsche's "true love.")

Schacht, Richard. *Nietzsche*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983. (An outstanding comprehensive philosophical study.)

Solomon, Robert C. *From Hegel to Existentialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988. (Studies in European philosophy, with several essays on Nietzsche.)

Solomon, Robert C., and Kathleen Higgins, *What Nietzsche Really Said*. New York: Random House, 1999. (An introduction to Nietzsche's thought, laying down the framework for the ideas in these lectures.)

Stern, J. P. *A Study of Nietzsche*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979. (A good study of Nietzsche's life and works.)

Young, Julian. *Nietzsche's Philosophy of Art*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. (Special attention to Nietzsche's use of art to overcome pessimism and understand tragedy. Particularly good on Nietzsche's relation to Schopenhauer.)

Collections of Critical Essays on Nietzsche

Allison, David B., ed. *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation*. New York: Dell, 1977. (Critical studies of Nietzsche, with emphasis on post-Heideggerian and new French interpretations.)

Krell, David Farrell, and David Wood, eds. *Exceedingly Nietzsche: Aspects of Contemporary Nietzsche Interpretation*. London: Routledge, 1988.

Magnus, Bernd, and Kathleen M. Higgins, *The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996. (Solid and wide-ranging critical studies of Nietzsche, with an emphasis on Nietzsche's influence on modern thought.)

Schacht, Richard, *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality*. Berkeley: University of California, 1997. (A variety of studies of Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals*, with numerous studies of genealogy, morality, and *ressentiment*.)

Sedgwick, Peter R., ed. *Nietzsche: A Critical Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995. (Critical studies of Nietzsche, with emphasis on recent French interpretations.)

Solomon, Robert C., ed. *Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays*. New York: Doubleday, 1973. (More traditional critical studies of Nietzsche, with essays by Hermann Hesse, George Bernard Shaw, and Thomas Mann as well as more recent interpretations.)

Solomon, Robert C., and Kathleen M. Higgins, eds. *Reading Nietzsche*. New York: Oxford, 1988. (Studies of Nietzsche's individual works, with special attention to the approach to those works.)

The Will to Power: The Philosophy of Friederich Nietzsche

Part II

**Professor Robert C. Solomon
and
Professor Kathleen M. Higgins**



THE TEACHING COMPANY ®

Robert C. Solomon, Ph.D.

Robert C. Solomon is Quincy Lee Centennial Professor of Business and Philosophy at the University of Texas at Austin and the recipient of several teaching awards and honors, including the 1973 Standard Oil Outstanding Teaching Award, the University of Texas Presidential Associates' Teaching Award (twice), a Fulbright Lecture Award, University Research and National Endowment for the Humanities Grants and the Chad Oliver Plan Iwe Teaching Award (1998). He is also a member of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers. He is the author of *The Passions* (Doubleday, 1976), *In the Spirit of Hegel*, *About Love*, *From Hegel to Existentialism* and *A Passion for Justice*. He has authored and edited articles and books on Nietzsche, including *Nietzsche* and *Reading Nietzsche* with Kathleen M. Higgins. His most recent books, also with Kathleen Higgins, are *A Short History of Philosophy* and *A Passion for Wisdom*. His books have been translated into more than a dozen languages. He also writes about business ethics in *Above the Bottom Line*, *It's Good Business*, *Ethics and Excellence*, and *New World of Business* and *A Better Way to Think about Business*. He regularly consults and provides programs for a variety of corporations and organizations concerned about business ethics. He studied Biology at the University of Pennsylvania and Philosophy and Psychology at the University of Michigan. He is married to Kathleen M. Higgins. He has taught at Princeton University, the University of Pittsburgh, and often teaches in New Zealand and Australia.

Kathleen M. Higgins, Ph.D.

Kathleen Higgins holds the rank of Professor at the University of Texas–Austin. She has a B.A. in Music from the University of Missouri–Kansas City and earned her doctorate in Philosophy (Modern Studies concentration) at Yale University. She has taught at University of California–Riverside and also at the University of Auckland for several summer terms. Among her academic honors are her appointment as Resident Scholar, The Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Study and Conference Center and two University Research Institute Awards.

A prolific writer and recognized Nietzsche scholar, her books include *The Music of our Lives* (Temple University Press) and *Nietzsche's Zarathustra* (Temple University Press), which was named one of the Outstanding Academic Books of 1988-1989 by Choice. She has co-edited numerous books with her husband, Professor Robert Solomon, including *Reading Nietzsche*, *A Short History of Philosophy*, *A Passion for Wisdom*, *The Philosophy of (Erotic) Love*, and the *Routledge History of Philosophy, Volume IV: The Age of German Idealism*. Additionally, she has authored many articles in scholarly journals, focusing on Nietzsche, but also covering a wide range of other issues in philosophy.

Table of Contents

The Will to Power: The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche

Part II

Professor Biography	i
Foreword	1
Lecture Thirteen	Nietzsche as Moral Psychologist—Love, Resentment, and Pity..... 5
Lecture Fourteen	Nietzsche on Love..... 8
Lecture Fifteen	Nietzsche and Women 10
Lecture Sixteen	Nietzsche’s “Top Ten”..... 14
Lecture Seventeen	Nietzsche on History and Evolution 18
Lecture Eighteen	What Is Nihilism? The Problem of Asceticism..... 20
Lecture Nineteen	The Ranking of Values—Morality and Modernity. 22
Lecture Twenty	Nietzsche’s “Immoralism”—Virtue, Self, and Selfishness 25
Lecture Twenty-One	<i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i> — Master and Slave Morality 27
Lecture Twenty-Two	Resentment, Revenge, and Justice 29
Lecture Twenty-Three	The Will to Power and the <i>Übermensch</i> 32
Lecture Twenty-Four	Eternal Recurrence: Nietzsche Says “Yes!” to Life 35
Timeline	38
Glossary	40
Biographical Notes	41
Annotated Bibliography	43

The Will to Power:

The Philosophy of Friederich Nietzsche

Part II

Scope:

Nietzsche is perhaps the best-known and most often quoted philosopher of the last two centuries. He is also probably the most misunderstood, the most misquoted, the most maligned. He is believed to be the Antichrist by some Christians. He is considered power-mad by many pacifists and gentle souls, and by those who themselves are power-mad. He is often thought to have been crazy and it is said to be a tragic irony that sexless Nietzsche died of syphilis. In fact, Nietzsche was deeply religious, that is spiritual, although to be sure he hated the hypocrisy of the Christian church and many of its leaders. (He might better be called an anti-Christian than the Antichrist.) His views on power are complex and much better understood in terms of self-discipline rather than brute force. His sex life is a matter of some debate which we will not delve into, but the diagnosis of the disease that demented and then killed him is by no means straightforward either. The truth is that Nietzsche was and still is the most deeply insightful, personally radical, complex philosopher of modern times.

Nietzsche displayed none of the systematic compulsion of the other great German philosophers, Kant, Fichte and Hegel. Indeed, he argued that the need for a system in philosophy betrayed a “lack of integrity.” He shared none of the political radicalism of his near contemporary Karl Marx. Indeed, insofar as Nietzsche pursued any political agenda at all, it might best be described as wishing for a society that appreciated and encouraged creative thinkers like himself. His work is a hodgepodge of reflections, experiments, accusations, bits of psychoanalysis, church and secular history, philosophical counter-examples, advice to the lovelorn, moral reminders, tidbits of gossip, everything but the philosophical kitchen sink. But underlying the hodgepodge is a subtle and intended strategy, and there are profound themes that organize the whole of his work.

In the following lectures, I try to display and work with these themes. Some are well-known but in fact relatively minor threads in his writings. Others are not so well-known and provide the fabric of his thinking. Among the former are certainly his most famous invention, the *Übermensch* and what he calls the Will-to-power. Among the latter are his deep psychological probings that would have such a powerful impact on his successor, Sigmund Freud. Nietzsche specialized in criticism—his attack on Christianity, his repudiation of what is called “morality,” his “campaign against guilt and sin,” his assault on the modern sensibility, his “critique of Modernity,” his personal attacks on his contemporaries and predecessors. But behind all of this is an affirmative fervor, a genuine spirituality, even a religious sensibility. Nietzsche was a lonely man, a

self-exile from his German roots who in perpetually poor health depicted a vision of healthy humanity. He was a gentle, extremely polite, thoroughly compassionate man who ruthlessly perceived his own weaknesses and flaws and saw through his own pretensions and virtues. Like Socrates who proclaimed his own ignorance and used this as a platform to expose the ignorance of everyone else around him, Nietzsche begins by insisting on his own “self-overcoming” and challenges us to do the same. But even at his most brutal and most provocative, Nietzsche exudes an enthusiasm, and a love of life that is really the heart of his philosophy. To love and accept one’s life, to make it better by becoming who one really is, that is what Nietzsche’s philosophy is ultimately all about.

In the first of these twenty-four lectures, We begin by describing, very briefly, Nietzsche’s rather unremarkable life and the rather more remarkable times in which he lived. He was born just a few years before the tumultuous revolutions of mid-century (1844), and he died in the first summer of what he predicted would be a new and most violent century. I then describe, also briefly, the sequence of works that has come down to us, also noting the suspicious forgeries of his works by his nefarious sister. We then begin to unfold the grand themes of his philosophy. In the second lecture, I discuss (with the help of my wife, fellow Nietzsche scholar Kathleen Higgins), various “rumors” about Nietzsche, beginning with the rumor that he was crazy and rumors about his sex life. We then move into some of the more subtle misunderstandings about his attitudes toward religion in general, toward Christianity in particular, toward the Jews, toward German nationalism and patriotism, and his complex relationship with the great operatic composer Richard Wagner. In the third lecture, we discuss Nietzsche’s fusion of philosophy and psychology and relate this back to some of the great figures in philosophy, notably Socrates and Schopenhauer, Plato, and Jesus. We also discuss the uncanny connection between anti-Christian Nietzsche and the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, a Christian fundamentalist whom Nietzsche never had the chance to read. Comparisons with Dostoevsky, Marx and Freud are also mentioned.

The next several lectures concern Nietzsche’s famous announcement that “God is Dead.” We try to explain what this means—it is by no means merely a thesis about religion and religious belief, and how it relates to the larger themes of Nietzsche’s philosophy. We discuss Nietzsche’s Lutheranism, his rejection of it and also the way that it continues to influence his thinking. We discuss in what sense Nietzsche is a champion of spirituality, and in what senses he is not. In the fifth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche’s intimate relation with the ancient Greeks. Indeed, Nietzsche’s love of philology and his near-worship of ancient Greeks has been argued to be the underlying motive if not also the theme of his whole philosophy. But Nietzsche is not the only German who displayed what one author has called “the tyranny of Greece over Germany.” Nietzsche’s relation to the ancient Greeks was complex, however. He loved the ancient tragic playwrights Aeschylus and Sophocles, but he despised their younger colleague Euripides. He displayed great admiration for the pre-Socratic philosopher

Heraclitus but had evident contempt for the great philosophers Socrates and Plato. But even his contempt was complex and mixed. It is obvious that he envied Socrates even as he ridiculed him. Socrates, along with Jesus, was something of a role model for Nietzsche. Indeed, not only Socrates' success but his reputation for virtue was something that Nietzsche admired. Nevertheless, the very heart of Socrates' (and Plato's) philosophy, the celebration of reason, was one of Nietzsche's primary targets for abuse. In the sixth lecture, we discuss in more detail Nietzsche's conception of tragedy, and along with it his conception of comedy, comparing the former with his predecessors Aristotle, Hegel and Schopenhauer. We introduce Nietzsche's famous opposition between the Apollonian and Dionysian aspects of Greek culture, and we discuss the sense in which the Greeks "accepted" suffering and made something "beautiful" out of it. The contrast, for Nietzsche, is with Christianity, which tries to deny the meaning of suffering by way of the invocation of another, better "otherworldly" life. (So, too, Nietzsche says, did Socrates and Plato.)

In the seventh lecture, we provide arguments for and against pessimism, with an emphasis on Nietzsche's early hero, Schopenhauer. We discuss Nietzsche's efforts to embrace "cheerfulness," if not optimism, and his discussion of the aesthetic viewpoint, of life as art. We also discuss the role of reason and passion in the meaning of life. In the eighth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's emphasis on instinct, his debunking of reason and consciousness, his notion of reason as a tyrant, his insights into the nature of passion. In the ninth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's style, his use of "*ad hominem* arguments" and other informal fallacies, such as his appeal to emotion. We then move into Nietzsche's often exaggerated views about truth and interpretation. In the tenth lecture, we discuss in more detail Nietzsche's views on these matters and his "perspectivism," his idea that there is no privileged, objective, absolute, or "God's eye" view of the world or human affairs.

In the eleventh lecture, we discuss in more detail Nietzsche's intimate and envious relation to the prophets of old, Jesus, Socrates and the Persian sage Zoroaster or Zarathustra. We discuss Nietzsche's oddest but best known book, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, a Biblical parody in which the Persian prophet rejects Christianity and all "otherworldly" ways of living and introduces the idea of the *Übermensch*. He also introduces the supposedly hateful idea of "the last man," the probable successor of modern man, the ultimate *bourgeois*, the perfectly happy couch potato. In the twelfth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's politics (such as they were), his individualism, his harsh views on socialism and democracy, his notorious views on "the great man." Accordingly, we also discuss Nietzsche's mixed reviews of Darwin's theory of evolution, which he clearly embraced in general outline even as he quibbled violently with the details. We also discuss his relation to Hegel, an important predecessor whom he evidently knew only by reputation. Hegel is often said to have anticipated Darwin (a debatable claim), but he clearly both anticipated and countered some of Nietzsche's main concerns. (In their reaction to Hegel, Nietzsche and Kierkegaard show themselves to be particularly kindred spirits.) We also

discuss Nietzsche's subtle views on freedom and free will, his celebration of fate (*amor fati*) and his insistence that one should "become who [you] are."

In the thirteenth lecture, we discuss in much more detail Nietzsche as a philosophical psychologist and his many insights and provocations concerning such basic human emotions as pity (compassion) and love. We discuss more generally Nietzsche's "moral psychology" and how it provides a counter to the more traditional philosophical attempts to justify (rather than explain) morality. In the fourteenth lecture, we discuss in more detail Nietzsche's views (and experiences) about love.

In the fifteenth lecture, we run through a dozen or so of Nietzsche's *ad hominem* analyses and attacks on various figures, first discussing those figures whom he (more or less) admires, and then those whom he (more and even more) despises. In effect, we (with Kathleen) produce two "top (and bottom) ten" lists, Nietzsche's favorites and Nietzsche's targets. In the sixteenth lecture, we discuss the grounds on which he makes such harsh evaluations, discussing Nietzsche's view of the use and abuse of history, his hopes for human evolution, his pervasive concern with what is healthy and what is "sickly," his celebration of *life*. In the seventeenth lecture, we discuss his views on nihilism, making the point that Nietzsche himself was no nihilist. Indeed, nihilism might well be described as the most general target of his entire philosophy.

In the eighteenth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's ranking of values, his view of morality and moralities, and his critique of modernity. In the nineteenth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's "immoralism" and the senses in which he both was and was not a moralist. We argue that Nietzsche is embracing an ancient rather than a modern view of ethics, what has been called an "ethics of virtue" rather than an ethics of rules and principles, rather than an ethic that looks mainly to the spread of well-being and happiness ("utilitarianism"). In the twentieth lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's polemic on weakness, his archaeological history ("genealogy") of morality, and his analysis of master and slave (or "herd") morality. In the twenty-first lecture, we discuss master and slave morality in more detail and analyze Nietzsche's notion of *ressentiment* that provides the basis of his moral psychology. In the next lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's analysis of resentment, revenge, and justice, and we follow this with a diagnosis of asceticism, the thorough-going self-denial that is often an extreme form of religious practices. In the twenty-third and twenty-fourth lectures, we discuss three of Nietzsche's most famous doctrines, the Will to Power, the *Übermensch*, and eternal recurrence, and we end by evaluating Nietzsche's emphasis on saying "Yes!" to *Life* and at the same time "philosophizing with a hammer."

Lecture Thirteen

Nietzsche as Moral Psychologist— Love, Resentment, and Pity

Scope: Nietzsche's genius as a philosophical psychologist has to do with not only his general pronouncements about the connections between personality, morality and philosophy, but his often-neglected particular insights into the details of human life. For example, although he engages in a life-long diagnosis of the emotion of pity (compassion, *Mitleid*), he himself was an exceedingly, even excessively, compassionate person. Consonant with Nietzsche's own *ad hominem* analyses is the fact that he collapsed in Turin embracing a horse to prevent it from getting a beating. His "suspicious" view of pity might be best understood by reference to a recent Hindu guru, Sri Muktananda: "Do not be deceived by your own compassion." More generally, Nietzsche used his "moral psychology" to explain (rather than justify) morality.

Outline

- I. Nietzsche uses his moral psychology to explain (rather than to justify) the origins and motives behind morality.
 - A. Like Derrida and other postmodernists, as well as psychoanalysts, he seeks the hidden motivations behind overt statements and behavior.
 - B. "Every philosophy is a personal confession and unconscious memoir."
 - C. Schopenhauer defends the notions of character and compassion.
 1. He sees character as already being largely determined at birth.
 2. Compassion is our natural realization that we are all in the same situation.
 3. Schopenhauer recognizes the Dark Side of human life, but is not able to see beyond that.
 - D. As usually understood, morality is at war with self-interest; the right thing to do clashes with what one wants to do. Nietzsche rejects this paradigm.
 1. The right thing to do *is* what one wants to do, once one realizes what he or she really wants to do.
 2. What we ought to do is a function of what has been imposed on us by external authority or by impersonal reason.
 3. Benevolence is in fact a subtle form of revenge against someone you view as inferior.
 - E. Nietzsche finds pity not noble, but rather pathetic and hypocritical.

1. If someone else suffers, we “suffer with” them by showing compassion. In so doing, we are adding to the world’s total amount of suffering.
 2. When we show pity for someone, we are in fact placing them in an inferior role and showing contempt for them.
 3. Nietzsche doubts the extent to which one can actually empathize with others.
 4. Nietzsche considers it pathetic to feel pity out of a sense that we are *all* victims.
 5. Nietzsche sees resentment as pathetic and an expression of weakness.
 6. Nietzsche rejects guilt as a problem for which Christianity is responsible.
 7. Nietzsche offers a psychological explanation for why people hold so fixedly to their beliefs.
 8. Laughter is often abusive and malicious—an instrument for asserting superiority.
- F. Our real motives are often unconscious.
- II. Nietzsche bases his view of morality on a diagnosis of *ressentiment*.
- A. Morality is the (often unconscious) attempt to bring down one’s superiors through guilt.
 - B. This requires “forgetting” the origins of one’s motives. Nietzsche sees forgetting as a great virtue.
 1. This can be accomplished through repression. Here Nietzsche anticipates modern psychoanalysis.
 2. This can be accomplished through religion. Here we camouflage our real motives by spiritualizing them.
 3. This can be accomplished through rationalization.
- III. Nietzsche also writes extensively about love, but it is not just in order to bring it down. Indeed, *eros* lies at the very heart of Nietzsche’s philosophy.

Essential Reading:

Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, *Gay Science* (throughout), *Beyond Good and Evil*, Section I.

Supplemental Reading:

C. Schier, “The Rationale of Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morals*” in Richard Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality*, pp. 449-459.

D. Conway, “Genealogy and Critical Method,” *ibid.*, pp. 318-333.

Questions to Consider:

1. Is all human behavior self-interested? If so, how is morality possible?

2. What would it mean to *explain* morality by appeal to psychology? What do you think such an explanation would look like? (e.g., “People naturally like to help people.”)

Lecture Fourteen

Nietzsche on Love

Scope: Nietzsche is routinely chastised as a misanthrope who despised love in all its forms and a misogynist who hated women. In this lecture, we suggest that Nietzsche had much more complex and enlightened views about love and that he knew much more about, and was far more sympathetic to, women than is usually acknowledged. We compare and contrast Nietzsche's views about love and friendship—which he saw as intimately related—with those of his predecessors, especially Plato and Aristotle. While he harshly attacks Christian love as hypocritical, he has nothing but the highest praise for mutual inspiring and virtuous romantic (that is, erotic but not sexual) friendship.

Outline

- I. Love in the Western World is torn between pagan *eros* and Christian love (*agape*).
 - A. *Eros* and *agape* represent opposite poles in the history of love.
 - B. For the Greeks, the various concepts of love were interrelated.
 - 1. *Eros* represented sexual (erotic) love.
 - 2. *Philia* represented non-sexual love, friendship.
 - 3. Plato and Aristotle discuss both *eros* and *philia* at great length. Plato's *Symposium* is perhaps the greatest treatise on love in Western philosophy, whereas Aristotle's *Ethics* is perhaps the greatest treatise on friendship in Western philosophy.
 - 4. Nietzsche follows both of them in many ways.
- II. Nietzsche celebrates and often expresses *eros*, but he explicitly praises *philia* or friendship.
 - A. Nietzsche, like Socrates, celebrates a de-sexualized notion of *eros*.
 - 1. The highest form of love is friendship. "Marriage should be viewed as a long conversation." *Eros* and *philia* are ideally the same.
 - 2. Christian love, by contrast, is hypocrisy.
 - B. Aristophanes, Socrates, and the Marquis de Sade all have theories about sex and love.
 - 1. Aristophanes (in Plato's *Symposium*) defends *eros* as the unity of the soul. Nietzsche rejects this. Love requires *distance*.
 - 2. Socrates (also in Plato's *Symposium*) defends *eros* as the longing for true beauty. Nietzsche rejects this. Love requires *mutuality*.
 - 3. The Marquis de Sade defends sex as perversion and love as power. Despite some of Nietzsche's best-known theses, he rejects this.

- C. Aristotle defends three concepts of love as friendship (*philia*). Nietzsche accepts only the third.
 - 1. There is friendship as mutual advantage. Nietzsche considers this vulgar.
 - 2. There is friendship as mutual enjoyment. Nietzsche considers this vulgar as well.
 - 3. There is friendship as mutual inspiration. Nietzsche accepts this. It is romantic (that is, erotic but not sexual) friendship.
- D. Nietzsche, like Schopenhauer, views sex as a primal drive.
 - 1. Love that denies its sexual impetus is false love, hypocritical love.
 - 2. But love that is purely sexual, unsublimated, displays weakness too.

Essential Reading:

Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, “Morality as Anti-Nature”; also Plato, *Symposium*; Aristotle, *Ethics*, Books XIII-IX.

Supplemental Reading:

Solomon, *No Excuses: Existentialism and the Meaning of Life*, Lectures Seven and Eight on Nietzsche. Lecture Eight deals with Nietzsche’s great examination of Greek and Christian ethical ideas and their effect on authentic life (The Teaching Company, 1993).

Questions to Consider:

- 1. What is love (romantic, sexual, erotic love, that is)? Do you think that love is essentially good, or perhaps dangerous, or even an expression of needy neurosis? What (for you) is an exemplary love relationship?
- 2. Do you think that Nietzsche was capable of a “true” love relationship? Why or why not?

Lecture Fifteen

Nietzsche and Women

Scope: Nietzsche is often accused of being a misogynist. This is not quite accurate, although he does hold views that are certainly “sexist” by today’s standards. Nietzsche’s personal experience provided some of the grounds for his complicated feelings about women. Some of his remarks about women vent spleen. However, many of the most famous passages cited as proof that he is sexist are poor evidence for this claim. Indeed, they often suggest the complexity of his thinking about gender and the relations between the sexes. Nietzsche actually anticipates many of the theses of contemporary feminism.

Outline

- I. Nietzsche’s biographical experience offers some explanation for his complicated feelings toward women.
 - A. His father died when he was four years old, and he grew up as the only male in his household.
 - B. Nietzsche fell deeply in love at least once, with Lou Salomé; their relationship was intense but short-lived.
 - C. Nietzsche had a number of female friends, most of whom were independent and intellectual.
 - D. Nietzsche recognized biographical sources for some of his views.
- II. Nietzsche had complex views about women. He is often misquoted or quoted out of context.
 - A. “Supposing truth is a woman—what then?” (Preface, *Beyond Good and Evil*)
 - 1. This aphorism has helped to give Nietzsche a reputation as a sexist.
 - 2. Nietzsche is playing on the feminine gender of *die Wahrheit*, the German term for truth.
 - 3. Although Nietzsche personifies truth in terms of a stereotype, he is assuming that women are psychologically complex.
 - 4. He stresses the ways in which the stereotypical woman is resistant to male demands.
 - 5. He suggests that philosophers should be more subtle in approaching truth, as they would when attempting to court a woman. Like a woman for a desiring man, truth cannot ultimately be had.
 - B. In *Beyond Good and Evil* (pp. 231-239), Nietzsche’s comments are unsympathetic.

1. The preface to this group of passages is a remarkable disclaimer, in which Nietzsche says that the comments to follow are only “my truths.”
 2. In this statement, Nietzsche assumes the stance of a male consciousness-raising group. His use of the phrase “woman as such” in this disclaimer evokes the Kantian concept of the “thing-in-itself.”
 3. The concept of “the Eternal Feminine” had currency in Nietzsche’s time; it represented an ideal for women (both shallow and smug) that Nietzsche rejected.
 4. Feminism, as he targeted it, is a collective movement. He was dubious of all collective movements, favoring more sensitivity to particular individuals.
 5. Nietzsche specifically objected to: the mass movement, generally; women joining the clumsy ranks of men (“Women as clerk”); the movement’s preference for scientific accounts of “female needs” and the attempt to conduct interactions between men and women through demands instead of artful interaction; the effort to undercut fantasies that are, while falsifying, nevertheless natural illusions for men in love; and, finally, the call for conscious manipulation of what is better guided by instinct, the relations between the two sexes.
 6. Nietzsche interpreted feminist demands as being allied with the unindividuated careerism typical of males of his society.
- C. A number of statements from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* have been interpreted as sexist, including two from a speech on men and women that Zarathustra makes.
1. “The happiness of man is: we will. The happiness of woman is: he wills.” This is presented as descriptive, not prescriptive, and Nietzsche gives a similar account in *The Gay Science* where he indicates that he thinks some of the differences between men and women are due to education and should be changed.
 2. “Man is for woman a means: the end is always the child.” This was a common medical opinion at the time. However, Nietzsche is taking women’s motives seriously. He does not conflate them with men’s. Nietzsche is anticipating Freud’s analysis of the family triangle, in which the father can become jealous of the child when the mother feels fulfilled by it, instead of the father.
- D. The most notorious line from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* is, “You go to women? Don’t forget the whip.”
1. This statement is uttered by an old woman who approaches Zarathustra. It is not at all clear that Nietzsche or even Zarathustra holds this view.
 2. The context of the statement is complex, making interpretation even less straightforward.

3. The suggestion of sado-masochism is apt for Nietzsche's analysis of human interactions in terms of power dynamics.
4. The old woman is indicating that Zarathustra needs to recognize that in any male/female relationship, two wills are operating. Zarathustra has assumed that a woman would cooperate with his vision, and be happiest when conforming to male will. It is not obvious that a woman would simply comply with Zarathustra's fantasies.
5. The old woman is a parodic counterpart of Diotima, the priestess from whom Socrates in Plato's *Symposium* claims that he learned about love. The effect is to suggest that such idealistic visions as Zarathustra's and Plato's Socrates do not pay enough attention to the real dynamics of love.
6. The whip reference recurs in a latter section of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, "The Other Dancing Song." There, Zarathustra brings his whip when he approaches the woman Life. She easily gets him to forget it again. They are dependent on each other for erotic stature.

III. Nietzsche actually explores a number of concerns important to contemporary feminist theory.

- A. Both assume the importance of perspectivism: Nietzsche conscientiously attempts to imagine alternative consciousnesses, including those of women.
- B. Nietzsche was an early questioner of androgyny as ideal, an issue considered by twentieth century feminists. Nietzsche questions the value of one set of traits for all.
- C. Real women are not mere male pawns. They have wills of their own.
- D. Women should *not* be more like men.
- E. Nietzsche distinguishes between sex and gender, and suggests that education might change the way gender is constructed.
- F. Women have a different perspective than men and this should be.
- G. Male fantasies should not be harshly debunked. However, neither should male fantasies be mistaken for reality.

Essential Reading:

Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, pp. 59-75 and 363; *Beyond Good and Evil*, pp. 231-239; *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, "On Little Old and Young Women," "The Dancing Song," "The Other Dancing Song."

Supplemental Reading:

Maudemarie Clark, "Nietzsche's Misogyny," *International Studies in Philosophy* 26/3 (Fall 1994): 3-12.

Carol Diethe, *Nietzsche's Women: Beyond the Whip* (New York: de Gruyter, 1996); Kathleen Marie Higgins, "Gender in *The Gay Science*," *Philosophy and Literature* 19/2 (October 1995): 227-247.

Kathleen Marie Higgins, "The Whip Recalled," *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 12 (Fall 1996): 1-18.

Kelly Oliver and Marilyn Pearsall, eds., *Feminist Interpretations of Friedrich Nietzsche* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998).

Questions to Consider:

1. Could a feminist endorse any of Nietzsche's critiques of the nineteenth century feminist movement? Why or why not?
2. What is the force of Nietzsche's describing his critical passages on women and feminism in *Beyond Good and Evil* as "only my truths"?
3. Do Nietzsche's comments on women add up to a coherent viewpoint?

Lecture Sixteen

Nietzsche's "Top Ten"

Scope: Nietzsche often became enthusiastic about authors he read, beginning with the ancients Homer, Aeschylus and Sophocles. He praises the historian Thucydides as the greatest (non-fiction) author of the ancients, contrasting him with Socrates. As a student, he became greatly excited about the German poet Holderlin. Later in life, he became enamored of the American essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson and the Dutch philosopher Spinoza. Many of these enthusiasms were short-lived, and the author in question may be rarely heard of again. Several, however, endure throughout Nietzsche's career, and because he is so intent on considering character and personality rather than cool abstractions, these figures are of particular importance in understanding his thought. So, too, Nietzsche easily turns contemptuous, sometimes on the basis of a casual reading or hearsay, sometimes as a reaction against too much uncritical devotion. The most obvious examples of the latter are Wagner and Schopenhauer. In this lecture, my wife, Kathleen Higgins, and I run through two dozen figures whom Nietzsche either loved or hated (or both). Accordingly, we produce two "top (and bottom) ten" lists.

Outline

I. Nietzsche's Favorites

- 10.** Richard Wagner: Wagner was Nietzsche's hero, although Nietzsche had an eventual apostasy. Nietzsche particularly admired Wagner's reworking of historical materials, his emphasis on the theme of devotion to a cause in his opera, and his artistic achievement in yoking several arts together in his music dramas.
- 9.** Arthur Schopenhauer : Nietzsche developed many of his ideas on the basis of Schopenhauer's philosophy ("will to power," for example). He admired Schopenhauer's cantankerous style, his independence, and his atheism.
- 8.** Immanuel Kant: Nietzsche admired Kant's tremendous courage, demonstrated particularly in his development of a rationalistic philosophy that pointed to the limits of reason. Nietzsche also admired (and perhaps envied) Kant's profound influence on later German thought.
- 7.** Benedict (Baruch) Spinoza: Spinoza seems distant in many respects from Nietzsche, but Nietzsche saw him as a precursor. Nietzsche shared a number of emphases with Spinoza, including the love of fate, the rejection of pity, naturalism, and the attempt to understand the individual in the context of the whole.

6. Ralph Waldo Emerson: Emerson is the only American on the list. He was one of Nietzsche's favorite writers. A number of Nietzsche's ideas appear to be influenced (sometimes even coined) by Emerson, including the *Übermensch* (akin to Emerson's "Over-soul"), the "gay science" (akin to Emerson's "joyous science"), emphasis on self-reliance, and even the "death of God." Emerson, like Nietzsche, rejected orthodox theology for religious reasons.
5. Sophocles: Sophocles, along with Aeschylus, was one of the two greatest Greek dramatists according to Nietzsche. Sophocles presented the tragic hero as noble, in opposition to the moral world order. Nietzsche admired this awareness of the nobility of the person who suffers tragically.
4. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Nietzsche admired Goethe as one of the luminaries of German culture and a writer whose stature he aimed to emulate. Nietzsche admired Goethe's affirmative character and his conscious effort to set the stage for the future. Nietzsche describes Goethe as the paradigmatic "Dionysian man."
3. Zarathustra (Zoroaster): Nietzsche admired the Persian prophet's honesty and courage, his insight, and his emphasis on this world in his religious vision. Nietzsche considered him a great religious revolutionary. Nietzsche believes that Zarathustra's morality has evolved beyond the original dichotomy of "good and evil," self-overcoming itself into Nietzsche's own philosophy.
2. Jesus: Jesus was never far from Nietzsche's mind. Nietzsche described him as the "only" Christian, who saw the kingdom of God as here, on earth, now. Jesus was exemplary in living his philosophy.
1. Socrates: Nietzsche admired and envied Socrates' importance in philosophy and history. Although Nietzsche rejected the extreme rationality that Socrates preached, he compared him to Jesus and saw him as another true revolutionary who genuinely lived his philosophy.

II. Nietzsche's Targets

10. Richard Wagner: Wagner was arrogant and irresponsible. Nietzsche came to see him as decadent and his music as sick. Nietzsche objected to Wagner's anti-Semitism and nationalism. Nietzsche came to consider Wagner a "sell-out," who used religious formulas he did not believe in order to win the crowd. Wagner was, in Nietzsche's opinion, an opportunist who never missed a chance for grandstanding.
9. Arthur Schopenhauer: Although Schopenhauer was one of Nietzsche's great heroes in his youth, he had an apostasy. Some of Schopenhauer's views that Nietzsche eventually rejected were: his style of pessimism, his promotion of renunciation, his mysticism (which Nietzsche claimed trivialized the individual in favor of a universal oneness), and his ethic of universal sympathy/pity.

8. Immanuel Kant: Nietzsche rejected Kant's super-rationalism, his insistence on a morality that disregarded the passions, and his postulation of a "thing-in-itself." Nietzsche described Kant as a backslider, and as someone whose style was in tension with his message.
7. René Descartes: Although Nietzsche does not discuss Descartes much, he consistently challenged Cartesianism. Nietzsche opposes Descartes' mind/body dualism, his appeal to the supernatural, his equation of the self with consciousness, and his denigration of the body.
6. John Stuart Mill: Mill seems an odd target for Nietzsche in certain respects. However, Nietzsche saw Mill as the main representative for utilitarianism. Nietzsche rejected the utilitarian doctrine of maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain, proposing that power, not pleasure, is the human being's primary drive. Nietzsche also disliked Mill's proselytizing for equal rights.
5. Euripides: Nietzsche claimed that Euripides murdered tragedy and complained that Euripides was under the sway of Socrates, and tried to explain too much in his plays. In particular, Euripides demoted the chorus in his plays. The chorus had been crucial to the powerful musical impact of Greek tragedy. Euripides emphasized the drama, in keeping with his effort to make "intelligible" plays.
4. Martin Luther: Nietzsche rejected a number of Luther's doctrines, such as the doctrine that faith alone justifies and that God was motivated by wrath. Nietzsche hurled a number of *ad hominem* arguments at Luther.
3. St. Paul: Nietzsche saw St. Paul as an opportunist, and as the propagandistic genius behind the development of Christianity into an institution. Nietzsche objected to Paul's denigration of the instincts, his interpretation of Jesus' life and death in terms of atonement, and his promotion of the idea of personal immortality. Nietzsche claimed that St. Paul was resentful and had no use for life.
2. Plato: Nietzsche objected to Plato's defense of hyper-rationality and his other-worldliness. Nietzsche considered Plato's literary experimentation in the dialogues as revealing his failure to follow his own genius. Influenced by Socrates, Plato gave up his brilliant play-writing, turning to the dialogue form to promote "rational dialectic."
1. Socrates: Nietzsche described Socrates as ultimately pessimistic, and life-rejecting and objected to Socrates' "absurd" rationality. Nietzsche concluded that Socrates was imbalanced, driven by a "logical force" that acted through him.

Essential Reading:

Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man."

Supplemental Reading:

Solomon, Higgins, *What Nietzsche Really Said*, Chapter 5.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why does Nietzsche admire those whom he admires? What do the “top ten” seem to have in common?
2. What do those whom Nietzsche despises (or whom he turned against) seem to have in common?

Lecture Seventeen

Nietzsche on History and Evolution

Scope: Nietzsche is a historicist. He insists that there is no understanding of human affairs that is not inescapably historical. He believes that all knowledge and all values are historically situated, relative to times and cultures. And he accepts the very recent view that humanity itself has evolved—only barely—from the apes. In this lecture, we discuss Nietzsche's views of history, its uses and its abuses, and his view of two of the giant historicist figures of his century, G.W.F. Hegel and Charles Darwin. We will also investigate Nietzsche's own hopes for human evolution and his pervasive concern with what is conducive to, and what is destructive of, life.

Outline

- I. Hegel and Darwin are two historical figures about whom Nietzsche has few consistent feelings.
 - A. Nietzsche seems to have read little Hegel.
 1. His views of Hegel's work were drawn mainly from the "right," from conservative, Christian sources.
 2. His view of Hegel misinterprets the meaning of *Geist* (Spirit) but utilizes Hegel's keen sense of the importance of history.
 3. Nietzsche also adopts Hegel's "pluralism"—the idea that there are many ways of viewing the world.
 - B. Nietzsche often criticized Darwin.
 1. Darwin resembles Nietzsche in being a naturalist and in seeing the world as a product of change.
 2. However, he rejected what became known as "survival of the fittest," as smacking too much of teleology.
 3. Nietzsche also rejected "Social Darwinist" notions of survival of the fittest; instead, he emphasized survival of the most creative. The "fittest" to survive is not always "the best."
 4. Nietzsche accepted and used Darwin's theory of evolution in a profound and telling way.
 5. The *Übermensch* seems to be an evolutionary conception. So is "the last man."
 6. Nietzsche's use of evolution is also evident in his theory of knowledge.
- II. History fascinated Nietzsche.
 - A. History should remain in the service of life, not the other way around.
 1. As an old philologist, he naturally loved antiquity.

2. But he also saw how a love of the past can interfere with and demean life in the present.
 3. History must serve life; it must not lead to our self-denigration. Nietzsche distinguished among (and praised) three kinds of history: monumental history, which celebrates great achievements in the past and encourages faith in our human potential; antiquarian history, which honors the past and preserves historical accounts out of love for history; and critical history, which acknowledges the undesirable features of the past and also uses past human experience as a basis for criticizing present institutions.
- B.** On the basis of his celebration of life, Nietzsche draws a deep distinction between what is healthy and what is “sickly.”
1. Health and disease are two of his most pervasive metaphors.
 2. Christianity and morality are two of his central examples of unhealthy attitudes toward life.
 3. Nietzsche’s “genealogy” is an attempt to separate what is healthy from what is “sickly” in human history and today.

Essential Reading:

“Use and Advantage of History for Life” in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections*.

Supplemental Reading:

A. Nehamas, “The Genealogy of *Genealogy*” in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality*, pp. 269-283.

Questions to Consider:

1. In what sense(s) does Nietzsche accept and adopt Darwin’s theory of evolution? In what ways does he reject it?
2. What is the point of studying history? How does one avoid getting “lost” in the past?

Lecture Eighteen

What Is Nihilism? The Problem of Asceticism

Scope: Nietzsche's name is almost always associated with "nihilism," and not just because of the convenient alliteration. Nietzsche often talked about nihilism. He often warned of it. In this lecture, we discuss his views on nihilism, making the point that Nietzsche himself was no nihilist. Indeed, nihilism, understood as a sickly ("decadent") "saying No" to life, might well be described as the most general target of his entire philosophy. He criticizes Socrates and Plato as decadents, and he criticizes modern society in general for its nihilism. Christianity is nihilistic, but so is the morality and social structure that are based upon it. Even seemingly life-celebrating ethics may be nihilistic. Utilitarianism, for instance, is nihilistic because of the hedonism that forms its basis. Pleasure is not what gives life meaning, and loving life for the pleasures it provides is less than the love of life itself.

Outline

- I. Nihilism means "the highest values devalue themselves."
 - A. The term comes into Europe from Russia. Turgenev used it in *Fathers and Sons*. It refers to the rejection of one's tradition or even of one's whole society, as Nietzsche did.
 - B. Nihilism gives rise to decadence, saying "No" to life. Such views are "sickly."
- II. Nietzsche is not a nihilist. He opposed nihilism throughout his career. He opposed moral and religious values that are detrimental to life.
 - A. Nietzsche recommended skepticism but rejected cynicism.
 - B. Nietzsche might be called a "nihilist" about knowledge.
 - 1. His statement "There is no truth" can be read as a denial of any real knowledge.
 - 2. But denying true knowledge does not constitute a denial of life.
 - C. Nietzsche certainly does seem to be a nihilist about religion ("God is dead").
 - 1. But denying religion is not to deny life.
 - 2. Religion itself (or at least some religions) constitutes a denial of life.
 - D. Nietzsche destroys the past only to pave the way for the future.
 - 1. This does not make him a nihilist.
 - 2. He rejects values only because they are sickly values.

III. Asceticism is the extreme form of life-denial.

- A. Asceticism is not what it seems, a matter of self-denial. Indeed, it is the most subtle illustration of the Will to Power. It denies only to proclaim. Nothing pleases like self-righteousness.
- B. Science involves asceticism in that the individual subordinates himself to the larger pursuit of knowledge.
- C. We say “no” to life by anticipating the “otherworldly,” whether the kingdom of Heaven, the “World of Being,” or the future “classless” society.
 - 1. Hegel’s long view of history can be a way of denying one’s own significance.
 - 2. Excessive nostalgia, antiquarianism, can also be a form of denying the significance of our lives.
 - 3. Marx’s “classless” society can be a way of viewing our present lives and suffering as merely a means.
 - 4. What Nietzsche calls “Nay-saying,” Camus later calls “philosophical suicide.”

Essential Reading:

“Nihilism” and “Anti-Nihilism” in Hollingdale, ed., *A Nietzsche Reader*, pp. 197-212.

Supplemental Reading:

R. Schacht, “Nietzsche and Nihilism” in Solomon, ed., *Nietzsche*, pp. 58-82.

R. Solomon, “Nietzsche, Nihilism, and Morality” in Solomon, ed., *Nietzsche*, pp. 202-225.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. What is nihilism? How is cynicism an example of nihilism?
- 2. What does it mean to take *life* as the ultimate value? What would it be to deny or reject life?

Lecture Nineteen

The Ranking of Values—Morality and Modernity

Scope: Nietzsche does not reject morality, understood as a “rank order” of values. Any such view would be absurd. Nietzsche only rejects certain kinds of moralities, in particular, that which has come down to us through the Judeo-Christian tradition. Like Kant, he sometimes refers to this as “Morality,” as if there can only be one such ranking. It is a ranking that has “absolute” status, in that it is not relative to either local conditions or particular personalities. One way of envisioning Morality is by way of the Ten Commandments, a single set of divine prohibitions. Most of these commandments are prohibitions, e.g., “Thou shalt *not* . . .” A more modern and sophisticated way is to understand the analysis of Morality by the most influential modern philosopher, Immanuel Kant. In this lecture, we discuss Nietzsche’s ranking of values, his view of morality and moralities, and his critique of modernity.

Outline

- I. Nietzsche held that it is part of human nature to have and espouse values, to order values in a way that is specific to a people’s conditions of life.
 - A. We do not see the world in terms of “facts.” We see the world by way of *values*.
 1. Nietzsche rejects the “subject-objective” distinction that would render values either subjective or objective. Values are not subjective, since we do not simply impose them on the world. Values are not objective, since the world has no value apart from our *living* in it. This leads to the conclusion that “Only as an aesthetic phenomenon is the world justified.”
 2. Values are species-specific. An animal values what it needs to live and to flourish.
 3. Values are culture-specific. A people values what it needs to live and to live well.
 - B. Nietzsche does not accept the Christian view that the highest values are God-given.
 1. Because the Decalogue was imposed from outside, we have a natural tendency to resist it. Most of these commandments are cast as prohibitions.
 2. All values are earthly, living values, including those that deny the importance of the earth and of life.
 3. The highest values are natural, not supernatural values.

- II. Nietzsche rejects Kant's view that morality is singular and "categorical."
- A. Kant thinks that Morality is based on "The Categorical Imperative," an unconditional Moral Law that admits of no exceptions.
 - 1. The "first formulation" of the Categorical Imperative is "act always that others should act likewise." Its test is universalization.
 - 2. The Categorical Imperative is a function of pure practical reason, as opposed to a product of the inclinations—emotions, desires, and impulses.
 - B. Nietzsche insisted that morals are always conditional, "hypothetical," and geared to a particular way of life.
 - 1. Universalization ignores the exceptional and assumes that the same values apply to everyone.
 - 2. Morals are a function of the inclinations—emotions, desires, and impulses. Reason only rationalizes.
 - C. Nietzsche considered different types of moralities, but in the final analysis, he reduced them all to two basic types, healthy and unhealthy.
 - 1. Healthy morality consists of straightforward, life-affirming values.
 - 2. Unhealthy morality consists of devious, reactive, life-denying values.
 - 3. Morality as a set of divine prohibitions—in other words, Judeo-Christian morality—represents a sickly morality.
 - 4. Morality as a set of rational, universal principles, "categorical imperatives" is also sickly, because these principles are externally imposed and are opposed to nature.
 - D. Modern life has adopted a sickly morality with delusional demands for equality.
 - 1. Democracy, like Christianity and Kant's Moral Law, treats everyone as equal and (morally) indistinguishable.
 - 2. Socialism, as an offshoot of Christianity, treats everyone as equal and (socially) indistinguishable.
 - 3. Modern capitalism, which Weber later diagnosed as another offshoot of Christianity, also treats everyone as equal by making money the great equalizer.
 - 4. Mass culture and popular entertainment also aim at the lowest common denominator, eliminating the desire for greatness.

Recommended Reading:

Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, especially Book II; *Beyond Good and Evil*; "The Natural History of Morals"; *Genealogy of Morals* in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections*; *Twilight of the Idols*; "Morality as Anti-Nature."

Supplemental Reading:

A. Danto, "Some Remarks on the *Genealogy of Morals*" in Solomon, Higgins, eds., *Reading Nietzsche*, pp. 13-28.

F. Bergmann, "Nietzsche and Analytic Ethics" in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality*, pp. 76-94.

Questions to Consider:

1. What does it mean to have a value? Does it make sense to say that one can have a value that is never exercised? Why do we feel compelled to *talk about* our values?
2. What is a healthy morality for Nietzsche? Why is modern life so filled with unhealthy moralities?

Lecture Twenty

Nietzsche's "Immoralism"— Virtue, Self, and Selfishness

Scope: Nietzsche delights in calling himself an “immoralist.” But he really was, in many ways, an old-fashioned fire-and-brimstone moralist. In this lecture, we argue that Nietzsche embraced an ancient rather than a modern view of ethics, in which personal virtue and character count far more than rational rules and principles. In this, he is not only to be distinguished from Kant and his rational principle-based ethics but also those ethics that look mainly to the spread of well-being and happiness, notably English “utilitarianism.” In Nietzsche’s ethics, it is not at all clear that selfishness and morality are wholly opposed to each other.

Outline

- I. Nietzsche is not an immoralist.
 - A. He does not reject or violate such basic norms as “don’t kill people,” “don’t steal,” “don’t lie.”
 - B. In fact, Nietzsche was a conscientiously moral person who prided himself on his gentility and his truthfulness.
- II. What Nietzsche does reject are certain *conceptions* of morality.
 - A. He rejects the idea of morality as a system of divine commandments, in other words, Judeo-Christian morality.
 - B. He rejects the idea of morality as a set of rational principles—in other words, Kant’s ethics. What such philosophers define as “rational” is only a *rationalization* of their own provincial morality.
 - C. He rejects the idea of morality as a maximization of utility, “the public good.”
 - 1. “Man does not live for pleasure; only the Englishman does.”
 - 2. The meaning of life is to be found not in general happiness but “only in the highest specimens,” the most *exemplary* human beings.
 - D. Morality as understood by Kant and Judeo-Christian tradition is really one of Nietzsche’s two basic types of morality, *viz.*, sickly morality.
 - 1. It denigrates the excellent and emphasizes the mediocre.
 - 2. One who is “moral” in this sense lives an empty, de-vitalized life.
- III. In their place, Nietzsche defends a very different conception of morality.
 - A. Nietzsche defends a morality of virtue and personal excellence, a virtue ethics, which reflects his admiration of the ancient Greeks.

- B. A morality of virtue and personal excellence is a healthy morality, encouraging greatness.
 - 1. Aristotle gives us a detailed ethics of virtue, although it is already “decadent” by the standards of the earlier “Golden Age” and Homeric Greeks.
 - 2. Saint Thomas Aquinas updates Aristotle, turning his ethics into a Christian ethics and thus compromising it.
 - 3. Kant generalizes the Golden Rule, but for every universal principle there are winners and losers. What Kant short-changes is exceptional behavior.
 - 4. Nietzsche rejects the “vulgar” ethics of the English utilitarians, “the greatest happiness for the greatest number,” for the same reason. It does not encourage greatness but encourages “the last man.”
- C. For his version of virtue ethics, Nietzsche looks back to the early Greeks whom he adores.
 - 1. In such a morality, the distinction between selfishness and selflessness breaks down.
 - 2. The question of selfishness and egoism depends on “whose ego it is.”
 - 3. Love, for example, is not at all selfless and in an important sense, most selfish. This is no argument against it.

Essential Reading:

Daybreak and Human, All Too Human in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche: Selections*.
Beyond Good and Evil, “Our Virtues.”

Supplemental Reading:

M. Clark in Schacht, pp. 15-34; L. Hunt, *Nietzsche and the Origins of Virtue*;
 Solomon, “A More Severe Morality” in *From Hegel to Existentialism*.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. What is selfishness? Is selfishness necessarily bad? Can one be ethical and selfish at the same time?
- 2. In what sense is “the Golden Rule” the heart of morality? How it is to be understood?

Lecture Twenty-One

On the Genealogy of Morals—Master and Slave Morality

Scope: In this lecture, we discuss master and slave morality in more detail and analyze Nietzsche's notion of *ressentiment* that provides the basis of his moral psychology. *Ressentiment* is a reactive emotion, but it lacks the power to fully express itself in action. This feeds the impotence of the slavish attitudes that constitute slave morality and further embitters them. But it also gives rise to a brilliant intellectual trick, the "transvaluation of values," the turning upside-down of traditional (master) morality, turning what is good and admirable into what is evil and damnable. Nevertheless, the slave morality in history has been essential for human development. It has made spirituality possible. It has made us sensitive in ways that would have been unimaginable and incomprehensible to the masters of the ancient world.

Outline

- I. Slave morality begins with *ressentiment*, which is a bitter emotional reaction against the superiority of others.
 - A. It is not so much a historical phenomenon as it is a psychological one.
 - B. *Ressentiment* differs from resentment in its emphasis on feeling, trapped and without effective expression.
 - C. Resentment can be understood as a more specific, better-aimed, and more strategic form of *ressentiment*.
- II. *Ressentiment* gives birth to a "transvaluation of values," an inversion of masterly good and bad to the slavish evil and good.
 - A. The slave revolt proceeds not by force of arms but by way of subversion.
 - B. Our animal kingdom example again—how this works.
 - C. When master and slave morality co-exist in the same person, this is "bad conscience."
- III. Nietzsche does not think that we can or should "go back" to ancient master morality.
 - A. Christianity has had too profound (and benign) an effect on us.
 - B. But Nietzsche does encourage us to go "beyond good and evil."

Recommended Reading:

Genealogy of Morals, Book I.

Supplemental Reading:

Solomon, "100 Years of *Ressentiment*," pp. 102-115.

Questions to Consider:

1. How does resentment function to bring about "the slave revolt in morals," the transvaluation of values? Give examples from your own experience.
2. How does Nietzsche think that two thousand years of Christianity will enrich and "spiritualize" our sense of healthy morality?

Lecture Twenty-Two

Resentment, Revenge, and Justice

Scope: In this lecture, we further discuss Nietzsche's analysis of resentment, revenge, and justice, and we follow this with a diagnosis of asceticism, the thorough-going self-denial that is often an extreme form of religious practices.

Outline

- I. Resentment is intimately connected to revenge and the concept of justice.
 - A. *Ressentiment* differs from resentment.
 - 1. Resentment seeks revenge.
 - 2. *On the Genealogy of Morals* describes the morality of the Jews as stemming from resentment.
 - B. Resentment can be a strategy.
 - 1. "Transvaluation of values" is a matter of turning failures into virtues.
 - 2. Resentment can be clever and brilliant (as Nietzsche acknowledges). Resentment is brilliant because of its bite, its "stabbing in the back."
 - 3. Revenge is the original meaning of justice (cf., the *Iliad*).
 - C. Master and slave morality can be at war within a person.
 - 1. One takes revenge on oneself. One wants to get even with oneself for doing well.
 - 2. We negate what is outside ourselves in order to feel good about ourselves.
 - 3. In this case, the project of turning the table against aggressors has become internalized.
- II. Nietzsche thinks that we should get over the concepts of guilt and sin, which reflect the structure of slave morality.
 - A. Guilt involves a sense that one is inherently deficient, a very unhealthy way of viewing oneself.
 - B. Sin indicates that master-type behavior is being viewed, and condemned, on another plane. It is interpreted as a transgression against God.
 - C. Because "God is dead," this is already happening.
 - 1. The result may be to help us take a better view of ourselves.
 - 2. But for those who cannot accept it and cannot adapt to a different kind of morality there will be anguish and resentment.
 - 3. Acting this out, there will be a desperate demand for new leaders, for "Führers," and great violence in the world in the next (i.e., twentieth) century.

- III. Nietzsche himself was filled with resentment, as he was with compassion. How can he be seen as more than just a resentful person?
- A. For Nietzsche, the slaves are brilliant, clever, and strategic. They also win in their attempt to impose their morality as Morality.
 - B. Hegel's parable of master and slave tells a similar story.
 - 1. The battle for recognition as "top dog" results in the loser becoming the winner's slave.
 - 2. The master, however, becomes dependent on the slave.
 - 3. The master becomes alienated from life, while the slave exercises creativity.
 - C. "Herd morality" is often necessary for holding a community together.
 - D. Nietzsche does not reject justice, but he transforms the concept in radical ways. Nietzsche had his own conception of justice.
 - 1. He objects to certain conceptions of justice (e.g., some modern conceptions of "distributive justice"), seeing them as interfering with (his own sense of) justice by disadvantaging exceptional individuals.
 - 2. He thought that people who call for justice are often just trying to improve their own positions.
 - 3. For Nietzsche, justice requires that we acknowledge differences among individuals.
 - 4. Nietzsche denies that there is an absolute standard of justice.
 - 5. Nietzsche's view of justice as revenge is that it should be overcome.
 - 6. Justice is a matter of being "great-souled."
 - 7. There are two meanings of "forgiveness": forgiveness as a legal technicality, which does not address psychological resentment, and "forgiving and forgetting" because one is too "big" to worry about the transgression.

Essential Reading:

Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, Book II.

Supplemental Reading:

Solomon, "100 Years of *Ressentiment*," pp. 115-124.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. Is resentment always pathetic, unwarranted, despicable? When is resentment justified, for example, in the face of oppression? What is the difference between the resentment Nietzsche criticizes and the heroism of freedom fighters?
- 2. What is justice? Does justice require treating everyone as equals ("in the eyes of God," "before the law")?

Lecture Twenty-Three

The Will to Power and the *Übermensch*

Scope: In the last two lectures, we discuss three of Nietzsche's most famous doctrines: the Will to Power, the *Übermensch*, and eternal recurrence. The Will to Power is perhaps Nietzsche's most famous doctrine. He himself sometimes claimed that it was the centerpiece of his philosophy and he at one time intended to write a summary book with that title. The notion is of considerable psychological significance (influencing psychoanalysis considerably). But the concept itself was drawn from and remains close to Schopenhauer, even after Nietzsche had wholly rejected the great pessimist's philosophy. Consequently, its alleged meaning is inconsistent, often confused, but often insightful and intriguing. The *Übermensch* is, at least in *Zarathustra*, the full manifestation of the (more than) human Will to Power.

Outline

- I. Nietzsche "discovers" the Will to Power in his early aphoristic works. He is evidently enamored with the phrase ("der Wille zu *macht*"). The concept is borrowed from Schopenhauer and his key concept of the Will.
 - A. Occasionally Nietzsche treats it as metaphysical reality. Nietzsche took inspiration from physics, in particular, from the theory that the world is composed of "points of power," which are dynamic and energetic and Nietzsche at times speaks of will to power as though it were the basic stuff of the universe.
 - B. Usually and for the most part, Nietzsche treats it as naturalistic motive, and in no particularly systematic way. At times, he presents it as a thought experiment.
- II. The Will to Power is neither "Will" nor "power" (and I'm not so sure it is "the" or "to" either).
 - A. The Will to Power is not "Will" because Nietzsche challenges the Kantian Will—from which Schopenhauer derives his concept—as a metaphysical fiction. For Kant, the will is individual; for Schopenhauer, the will is universal.
 - B. Nietzsche rejects both notions. He considers "will" to be what motivates us, and the goal of will to be power.
 - C. The Will to Power is not "power" but rather more "personal strength," or even creativity. The German word for political power (realm) is "*reich*," implying military power, power over others. The word Nietzsche uses for power is "*macht*," which suggests personal authority, discipline, the power of expression.

- D. There is no Will to Power in the singular sense, no unitary motive, state or force. Schopenhauer insists that there can only be one Will. (cf., Spinoza and Hegel).
 - E. Nietzsche formulates explanations in terms of the Will to Power in a bewildering multiplicity of contexts and often insists that it is *one's own* Will to Power that demands expression.
 - F. The Will to Power should not be conceived as goal-oriented. Nietzsche's view of motivation focuses on drives rather than goals, the "push" rather than the aim.
 - G. In this, Nietzsche modifies Schopenhauer's conception of the Will as blind and purposeless. The Will to Power creates and discovers goals *in* its expression. It does not begin with goals neatly established (which would allow reason to dominate motivation).
 - H. Any particular goal is a manifestation of will to power.
- III. The Will to Power can be insightfully construed as representing Nietzsche's dynamic conception of the world.
- A. The world is energy and not mere matter.
 - B. Life is not mere survival but the struggle for self-expression. The "life" that will to power strives for involves doing what you love. It is vital, exciting, risky, dangerous. (Here Nietzsche conflicts with Darwin.)
- IV. The Will to Power is also a psychological notion, juxtaposed explicitly against the English utilitarians' emphasis on pleasure (and the avoidance of pain) as the fundamental human motives.
- A. There are many cases in which hedonistic explanation fails.
 - B. We are desiring, not complacent, creatures.
 - C. The need for self-expression explains these cases.
- V. The Will to Power is also a part of Nietzsche's ethics.
- A. The Will to Power is a primary motive. It may be acknowledged or not. It may be straightforward or—as in asceticism—twisted and denied.
 - B. The Will to Power represents master morality, construed as a straightforward drive toward self-expression and self-realization. ("Become who you are.")
 - C. The *Übermensch* can be understood as the full manifestation of the Will to Power.

Essential Reading:

Nietzsche, "Will to Power" and "Superman," in Hollingdale, ed., *A Nietzsche Reader*.

Supplemental Reading:

W. Kaufmann, "Discovery of the Will to Power" in Solomon, ed., *Nietzsche*, pp. 226-242.

Martin Heidegger, "Who is Nietzsche's Zarathustra?" in David Allison, ed., *The New Nietzsche*, pp. 64-79.

John Richardson, *Nietzsche's System*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the Will to Power? What is its plausibility as a psychological hypothesis? Does it make any sense as a metaphysical thesis?
2. In what sense is the *Übermensch* a manifestation of the Will to Power?

Lecture Twenty-Four

Eternal Recurrence— Nietzsche Says “Yes!” to Life

Scope: In this lecture, we discuss the last of three Nietzschean doctrines, the “eternal recurrence of the same,” and we end the lectures by evaluating Nietzsche’s enthusiastic emphasis on saying “Yes!” to Life and at the same time “philosophizing with a hammer.”

Outline

- I. The idea of eternal recurrence is the idea that time repeats itself, over and over again.
 - A. The idea of time as a wheel, as circular and always repeating itself, is an ancient idea.
 - 1. It could be found in early Persia, around the time of Zarathustra.
 - 2. It traces back to the ancient Vedic philosophy in India, 1500 B.C.E.
 - 3. The idea had currency in ancient Greece. Heraclitus, the Stoics, and the Pythagoreans all developed versions of the idea.
 - 4. The Christian orthodoxy rejected it. Christ’s life and death split history in two. The Church insisted that history is linear.
 - B. In his unpublished notes, Nietzsche does give an attempted physical justification of eternal recurrence.
 - 1. The “proof” turns on the idea of a finite number of “energy states” over an infinite period of time.
 - 2. The “proof” is deeply flawed but irrelevant to Nietzsche’s purpose.
 - 3. Nietzsche (wisely) never published it.
 - C. Eternal recurrence can best be understood as a personal, psychological test: *do you in fact love your life?*
 - 1. The eternal recurrence can be understood as an “existential imperative,” a way of envisioning your life and making personal decisions.
 - 2. “Would you be happy to repeat your life, *exactly as it has been?*”
 - 3. Eternal recurrence is a way of seeing each element as beautiful by virtue of its membership in the whole.
 - 4. We are not free from basic internal drives, but we’re free in how we choose to react to them.
- II. The dominant idea in Nietzsche’s philosophy, from his early attempts to understand the ancient Greeks to his flamboyant autobiography (modestly entitled *Ecce Homo*) is the love of life, “Yes-saying.”

- A. This can be understood as the personal expression of Nietzsche's own miserable life, burdened by illness and loneliness, given both levity and weight by his genius.
 - B. It is also the focus of his attack on nihilism, on decadence, on Christianity and modernity. It lies at the heart of his attack on Morality, which he sees as "Nay saying."
 - C. What it means to say "Yes!" to life cannot be reduced to any particular ambitions or desires, nor to any pleasures, no matter how enjoyable.
 - D. The eternal recurrence is the ultimate test. To love life is to love *that* one is alive.
 - E. The dominant style of Nietzsche's writing is critical because he believes that the refusal to say "Yes!" to life is supported by intellectual, moral and religious doctrines, fueled by *ressentiment*. But if his style is harsh and often sarcastic, it should not be construed as "No-saying."
 - 1. The overall result is or should be not a sense of arrogant superiority but deep self-criticism.
 - 2. Nietzsche's aim is that we should resolve to be the best that we can be.
- III. "Become who you are" is not so much a statement of fatalism as it is an encouragement, a spur to virtue and excellence, a provocation to life.
- A. This notion from Pindar resembles Aristotle's ideal of flourishing and Nietzsche's ideal of self-realization.
 - B. Nietzsche has this idea in mind when he suggests that we "give style" to our characters.
 - C. Alexander Nehamas has pointed out that Nietzsche gave shape to himself as an author, as Plato gave shape to Socrates.

Essential Reading:

"Eternal Recurrence," in Hollingdale, ed., *A Nietzsche Reader*.

"The Genius of the Heart" (from *Beyond Good and Evil*) in Hollingdale, ed., *A Nietzsche Reader*.

Supplemental Reading:

Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*, Chapter 5.

I. Sol, "Reflections on Recurrence" in Solomon, ed., *Nietzsche*, pp. 322-342.

D. Allison, "Have We Been Understood?" in Schacht, ed., *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality*, pp. 460-469.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the eternal recurrence? How could accepting this thesis change your life?
2. What does it mean, in *your* case, to “Become who you are”?

Timeline

1844 October 15	Nietzsche is born in Röcken, Saxony (Prussia).
1849	Nietzsche's father dies at the age of 36.
1858-69	Nietzsche studies the classics and music.
1869	Nietzsche meets and befriends the composer, Richard Wagner.
1869	Nietzsche becomes a professor of classics (philology) at Basel, Switzerland.
1870	Bismarck unifies Germany. The Franco-Prussian war. Nietzsche enlists as an orderly.
1872	Nietzsche publishes <i>The Birth of Tragedy</i> , idolizing the Greeks and Wagner.
1873-74	Nietzsche publishes three "Untimely Meditations," including an essay on the German pessimist Arthur Schopenhauer.
1876	Nietzsche publishes an essay on Wagner, as the break is becoming evident between them. Intermittent depression begins.
1878-79	Nietzsche publishes <i>Human, All Too Human</i> (his first book of aphorisms), quits his job at Basel, but stays in Switzerland.
1881	Nietzsche publishes <i>Daybreak</i> .
1882	Nietzsche has a short but intense love affair with Lou Salomé. He publishes <i>The Gay Science</i> . Depression intensifies.
1883-85	Nietzsche writes and publishes <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> . His sister Elizabeth marries a proto-Nazi. Nietzsche is appalled and breaks with her.
1886	Nietzsche publishes <i>Beyond Good and Evil</i> and expands his <i>Gay Science</i> .
1887	Nietzsche publishes <i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i> , briefly considers a larger work to be called <i>The Will to Power</i> .

1888	Nietzsche publishes <i>The Wagner Case</i> , <i>Twilight of the Idols</i> , <i>The Antichrist</i> , and a quasi-autobiography, <i>Ecce Homo</i> .
1889 January	Nietzsche collapses in Turin. He is moved in with his mother. He is now terminally demented.
1893	Nietzsche's sister returns from a failed fascist experiment in South America and takes over her brother's literary estate.
1897	Nietzsche's mother dies.
1900 August 25.....	Nietzsche dies in Weimar.
1916	<i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> becomes the most popular book in the German trenches of World War I. The book is denounced in England and elsewhere.
1933	Elizabeth invites the newly elected Hitler to visit the newly built Nietzsche archives.
1950	German-born refugee Walter Kaufmann expunges Nietzsche's now notorious association with fascism and the Nazis. Serious American Nietzsche scholarship begins.

Glossary

Ad hominem: an argument against the person, not the position.

Agape: Christian love, love without *eros*, “the love of humanity.”

Apollonian: the rational individuating element in Greek thought.

Dionysian: the frenzied, irrational, holistic element in the Greek spirit.

Eros: erotic (sexual) love.

Eternal recurrence: the idea that time and lives will repeat themselves, over and over.

“God is dead”: Nietzsche’s summary (borrowed from Luther and Hegel) that summarizes the end of monotheistic structure of Western thought.

Immoralism: anti-moral, or, in Nietzsche, the rejection of rule-bound ethics.

Last man: the evolutionary potential for the ultimate, satisfied *bourgeois*, Zarathustra’s nightmare.

Macht: power, but especially the power of self-discipline and personal strength.

Master morality: a value system in which one’s own nobility plays the central role.

Philia: love as friendship.

Reich: political power, “realm.”

Ressentiment: a reactive but ineffective emotion, rejecting another’s success.

Slave morality: a value system in which one’s relative impotence plays the central role.

Transvaluation: turning a value system upside down, so that what was good is now evil, what was bad is now good.

Übermensch: the “superman,” an evolutionary possibility, Zarathustra’s dream.

Will to power: the ultimate motivation of human (and much animal) behavior.

Biographical Notes

Aeschulus (525-456 B.C.E.). Greek playwright, author of *Seven against Thebes* and *Prometheus Bound*. One of Nietzsche's favorite tragedians.

Bismarck, Otto von (1815-1898). Prussian statesman, consolidated the German *Reich*, ruled Germany for most of Nietzsche's adult life.

Darwin, Charles (1809-1882). English naturalist, father of the theory of evolution, author of *Origin of Species* and *The Ascent of Man*.

Descartes, René (1596-1650). French philosopher, mathematician, scientist, rationalist, "we think therefore we am," the man who "tyrannized consciousness," according to Nietzsche.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo (1803-1882). American philosopher, essayist, "Self-Reliance," admired by Nietzsche.

Euripides (480-405 B.C.E.). Greek playwright, author of *The Bacchae* and *Medea*. Nietzsche's least favorite tragedian.

Goethe, J. W. (1749-1832). German poet, culture hero, author of *Faust*. Nietzsche's most often-cited example of "the higher man."

Hegel, G.W.F. (1770-1831). History-minded German philosopher, cosmic rationalist, author of *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) with its "Master-Slave" dialectic.

Heraclitus (540-480 B.C.E.). Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher, Nietzsche's favorite Greek philosopher.

Kant, Immanuel (1724-1804). German philosopher, uncompromising rationalist, author of the three Critiques, the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788) and the *Critique of Judgment* (1790). Nietzsche's most frequent target among philosophers.

Kierkegaard, Søren (1813-1855). Danish religious philosopher and first "existentialist." Many important parallels with Nietzsche, despite their very different positions on the desirability of Christianity.

Luther, Martin (1483-1546). German theologian, reformer, major figure in Nietzsche's Lutheran background.

Marx, Karl (1818-1883). German philosopher and socialist, author (with F. Engels) of *The Communist Manifesto* (1848).

Mill, John Stuart (1807-1858). English philosopher, one of Nietzsche's favorite targets (though rarely by name).

Nietzsche, Elizabeth Förster- (1846-1935). Nietzsche's sister, literary executor and self-appointed public relations agent.

Nietzsche, Franziska (1826-1895). Nietzsche's mother, often his closest friend and his devoted nurse for most of his last decade.

Nietzsche, Karl Ludwig (1813-1849). Nietzsche's father, a Lutheran minister, who died when Nietzsche was only four.

Paul of Tarsus (?-68). An apostle and one of the founders of Christianity, who attracts Nietzsche's harshest accusations for his attitudes toward the human body, sex, marriage, and human justice.

Pindar (522-438 B.C.E.). Greek poet, from whom Nietzsche gets his phrase "Become who you are."

Plato (428-347 B.C.E.). Greek philosopher, student and follower of Socrates, author of many dialogues with Socrates as key character, uncompromising rationalist. He shares much of the blame with his teacher for the over-rationalization of life.

Ree, Paul (1849-1901). German philosopher, friend of Nietzsche, author of a book on the moral sentiments.

Salomé, Lou Andreas (1861-1937). German philosopher, writer, friend of Nietzsche, author of one of the first books on Nietzsche.

Schopenhauer, Arthur (1788-1860). German philosopher, profound pessimist, author of *World as Will and Idea* (1819). Nietzsche's first and most profound modern philosophical influence.

Socrates (470-399 B.C.E.). Greek philosopher, gadfly, perished (didn't publish), Nietzsche's favorite target, also in many ways his role model.

Sophocles (525-456 B.C.E.). Greek playwright, author of the Oedipus trilogy. One of Nietzsche's favorite tragedians.

Spinoza, Baruch (1632-1677). Dutch philosopher, pantheist, determinist, author of the *Ethics*. Nietzsche eventually comes to consider him a "predecessor."

Wagner, Richard (1813-1883). German composer, Nietzsche's one-time friend and hero, creator of *Tristan and Isolde*, *Lohengrin*, the *Ring* cycle, and *Parsifal*.

Zarathustra (Zoroaster) (628-551 B.C.E.). Persian prophet, founder of Zoroastrianism, employed by Nietzsche as the protagonist of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

Annotated Bibliography

Nietzsche's Works: German Editions

Kritische Gesamtausgabe Werke. Edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1967 onwards. The new standard edition.

Werke in Drei Bänden. 3 vols. Edited by Karl Schlechta. 3rd edition. Munich: Carl Hansers, 1965. The old standard edition.

Nietzsche in English Translation

Nietzsche's individual works (in chronological order, original publication dates in parentheses):

The Birth of Tragedy (with *The Case of Wagner*). Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage, 1966. (1872)

Untimely Meditations. Translated by R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

David Strauss, Confessor and Writer. (1873)

On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life. Also translated by Peter Preuss. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980. (1874)

Schopenhauer as Educator. (1874)

Richard Wagner in Bayreuth. (1876)

Human, All Too Human. Translated by R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. (1878)

Human, All Too Human II. Translated by R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. (1879)

Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality. Translated by R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982. (1881)

The Gay Science. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage, 1974. (1882)

Thus Spoke Zarathustra. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. In *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking, 1954. (1883-85)

Beyond Good and Evil. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage, 1966. (1886)

On the Genealogy of Morals. Translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale. (Together with *Ecce Homo*, translated by Walter Kaufmann.) New York: Vintage, 1967. (1887)

The Case of Wagner (with *The Birth of Tragedy*). Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage, 1966. (1888)

Twilight of the Idols. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. In *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking, 1954. (1889)

The Antichrist. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. In *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking, 1954. (1895)

Nietzsche contra Wagner. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. In *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking, 1954. (1895)

Ecce Homo. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. (With *On the Genealogy of Morals*, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale). New York: Vintage, 1967. (1895)

Letters and Unpublished Works

Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche. Edited and translated by Christopher Middleton. Indianapolis: Hackett Publ. Co., 1996.

Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's. Edited and translated by Daniel Breazeale. Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1979.

The Will to Power. Translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale. New York: Vintage, 1967 (compiled from the *Nachlass*, originally edited by Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche).

Collections of Nietzsche's Works

The Portable Nietzsche. Translated and edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking, 1954. Includes (complete) *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, *Twilight of the Idols*, *The Antichrist*, *Nietzsche contra Wagner*.

Basic Writings of Nietzsche. Translated and edited with commentaries by Walter Kaufmann. New York: The Modern Library, 1968. Includes (complete) *The Birth of Tragedy*, *The Case of Wagner*, *Beyond Good and Evil*, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, and *Ecce Homo*.

Selections from Nietzsche's Works

A Nietzsche Reader. Edited and translated by R. J. Hollingdale. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977. A good selection of short snippets, organized by topic.

Nietzsche: Selections. Ed. Richard Schacht. New York: Macmillan, 1993. A good collection of excerpts from all of Nietzsche's works, published and unpublished, arranged chronologically. Particularly handy for some of the hard-to-get early essays—we have used these two extensively in the readings for the lectures.

Biographies and General Surveys

Ackermann, Robert John. *Nietzsche: A Frenzied Look*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990. (An offbeat but fascinating account of Nietzsche as continually obsessed with the Greeks.)

Chamberlain, Leslie. *Nietzsche in Turin*. New York: Picador, 1998. (A moving account of Nietzsche's last years.)

Clark, Maudemarie. *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. (The best book on Nietzsche's general philosophical stance and his theory of knowledge.)

Danto, Arthur. *Nietzsche as Philosopher*. New York: Macmillan, 1965. (The first book to "translate" Nietzsche into the language of contemporary Anglo-American philosophy.)

Gilman, Sander L., ed. *Conversations with Nietzsche*. Trans. David Parent. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. (Excerpts from letters and reminiscences.)

Hayman, Ronald. *Nietzsche: A Critical Life*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. (Perhaps the best single biography of Nietzsche, with an exaggerated sense of his impending madness.)

Heidegger, Martin. *Nietzsche*. 2 vols. Pfullingen: Neske, 1961. Trans. David Farrell Krell. 4 vols. New York: Harper and Row, 1979-86. (A book that has had tremendous influence on Nietzsche studies in Europe, dubiously interpreting Nietzsche as "the last metaphysician.")

Higgins, Kathleen Marie. *Nietzsche's Zarathustra*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987. (A sensitive and sympathetic reading of Nietzsche's most dramatic work as a work of literature as well as philosophy.)

Hollingdale, R. J. *Nietzsche*. London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973. (A good solid biography by one of Nietzsche's best translators.)

Hunt, Lester H. *Nietzsche and the Origin of Virtue*. London: Routledge, 1991. (An original interpretation of Nietzsche as a virtue ethicist and an "immoralist.")

Jaspers, Karl. *Nietzsche*, trans. Charles F. Wallraff and Frederick J. Schmitz. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1965. (A classic work, important for introducing Nietzsche to early twentieth century philosophy.)

Kaufmann, Walter. *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*. 3rd ed., New York: Vintage, 1968. (The first ground-breaking work on Nietzsche in English, shattering the Nazi and German chauvinist myths and establishing Nietzsche as a respectable philosophical figure.)

Krell, David Farrell. *The Good European*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. (A stunning collection of photographs and letters, tracing Nietzsche's wanderings through Southern Europe from his childhood and teaching in Basel to his last lonely years in northern Italy.)

Magnus, Bernd. With Jean-Pierre Mileur, Stanley Stewart. *Nietzsche's Case: Philosophy as/and Literature*. New York: Routledge, 1993. (A radical attempt to interpret Nietzsche in a postmodernist vein and understand his philosophical works as important works of literature.)

Nehamas, Alexander. *The Art of Living*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. (A study of Socrates' influence, with special attention to Nietzsche's admiration and use of him.)

———. *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985. (One of the most elegant and influential attempts to interpret Nietzsche along postmodernist lines.)

Salomé, Lou. *Nietzsche*. Edited and translated by Siegfried Mandel. Redding Ridge, Connecticut: Black Swan Books, 1988. (One of the first Nietzsche studies, by the one woman who might have claimed to be Nietzsche's "true love.")

Schacht, Richard. *Nietzsche*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983. (An outstanding comprehensive philosophical study.)

Solomon, Robert C. *From Hegel to Existentialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988. (Studies in European philosophy, with several essays on Nietzsche.)

Solomon, Robert C., and Kathleen Higgins, *What Nietzsche Really Said*. New York: Random House, 1999. (An introduction to Nietzsche's thought, laying down the framework for the ideas in these lectures.)

Stern, J. P. *A Study of Nietzsche*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979. (A good study of Nietzsche's life and works.)

Young, Julian. *Nietzsche's Philosophy of Art*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. (Special attention to Nietzsche's use of art to overcome pessimism and understand tragedy. Particularly good on Nietzsche's relation to Schopenhauer.)

Collections of Critical Essays on Nietzsche

Allison, David B., ed. *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation*. New York: Dell, 1977. (Critical studies of Nietzsche, with emphasis on post-Heideggerian and new French interpretations.)

Krell, David Farrell, and David Wood, eds. *Exceedingly Nietzsche: Aspects of Contemporary Nietzsche Interpretation*. London: Routledge, 1988.

Magnus, Bernd, and Kathleen M. Higgins, *The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996. (Solid and wide-ranging critical studies of Nietzsche, with an emphasis on Nietzsche's influence on modern thought.)

Schacht, Richard, *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality*. Berkeley: University of California, 1997. (A variety of studies of Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals*, with numerous studies of genealogy, morality, and *ressentiment*.)

Sedgwick, Peter R., ed. *Nietzsche: A Critical Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995. (Critical studies of Nietzsche, with emphasis on recent French interpretations.)

Solomon, Robert C., ed. *Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays*. New York: Doubleday, 1973. (More traditional critical studies of Nietzsche, with essays by Hermann Hesse, George Bernard Shaw, and Thomas Mann as well as more recent interpretations.)

Solomon, Robert C., and Kathleen M. Higgins, eds. *Reading Nietzsche*. New York: Oxford, 1988. (Studies of Nietzsche's individual works, with special attention to the approach to those works.)