

In the *Critique of Pure Reason* of 1781, Immanuel Kant introduced a new method that effected a revolution in philosophy. It is this method that essentially defines the mainstream tradition of continental European philosophy of the 19th- and 20th-Centuries. We will study this method and its implications through a substantial study of the *Critique of Pure Reason* as a whole, and then in its further development in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*. These works by Kant and Merleau-Ponty are among the most technical and the most foundational works of "Continental" philosophy, and competence in working with these texts is the key to being able to engage in serious work within this tradition. To that end, we will focus our efforts on developing the skills of reading, writing and critical analysis necessary to master these technical studies.

Tentative Reading Schedule

Though details of the specific reading assignments may change slightly as our course develops, this schedule will serve as your basic guide for class preparation. You are expected to have read the material in advance of each class meeting and to come to class with the text, prepared to discuss it.

Sept 12: Introduction

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*.

Sept 19: 4th Paralogism, pp 344-352 (A366-380)

Refutation of Idealism, pp 244-247 (B274-279)

Sept 26: "Transcendental Aesthetic," pp 65-91 (A19-49/B33-73)

Oct 3: Table of Categories: pp 111-118 (A76-83/B102-113)

"Transcendental Deduction," pp 129-150 (A95-130)

Oct 10: Principles of Pure Understanding," pp 194-238 (A158-218/B197-265)

Oct 17: 3rd Antinomy pp 409-15, (A445-51/B473-80) and pp 464-79 (A532-58/B560-86)

[optional: pp 386-396 (A408-425/B435-453)]

"Preface to the Second Edition," pp 17-37 (Bvii-xliv)

Oct 24: "The Canon of Pure Reason," pp 629-644 (A795-819/B823-847)

[optional: "The Final Purpose..." pp 549-570 (A669-704/B697-732)]

Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*.

Oct 31: The Lived Body:

Part I, Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2, pp 69-99

Nov 7: Lived Space:

Part I, Chapter 3 (selection) and Chapter 4, pp 100-14, 139-48, 149-155

Nov 14: Sexuality:

Part I, Chapter 5, pp 156-78 and de Beauvoir excerpt (pdf on courselink)

Nov 21: Language:

Part I, Chapter 6, pp 179-205

Nov 28: Other Selves:

Part II, Chapter 4, pp 361-383

Required Texts:

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kemp Smith (trans), (Palgrave)

Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, Landes (trans), (Routledge)

Over the semester I will also make available some good secondary literature on these texts. I encourage you to make it your primary focus to work on reading the texts on your own, but once you have established a good grasp of their meaning you should read the work of other good scholars who write about these texts.

Assignments:

I expect you to read the material in advance of the class meeting for which it is specified, and to come to course prepared to participate politely, informedly and constructively in the discussion of the material. Beyond this regular participation, you are required to write a term paper. This will be a critical essay, approximately 20 pages in length, on a topic pertaining to Kant and/or Merleau-Ponty. (1) You must meet with me to discuss your idea for the paper sometime in November. (2) Your paper must involve some detailed explication of one or more portions of text in either Kant or Merleau-Ponty. (3) You must incorporate references to contemporary scholarship on Kant or Merleau-Ponty. (4) The final paper should be of a quality suitable for submission to an academic journal.

This should be obvious to anyone pursuing graduate work in philosophy, but I emphasize it nonetheless: any work you submit for this course must be your own. If you rely upon the work of others in your research, *make that use is properly documented*. Submitting the work of others as your own is plagiarism, and will be treated as the serious academic offence that it is.

Recommendation:

Buy Frederick Crews, *The Random House Handbook*, and study it.