

CIE300/PHIL 309C: What is Love?

Spring 2011, 1:30-2:45, TR, Myrin 201

Instructor: Jonathan Marks
Office: Bomberger 209
Office Hours: Monday, 3-4, Wed. 9:15-10:15, Fri. 11-12 and by appointment
Phone: X3202
Email: jmarks@ursinus.edu

Rationale and Purpose

In *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo rejects Friar Laurence's advice by crying out "Hang up philosophy! Unless philosophy can make a Juliet . . ." But if the insensitive moralism of the Friar is no help to Romeo, I think that there are other teachers—and the authors of the texts we will read in the course are, I hope, among them—who can speak to a Romeo or a Juliet. The question of the good life, which is at the heart of CIE, speaks directly to all of us, but even that enduring question is abstract compared to the question of love which we will pursue in this CIE seminar. Everyone I know not only has strong feelings about love, like Romeo, but is often also, unlike Romeo, perplexed about it. To stick to the questions likely to occur to people prior to marriage: how do I know if I'm in love? How are love and sex connected? Do I spoil love by having sex early and often, or, since bad sex may undermine love, do I actually increase my chances of finding true love by gaining sexual experience? Among enduring questions, the question of love is rare in that we worry about it without prodding from intellectuals. The questions we pose to ourselves without prompting are, I think, both good in themselves and bridges to other questions we may not have considered yet. Is love an expansive feeling that one self-sufficient person feels for another, or is it a need that drives an incomplete person to seek someone to make him whole? Is love fairly reasonable, so that we can inquire into whom we should love, or is it fundamentally mysterious and spontaneous, offering itself only to people who know reason's limits? Is love an end in itself or part of a bigger pursuit, of communion with God, or of happiness, or of immortality, or, for that matter, of success in the struggle to pass on our genes?

The course has one main purpose, to help us think seriously about and articulate a provisional answer to the question "what is love?"

Grading

Class participation	25%
Journal	25%
Follow ups (3)	20%
Oral Exam or 8 page paper	25%
Informal Work (various)	5%

Course Texts

These are all available in the bookstore

1. *Hooking Up: Sex, Dating, and Relationships on Campus*, Johns Hopkins University Press
2. *Plato's Symposium*, Translated by Seth Benardete. University of Chicago Press
3. *The Four Loves*, C.S. Lewis, Mariner Books
4. *Abelard and Heloise: The Letters and Other Writings*. Edited by William Levitan. Hackett.
5. Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*. Arden
6. Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*. Folger
7. Turgenev, *First Love*, Penguin

Attendance

I expect on-time attendance. Four or more absences may result in a 0.0. I am willing to consider, in applying this policy, whether a genuine emergency has kept you out of class, if you let me know as soon as possible, preferably before missing class, and if you present documentation. There are, however, with the exception of absences for religious holidays, no excused absences. I expect you to schedule non-emergencies (e.g. dentist appointments, job interviews, tropical vacations) so that they do not conflict with this class. Frequent lateness will count against your grade. When you are absent, you are responsible for getting the notes as well as any assignments that may have been announced or distributed in class. That you were absent from class will not count as an excuse for not having an assignment, for missing a change in the reading assignment, or for not knowing what we covered in class.

Statement on Academic Honesty

The default penalty for plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty is **failure in the course**. I also report academic dishonesty to the Dean's Office. A second offense at any time in your college career may result in dismissal from the College. This policy applies to all cases of academic dishonesty. **The policy applies to all assignments, short or long.** If you have any doubt about what plagiarism is consult:

http://myrin.ursinus.edu/help/resrch_guides/plagiarism.htm

E-Mail

Occasionally, I may need to use e-mail to make announcements to the class or to communicate with you on an individual basis. You are responsible for checking your e-mail once per day to make sure you do not miss important announcements. You are also welcome to use e-mail to get in touch with me, though I urge you strongly to attend office hours or make an appointment when you have anything of substance to discuss—e.g. a paper you are working on.

Tentative Reading List

Part One: Love and Courtship: Reflections on Recent History

- Jan 17 Kass, "The End of Courtship" and Illouz, "Love and its Discontents"
- Jan 19 Bailey, *Front Porch*, 1-56; 141-43, to be distributed
- Jan 24 Bogle, *Hooking Up*, selections to be distributed
- Jan 26 Firestone, *Dialectic of Sex* and Nehring, *Vindication of Love*
Selections to be distributed.
- Jan 31 Kathleen Bogle visits class, 1:30-2:45. Delivers lecture at 4:30, Pfahler 100.
Attendance at lecture is mandatory.

Part II: Platonic Love

- Feb 2 Plato's *Symposium*, 1-22
- Feb 7 Plato's *Symposium*, 22-42
- Feb 9 Plato's *Symposium*, 42-54
- Feb 14 John Alan Lee, "Love Styles."

Part III: Christian Love

- Feb 16 Abelard and Heloise. **First follow up has to be in by now.**
- Feb 21 C.S. Lewis, *Four Loves*
- Feb 23 C.S. Lewis, *Four Loves*

Part IV Shakespeare in Love

- Feb 28 *Romeo and Juliet*, I-III
Mar 1 *Romeo and Juliet*, finish
Mar 6 Spring Break
Mar 8 Spring Break
Mar 13 *Antony and Cleopatra*, I-III
Mar 15 *Antony and Cleopatra*, finish

Part V Rousseau and Romantic Love

- Mar 20 Rousseau, selections to be distributed
Mar 22 To be announced
Mar 27 Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 1-91. **Second follow up should be in by now.**
Mar 29 Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 91-173
Apr 3 Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (finish text, 173-262)—I'd recommend starting on *First Love*, too.
Apr 5 Turgenev, *First Love* (read it all)

Part VI Freudian and Darwinian Perspectives on Love

- Apr 10 Freud, selections
Apr 12 Freud and Jonathan Lear
Apr 17 Erik Fromm, *Art of Loving*, excerpts

April 19 COSA

Apr 24 David Buss, from *Evolution of Desire*

Apr 26 Buss, from *Evolution of Desire*

April 30 Note to NEH: since I made the mistake of leaving only one day for Abelard and Heloise, I had to add it; so I used April 30 (previously TBA) for the Erik Fromm reading that would otherwise have taken place on the 17th.