Philosophy and the Environment
PHIL 10064
2021-22

Course Organiser
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Seminar Time
Semester 2
Fridays 14:10 - 16:00

Assessment
Mid-term essay (30%) to be submitted by 12 noon on Thursday 3rd March 2022. Word limit: 1,500 words
and
Final essay (65%) to be submitted by 12 noon on Thursday 21st April 2022. Word limit: 3,000 words
and
Participation (5%) assessed by seminar attendance and Learn Discussion Board participation
Or
Coursework Dissertation (100%) to be submitted by Tuesday 19th April 2022 by 12 noon. Word limit: 5,000 words

Delivery
The course will be taught as a ‘flipped classroom’. Each week, you will be required to watch online lectures, read the recommended texts and complete a few associated tasks, all of which we will discuss in seminar at the end of the week.

Course Outline
In this course, we examine the deep ecological philosophy of Arne Naess that takes its inspiration from the monist philosophy of Benedict de Spinoza and will contrast this with the ecophilosophy of Phemister inspired by the pluralist philosophy of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. We will explore the interconnectedness of living and nonliving entities, the relational identities of living beings, Naess’s notions of Self-realisation and Wide-identification, and raise questions concerning intrinsic, instrumental, relational, moral, aesthetic and spiritual values. We will also consider moral and aesthetic issues relating to bio- and onto-egalitarianism, biodiversity and variety, progress and the ideal of perfection.
Provisional Outline

Week 1: Shallow and Deep Ecology Movements, Ecophilosophy and Ecosophy

Essential Reading
Naess, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*, pp. 21-47

Video
Arne Naess and the Deep Ecology Movement (short version)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJz2zVW9WHM

Week 2: Deep Ecosophies (Naess/Spinoza; Phemister/Leibniz)

Essential Reading
Naess, ‘Spinoza and Ecology’, *Philosophia*, 7:1, 45-54
Naess, ‘Spinoza and the Deep Ecology Movement’. In *Selected Works*, pp. 2662-2687

Week 3: Gestalt Ontology, Qualities and Relations (Naess)

Essential Reading
Naess, ‘The World of Concrete Contents’. In *Selected Works*, pp. 2714-2726
Naess, ‘Gestalt Ontology and Gestalt Thinking’. In *Selected Works*, pp. 2727-2733

Week 4: Values and Norms (Naess)

Essential Reading
Naess, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*, pp. 68-86
Naess, ‘Notes on the Methodology of Normative Systems’. In *Selected Works*, pp. 2751-2766
Naess, ‘The Place of Joy in a World of Fact’. In *Selected Works*, pp. 2371-2383
**Week 5: Technology, Progress and Lifestyle (Naess)**

*Essential Reading*

Naess, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*, pp. 87-103


Naess, ‘An Example of a Place: Tvergastein’. In *Selected Works*, pp. 2604-2625

*Video*

Jonathan Safran Foer, ‘We are the Weather – What will it take for things to Change?’
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4ao27K8KiU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4ao27K8KiU)

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**Week 6: Self-Realisation and Wide Identification (Naess)**

*Essential Reading*

Naess, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*, pp. 84-86, 163-196


*Video*

Wolves of Yellowstone
[https://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/wolves-yellowstone/](https://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/wolves-yellowstone/)

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**Week 7: Natural World, Activity and Beauty (Phemister)**

*Essential Reading*

Phemister, *Leibniz and the Environment*, chapter 4


*Video*


*Podcast*

‘Were my atoms once your atoms?’, CrowdScience, BBC World Service
[https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3cszv5r](https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3cszv5r)

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**Week 8: Relational Values (Phemister)**

*Essential Reading*

Phemister, *Leibniz and the Environment*, chapter 5

Week 9: Space and Place (Phemister)

*Essential Reading*
Phemister, *Leibniz and the Environment*, chapter 6

Week 10: Communication and Empathy (Phemister)

*Essential Reading*
Phemister, *Leibniz and the Environment*, chapter 7

Week 11: Temporality (Phemister)

*Essential Reading*
Phemister, *Leibniz and the Environment*, chapter 8

*Video*
Alastair McIntosh (2012). ‘The Importance of Hope’, DO Lectures [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ue-lAtEygo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ue-lAtEygo)

Readings

*Essential Set Texts*

You will also at points be required to read papers from:
These papers and other essential readings are listed as ‘essential readings’ in the weekly schedule above.

*(Optional) Primary texts* of Spinoza and Leibniz are not required reading for this course, but if you do wish to follow up references in the literature, you can access many of their writings here:

**Leibniz:** *G. W. Leibniz: Philosophical Essays*, tr. and ed. by D. Garber and R. Ariew (Hackett). Available online via University Library Databases, ‘Past Masters’ (‘Continental Rationalists’)

**Leibniz:** *Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz: Philosophical Papers and Letters*, tr. and ed. by Leroy E. Loemker (Reidel). Online version edited by S. Knuuttila et. al. (Springer, 1975) available via University library.

**Further recommended (optional) secondary (and some primary) texts**


