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THE HISTORY OF EVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT FROM THE ENLIGHTENMENT TO
THE PRESENT



Prof. Vassiliki Betty Smocovitis

Spring 2024

Tuesday: Periods 8-10; 3:00-6:00 pm

Office: 617 Carr Hall

Office Hours Wednesdays 11:00 pm-1:00 pm or Online or by Appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the history of evolutionary thinking from the Enlightenment to the present. In addition to examining the development of scientific ideas concerning evolution, the course also examines the lives of critically important individuals like Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace, and the varied sociopolitical and national contexts of evolutionary science, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The course also focuses on contemporary debates pertaining to evolution and its teaching in US high schools and on the complex relations between evolution and US popular culture. Following historical discussion, the recent status of evolutionary science is examined in historical context.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. Peter Bowler, *Evolution: The History of an Idea*, 25th anniversary edition
2. Charles Darwin, *Voyage of the H.M.S. Beagle*, Penguin Classics
2. Edward Larson, *Summer for the Gods*
3. Edward Humes, *Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion and the Battle for America's Soul*
4. Charles Darwin, Selections from *On the Origin of Species*
5. Films: *Creation*, *Inherit the Wind*, Video: *Judgment Day: Intelligent Design on Trial*

EVALUATION:

This is a three-credit lecture/discussion course. Course evaluation follows the organization of the course. There will be five 2-page reaction/response papers worth 7% each for 35% of the grade, and a final take-home essay exam worth 45%. The final 20% of the grade is based on class participation including attendance. Students are expected to attend lectures, view films, and complete all reading assignments in time for class. Reaction/response papers will be

given grades of check plus, check, check minus or “U” (or unsatisfactory). Students are expected to have completed assigned readings, or viewed material, and to have submitted their 2-page reaction/response papers on Canvas by noon on the Monday before the Tuesday class on the topic. If so wished, students may rewrite papers immediately after class discussion if they find their views have changed or if they wish to improve their grades. Rewritten papers must be submitted within one week after the discussion. Students are allowed two legitimate absences. Please note: the textbook serves as a supplement to the lectures. Students are expected to do all readings assigned. The final take-home essay exam will be based on both lectures and the readings assigned as well as any films or resources shared with the class; it will be handed out two weeks before the due date. Make-up exams are not encouraged, but possible, given sufficient explanation (e.g. physician’s note) for absence. The course follows standard UF grade scales and policies:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies>.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week One (January 9): ZOOM CLASS Introduction. Goals and Aims of Course

Week Two (January 16):

The “Idea” of Evolution and the Prehistory of Evolution.

Reading: Bowler, *Evolution*, Chapter 1. “The Idea of Evolution: Its Scope and Implications;” Chapter 2. “The Pre-Evolutionary Worldview.”

Week Three (January 23):

The Enlightenment. Extinction is Forever. The Abyss of Time.

Readings: Bowler, *Evolution*, Chapter 3, “Evolution in the Enlightenment;” Readings: Bowler, *Evolution*, Chapter 4. “Nature and Society;” Tennyson's "In Memoriam. "

Week Four (January 30):

The Life of Charles Darwin I. Lecture and Discussion

Reading: Charles Darwin, *The Voyage of the H.M.S. Beagle*, Penguin Classics

Assignment#1: Reaction/Response Paper Due by Monday January 29 on Canvas by 12 pm (noon)

Week Five (February 6):

The Life of Charles Darwin II. Why Darwin not Wallace

Reading: Bowler, *Evolution*, Chapter 5, “The Development of Darwin’s Theory. ” Darwin biography online: <http://darwin-online.org.uk/biography.html>;
The Wallace Website, esp. <https://wallacefund.myspecies.info/content/biography-wallace>

Week Six (February 13):

What Darwin Really Said. Discussion.

Reading: Bowler, *Evolution*, Chapter 5, “The Development of Darwin’s Theory;” selections from *On the Origin of Species* (Chapters 1-4; Final Chapter).

Assignment #2: Reaction/Response Paper Due by Monday February 19 on Canvas at 12 pm (noon)

Week Seven (February 20):

After the “Origin.” The Moral, Religious and Philosophical Implications of Darwin’s Theory

Readings: Bowler, *Evolution*. Chapter 6, "The Reception of Darwin's Theory." Readings: Bowler, *Evolution*, Chapter 7, "The Eclipse of Darwinism: Scientific Evolutionism, 1875-1925." Bowler, *Evolution*, Chapter 8, "Evolution, Society and Culture."

Week Eight (February 27):

The Sociopolitical Contexts of Evolutionism: Social Darwinism and Eugenics.

Readings: Bowler, *Evolution*, Chapter 8, " Evolution, Society and Culture;" Rudyard Kipling's "White Man's Burden," Andrew Carnegie, "The Gospel of Wealth," Theodore Roosevelt's, "The Strenuous Life."

Week Nine (March 5):

Creation (No Class: Feature Film)

Feature Film: *Creation Available on Amazon Prime or You Tube:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqnAZMcPCsY> or Free on You Tube with Ads:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_8q8kVCTBek

Assignment #3: Compare and contrast what you have learned about Charles Darwin, his life and his work with the film depiction: Reaction/Response Paper Due by Monday March 4 on Canvas by 12 pm (noon).

Week Ten (March 12). Spring Break (No Class)

Week Eleven (March 19):

Anthropology, Human Evolution and Race; The Evolutionary Synthesis, Modern Debates and Developments

Readings: Bowler, *Evolution*, Chapter 8, "Evolution, Society and Culture;" Bowler, *Evolution*, Chapter 9, "The Evolutionary Synthesis," Chapter 10, "Modern Debates and Developments."

Week Twelve and Thirteen (March 26 and April 2): Evolution, and US Popular Culture I. The Scopes "Monkey Trial"

Reading: Edward Larson, *Summer for the Gods*.

Film and Discussion: *Inherit the Wind*.

Assignment Number #4: Reaction/Response Paper Due Monday April 1 on Canvas at 12 pm (Noon).

Week Fifteen (April 9 and April 16): Evolution and US Popular Culture II. Dover

Reading: Edward Humes, *Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion and the Battle for America's Soul*. Film and Discussion: *Judgment Day*

Assignment Number #5: Reaction/Response Paper by Monday April 15 on Canvas at 12 pm (Noon)

Week Sixteen April 23 (Summation)

Take Home Essay Questions Sent Out April 9, Due April 24th at noon on Canvas (you have a full two weeks).

GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNMENTS AND REACTION PAPERS

The goal of the assignment is to encourage students to engage critically the issues raised by the readings assigned, and to come to class prepared to engage in class discussion. I suspect

that there will be some similarities in points of view, but each paper will (I hope) reflect the opinions of each reader and author. I cannot therefore give you a fixed set of standards or any formula for writing papers, though I can help refine the goals of the assignment and offer the following as guidelines.

Length: Each paper should be a minimum of 2 double-spaced typewritten pages (regular font or 12 points). You may extend the length of your paper *to no longer than 5 pages*.

Structure: This paper *is not a review* of the readings or any of the books assigned. Do not attempt to write a full-fledged description of the books. Somewhere in the text, you should, however, summarize the “point” of the book. In other words, try to interpret the book in about one paragraph. This could be in your introduction. Your response or reaction to the texts should form the main body of the essay. Feel free to ask critical questions in these essays or point to any shortcomings in the readings or books. Keep in mind, however, that "critical" does not necessarily mean a negative assessment, but a rigorous and thoughtful analysis that brings into relief the issues raised by a particular subject.

Style: Please feel free to use the "I" personal form if you so wish; but try to avoid over-personalized responses. The essay should maintain a scholarly tone, but should also avoid pedantic, pretentious academic-eze. Do not overuse the passive voice; this is not a laboratory write-up, but a critical essay.

Suggestions for reading: Please do not engage the readings as you would of standard textbooks in psychology, chemistry, biology, or astronomy. Jot down notes only when necessary; you do not need to highlight the text, although some notation or highlighting may help. Pay close attention to what the author is trying to achieve by reading the background material if it is included (e.g. preface, foreword, introduction etc.). Familiarize yourself with the author by doing additional research if necessary in the library (you may use any of the biographical sources in the science library or on the internet).

Include a bibliography or reference section if you have relied on additional sources. The formatting is flexible. Be judicious with your reliance on the internet as it is not peer-refereed information.

POLICIES

Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Your voice matters. Thank you for serving as a partner in this important effort.

Honesty Policy

- All students registered at the University of Florida have agreed to comply with the following statement: “I understand that the University of Florida expects its students

to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.”

- In addition, on all work submitted for credit the following pledge is either required or implied: *“On my honor I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”*
- If you witness any instances of academic dishonesty in this class, please notify the instructor or contact the Student Honor Court (392-1631) or Cheating Hotline (392-6999). For additional information on Academic Honesty, please refer to the University of Florida Academic Honesty Guidelines at: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/academicguide.html>.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center: <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

UF Counseling Services

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

Policy on Zoom and Class Attendance

You are required to attend all classes in person and participate in class discussions. If you are sick and infectious, please self-quarantine, let the instructor know, and attend via Zoom.

Software Use

All faculty, staff and student of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages

and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Academic Resources

Students are encouraged to make use of the following helpful resources on campus:

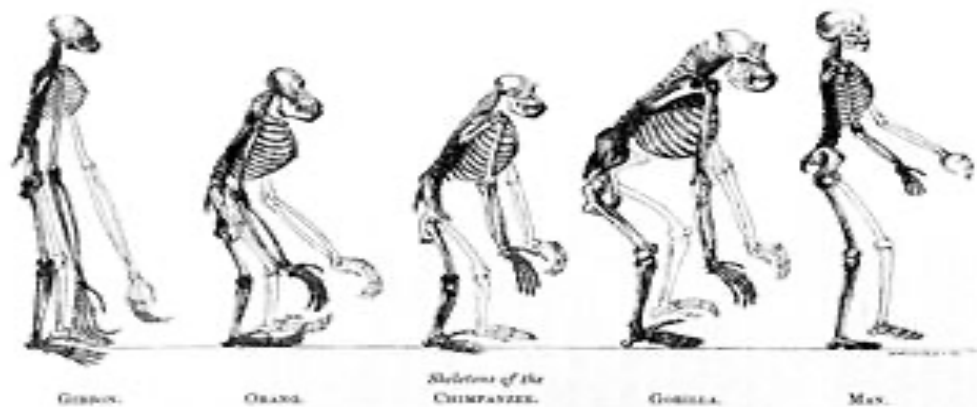
E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420.
General study skills and tutoring: Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138.
Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information. On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.



Photographically reduced from Diagrams of the natural size (except that of the Gibbon, which was twice as large as nature), drawn by Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins from specimens in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons.