

PHI 374¹ — Spring 2020
Bioethics
(Two PHI courses are prerequisite.)

Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:30–3:50 p.m.
N4006 Melville Library

Professor Robert Harvey
office hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 1-2 p.m. or by appt
241 Harriman Hall
robert.harvey@stonybrook.edu

In this semester's course on a slice of the expansive field of bioethics, we will read, discuss, and analyze a selection of texts dealing with ethical questions that link the life of persons and politics. How, in other words, did we get from the body per se to the body politic as it exists and functions today? From Michel Foucault's foundational explorations of medicine in an era when biological science was just emerging from natural history, we will move on to contemporary philosophical efforts to expand the category of life's legitimacy and, concomitantly, forces that attempt to resist its shrinkage.

Bulletin description: Provides students with the opportunity to conduct research and pursue advanced readings in the field of bioethics. Readings may include foundational articles in bioethics, recent work in feminist bioethics, as well as narratives of illness. The class will analyze one or more contemporary issues in bioethics, such as experimentation with human subjects, migration of care workers, medical tourism or disability. The course may also include attention to the connection between health and social justice considering, for example, problems such as hunger, obesity, and food justice or the just allocation of health care resources.

Required Readings

N.B. PDFs will be provided in Blackboard documents for titles marked by a red asterisk (*). All other texts must be purchased *in the editions indicated*.

Peter Kemp, "From Ethics to Bioethics."* In Richard Kearney & Mark Dolley, eds.,
Questioning Ethics: Contemporary Debates in Philosophy: 283-93. New York: Routledge,
1999.

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, v. 1. The Will to Knowledge* [1976]. New York: Vintage,
1990. ISBN 978-0679724698

Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*. New York:
Picador (Macmillan), 2010. ISBN 9780312203412

Michel Foucault, *On the Government of the Living: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1979-1980*. New
York: Picador (Macmillan), 2016. ISBN 9781250081612

Giorgio Agamben, *Homo sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. ISBN 9780804732185

¹ DEC: G
SBC: CER, HFA+

- James Gordon Finlayson, “‘Bare Life’ and Politics in Agamben’s Reading of Aristotle.”* *The Review of Politics* 72 (2010): 97-126.
- Robert Harvey, “Foucault’s Transgression.”* In *Sharing Common Grounds: A Space for Ethics*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2017.
- Mary Midgley, “Persons and Non-Persons”* from *In Defense of Animals*.
- Mary Anne Warren, “On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion.”* *The Monist* 57, no. 4 (1973): 43-61.
- Paul Rabinow and Gaymon Bennett, “From Bioethics to Human Practices, or Assembling Contemporary Equipment.”* In Beatriz da Costa and Kavita Philip, eds., *Tactical Biopolitics: Art, Activism, and Technoscience*. 389-400. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008. [§ on Biosecurity and Bioethics]
- Jonathan King, “How Do We Insure Security from Perceived Biological Threats?”* In da Costa and Philip, eds. *Tactical Biopolitics*: 401-12.
- Critical Art Ensemble, “Bioparanoia and the Culture of Control.”* In da Costa and Philip, eds. *Tactical Biopolitics*: 413-27.

Recommended Readings

- Hans Jonas. *The Phenomenon of Life: Toward a Philosophical Biology* [1966]. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001.
- Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*. New York: Vintage, 1994.
- Margrit Shildrick and Rozanne Mykitiuk, eds., *Ethics of the Body: Postconventional Challenges*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005.
- Jackie Leach Scully, Laurel E. Baldwin-Ragaven and Petya Fitzpatrick, eds., *Feminist Bioethics: At the Center, On the Margins*. New York: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010.
- Mary Midgley, “Bridge-Building at Last.” In Aubrey Manning & James Serpell, eds., *Animals in Human Society: Changing Perspectives*. 188-94. London & New York: Routledge, 1994.

Course Requirements / Grade Determination

- 10% – informed participation in class discussions based on engaged reading and, obviously, regular attendance
- 30% – weekly reader’s responses due at midnight most Sundays in the semester
- 30% – a 15-20 minute oral presentation
- 30% – a term essay requiring research, with an explicit thesis, argument and conclusion

Please, please ...

- ... arrive promptly to class
- ... switch off and stow your cell phones

No late work accepted.
No extra credit offered.

Official University Statements²

Responsibilities in the Classroom

Students are expected to attend class regularly unless other arrangements are made; arrive for class on time and leave the classroom only at the end of class; engage in class discussions and activities when appropriate; exhibit classroom behavior that is not disruptive of the learning environment; secure and turn off all electronic communications and entertainment devices during class time unless otherwise directed by the course instructor. Any use of a cell phone or other unauthorized electronic device during an examination may lead to an accusation of academic dishonesty.

Absentee Policy

Students are expected to report for their examinations and major graded coursework as scheduled. If a student is unable to report for any examination or to complete major graded coursework on time, the student must contact the faculty member immediately. If the student cannot reach the faculty member, then s/he should contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Academic Integrity

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at

<http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/>

Disability Support Services (DSS)

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, Room 128 (631-632-6748). They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation are confidential.

Semester Program

Tuesday, 28 January – Introductions & Preliminaries | read Kemp, “From Ethics to Bioethics”

Thursday, 30 January – Kemp, “From Ethics to Bioethics” | read Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge*, pp. 3-114.

Tuesday, 4 February – *The Will to Knowledge* | read Foucault, pp. 115-59.

Thursday, 6 February – *The Will to Knowledge* | Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, pp. [1]-50.
reader’s response to Kierkegaard due Sunday before midnight

Tuesday, 11 February – Foucault | read *The Birth of Biopolitics*, pp. 51-73.

Thursday, 13 February – Foucault | read Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* and Foucault, *On the Government of the Living*, pp. [1]-21.

² for further information, see

https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/provost/faculty/handbook/academic_policies/minimal_instructional_and_student_responsibilities.php

Tuesday, 18 February – Foucault | read *On the Government of the Living*, pp. [22]-42, [47]-71.
Thursday, 20 February – Foucault | read *On the Government of the Living*, pp. [221]-232.
reader's response on Foucault due Sunday before midnight

Tuesday, 25 February – Foucault | read *Homo sacer*, pp. 1-29
Thursday, 27 February – Agamben | read *Homo sacer*, pp. 49-67, 71-103

Tuesday, 3 March – Agamben | read *Homo sacer*, pp. 119-88
Thursday, 5 March – Agamben | read Finlayson, "'Bare Life' and Politics [...]"

Tuesday, 10 March – Agamben, Foucault, Finlayson | read Harvey, "Foucault's Transgression"
Thursday, 12 March – Harvey, "Foucault's Transgression"
reader's response on Agamben & Harvey due Sunday before midnight

Tuesday, 24 March – Harvey | read Midgley, "Persons and Non-Persons"
Thursday, 26 March – Midgley | read Warren, "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion."

Tuesday, 31 March – Warren | read Rabinow & Bennett, "From Bioethics to Human Practices"
Thursday, 2 April – Rabinow & Bennett | read King, "How Do We Insure Security from Perceived
Biological Threats?"

Tuesday, 7 April – King
Thursday, 9 April – oral presentations | Critical Art Ensemble, "Bioparanoia and the Culture of
Control"

Tuesday, 14 April – Critical Art Ensemble
Thursday, 16 April – oral presentations

Tuesday, 21 April – oral presentations
Thursday, 23 April – oral presentations

Tuesday, 28 April – oral presentations
Thursday, 30 April – oral presentations

Tuesday, 5 May – oral presentations
Thursday, 7 May – oral presentations

Term Paper Due – Monday, 11 May

"proximate persons" (Stephens, 405.2)
J.W. Walters, *What Is a Person?* 1997.