

Darwin

Spring 2017

PHIL UN3248

When: MW 4:10-5:25pm

Where: 301m Fayerweather

Professor: Kathryn Tabb (Philosophy)

Office: 721 Philosophy Hall

Email: kct2121@columbia.edu

Office Hours: Monday 2pm-3pm, Tuesday 11am-12pm, or by appointment

Course Description

Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection has been revolutionary, not just for scientists but for everyone who reflects on human nature and human destiny. The first aim of this course is to separate Darwin's own theory from its scientific, religious, and cultural aftershocks, and to consider how its influence developed and changed over the century and a half since *On the Origin of Species* was published in 1859. After careful consideration of Darwin's own life and historical context, we will read our way through the *Origin*, and then consider reactions to it starting in Darwin's own day, proceeding through social Darwinism and the "Modern Synthesis," and ending in our present moment. The final sessions of the course will explore Darwin's impact on recent philosophical debates over human nature, freedom and determinism, and the relationship between science and religion.

Readings

This course has two required textbooks, both of which are available at Book Culture. One is *Darwin*, the Norton Critical Edition, which you may have purchased for CC. The other is a facsimile of the *Origin of Species* (Harvard University Press). Other required readings will either be online (URLs provided) or will be posted on Courseworks. Please print out the reading material and bring it to class.

I also ordered Peter Bowler's *Evolution: the History of an Idea*. This book is *truly* optional — I got it as a resource for people who want a comprehensive contextual history for the themes we'll be discussing, but you need neither buy it nor read it. For those who choose to follow along in it, there are recommended readings in the syllabus.

Evaluation

Your grade for this course will be made on the basis of the following components:

- Participation (in-class discussion / office hours) — 10%
- Quizzes - 30%
- Paper Steps 1-3 - 10%
- Paper Step 4 - 50%

Class Participation

As you'll note, participation is a significant portion of your grade. This class will be the most fun for all of us if we can achieve intense and rich discussions each week, so I ask you to come having done the reading, ready to focus and engage throughout class. It is to this end that I ask you to **put away all electronics during class, unless you have cleared it with me first.**

While I encourage everyone to contribute to discussion, I recognize for some this is difficult and I offer office hours as an alternative way to increase your participation grade.

Written Work

The main product of this class will be one research paper of 8-12 pages. You will produce the paper in four stages, spread throughout the semester (with dates marked on the syllabus).

- **Stage 1:** Pretty much immediately, I will ask you to complete a “brainstorm” assignment in which you (in a very informal way) reflect on what it is about the course’s theme that interests you. Write a paragraph or two.
- **Stage 2:** Your next step will be to come up with a prompt for yourself, and a proposed thesis statement — in other words, a question and an answer.
- **Stage 3:** I will ask for an outline of your argument, including key quotes, which will serve as the structure for your final paper.
- **Stage 4:** Your final paper.

For every day an assignment is late you will lose a third of a grade, unless you have a note excusing you from your academic advisor or a doctor or unless we have agreed to an extension in advance. If you get behind in your work **tell me sooner rather than later** as I will be more likely to be charitable.

Quizzes

We will have four quizzes, which will be short answer, take 20 minutes, and should not be very arduous if you’ve kept up with the readings and lectures.

Accessibility

I recognize that there are multiple ways to learn, and I encourage you to discuss your learning style and comprehension requirements with me during my office hours or by appointment. I am always happy to discuss study habits, homework management methods, etc., and to work with you to assure you get the most possible out of our class. If you find yourself struggling with accessibility issues in the classroom and have not yet contacted Disability Services (DS), I encourage you to do so; once you register with them, they can provide note-takers, extra time for assignments, transcribers, and interpreters, among other services, as well as liaise between you and your professors. Students who think they may have specific accessibility requirements can contact Disability Services for a confidential discussion at (212) 854-2388 (Voice/TTY) or by email at disability@columbia.edu. More information on the DS registration process is at www.health.columbia.edu/ods. Finally, if you are struggling psychologically during our time together, I can help connect you with services on campus that can help — just ask.

Office Hours

If you are unable to attend the office hours listed above, you can email me to make an alternative arrangement. Office hours can be used to talk over assignments, reading, or class performance, or to have a more freewheeling discussion about the topics at hand. If you are struggling in the course the best thing to do is explain the situation to me as soon as possible so we can work out a solution together. If you need to talk about something confidential, make an appointment so we won’t be interrupted.

Academic integrity: Just like you, I have taken a pledge to abide by Columbia’s statement of policy regarding cheating and plagiarism. This means that I must report any instances of academic dishonesty that occur in our class. To avoid this unpleasant outcome, please get in touch with me immediately if you are tempted to either cheat or plagiarize so we can find another way forward for you. Many cases of academic dishonesty are due to ignorance, but cannot be excused for that reason. Be sure to educate yourself about proper citation practices and consult with me or the Writing Center if there is any risk of improper citation.

Readings (all readings and dates subject to change)

A: Appleman, ed., *Darwin: A Norton Critical Edition*

B: Bowler, *Evolution: the History of an Idea*

January 18 (W): Introduction (no reading)

January 23 (M): Natural History Before Darwin: Zoology

- **Assignment due: Paper Stage 1**
- Required:
 - Erasmus Darwin, selection from *Zoonomia*, 1800 (Courseworks, pp. 563-577)
 - William Paley, selection from *Natural Theology*, 1802 (A, pp. 41-43)
 - Jean Baptiste Lamarck, selection from *Zoological Philosophy*, 1809 (A, pp. 44-48)
- Recommended: B, Chapter 3

January 25 (W): Natural History Before Darwin: Method

- Required:
 - Charles Lyell, selection from *Principles of Geology*, 1830 (A, pp. 49-51)
 - John Herschel, selection from *The Study of Natural Philosophy*, 1830 (A, pp. 52-57)
 - William Whewell, selection from *Astronomy and General Physics Considered with Reference to Natural Theology*, 1833 (A, 57-60)
- Recommended: B, Chapter 4

January 30 (M): A Voyage 'Round the World

- Required:
 - Charles Darwin, selections from *Voyage of the Beagle*, 1845 (A, pp. 67-81)
 - Darwin, the Galapagos notebook, 1835 (available at <http://darwin-online.org.uk/content/frameset?itemID=EH1.17&viewtype=text&pageseq=1>)
- Recommended: B, pp. 148-155

February 1 (W): Birth of the Theory I

- Required:
 - Thomas Robert Malthus, selection from "An Essay on the Principle of Population," 1798 (A, pp. 39-40)
 - Darwin, selections from "Notebook B," 1837 (pp. 1-44, 74-104, 224-232; available at <http://darwin-online.org.uk/content/frameset?itemID=CUL-DAR121.-&viewtype=text&pageseq=1>)
 - Darwin selections from "Notebook C," 1838 (pp. 55-66, 157-166; available at <http://darwin-online.org.uk/content/frameset?itemID=CUL-DAR122.-&viewtype=text&pageseq=1>)
- Recommended: B, 161-175

February 6 (M): Darwin on Man I

- Required: Darwin, "Notebook M," 1838 (entire; available at <http://darwin-online.org.uk/content/frameset?itemID=CUL-DAR125.-&viewtype=text&pageseq=1>)
- Recommended: B, pp. 155-161

February 8 (W): Birth of the Theory II

- Required:
 - Alfred Russel Wallace, "On the Tendency of Varieties to Depart Indefinitely from the Original Type," 1858 (A, pp. 61-64)
 - Darwin Correspondence, Letters # 2285, 2299, 2449 (<https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk>)
 - Darwin, "An Historical Sketch of the Progress of Opinion on the Origin of Species, Previously to the Publication of This Work," 1861 (A, pp. 87-94)
- Recommended: B, 162-176

February 13 (M): Variation

- QUIZ 1
- Required: Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, §1-2 (pp. 1-60)

February 15 (W): Selection

- Required: *Origin*, §3, part of §4 (pp. 60-111)

February 20 (M): Selection & Variation

- Required: *Origin*, remainder of §4, §5 (pp. 112-170)

February 22 (W): Difficulties 1

- Required: *Origin*, §6, part of §7 (pp. 171-224)

February 27 (M): Difficulties 2

- Required: *Origin*, §10 (pp. 312-345) and part of §12 (pp. 388-410)

March 1 (W): Morphology & Embryology

- Required: *Origin*, §13 (pp. 411-458)

March 6 (M): Recapitulation and Conclusion

- QUIZ 2
- Required: *Origin*, §14 (pp. 459-490)

March 8 (W): Reception

- Required:
 - Darwin Correspondence Project, Letters # 2496, 2501, 2548, 2554, 2555, 2807 (<https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk>)
 - Adam Sedgwick, "Objections to Mr. Darwin's Theory of the origin of Species," 1860 (A, pp. 265-266)
 - Richard Owen, "Darwin on the Origin of Species," 1860 (A, pp. 267-270)
 - Fleeming Jenkin, "Review of the Origin of Species," 1867 (A, pp. 271-275)
- Recommended: B, pp. 176-196

March 13 & 15: NO CLASS (Spring Break)

March 20 (M): Darwin on Man II

- Required: Darwin, selections from *The Descent of Man*, 1871 (A, pp. 175-254)

March 22 (W): Darwin on Design

- Required:
 - Darwin Correspondence Project, Letters #2599, 3256, 3283, 2998 (<https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk>)
 - Asa Gray, "Design Versus Necessity" (Courseworks, pp. 62-86)
- Recommended:
 - B, pp. 202-223
 - *Re:Design* (a play about Darwin and Gray): <https://vimeo.com/151384869>

March 27 (M): Social Darwinism

- **Assignment due: Paper Stage 2**
- Required:
 - Herbert Spencer, §14 of *The Study of Sociology*, 1873 (Courseworks, pp. 298-323)
 - Herbert Spencer, selection from "the Americans," 1881 (Courseworks, pp. 480-492)
 - Wells, 'Zoological Retrogression', 1891 (*Gentleman's Magazine* 271, 246-53, available at http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Zoological_Retrogression)
- Recommended: B, pp. 274-324

March 29 (W): Social Planning after Darwin

- Required:
 - Thomas Henry Huxley, "Emancipation Black and White," 1865 (Courseworks, pp. 67-74)
 - Francis Galton, "Eugenics: Its Definition, Scope, and Aims," and responses from Pearson, Maudsley, Weldon, Wells, Vickery, Welby, Hobhouse, Reid, Shaw, and Robertson, 1904 (Courseworks, 22 pp.)
- Recommended: www.eugenicsarchive.org

April 3 (M): Darwinian Utopias

- Required:
 - Eliza Burt Gamble, selections from *The Evolution of Woman: an Inquiry into the Dogma of her Inferiority to Man*, 1893 (Courseworks, pp. v-ix, 28-52, 342-350)
 - Andrew Carnegie, selection from *The Gospel of Wealth*, 1900 (A, pp. 396-398)
 - P. Kropotkin, selections from *Mutual Aid*, 1902 (A, pp. 398-403)

April 5 (W): The Modern Synthesis

- Required:
 - Thomas Morgan, selections from *A Critique of the Theory of Evolution* (Courseworks, pp. 40-58)
 - Julian Huxley, "The Eclipse of Darwinism" from *Evolution: The Modern Synthesis*, 1942 (Courseworks, pp. 22-28)
- Recommended: B, pp. 325-346

April 10 (M): Darwin in America

- **QUIZ 3**
- Required:
 - Scopes Trial transcripts (A, 542-549)
 - William Jennings Bryan, "The Menace of Darwinism," 1921 (Courseworks, pp. 15-64)

- Editorial from *Science* by F. L. Pickett, 1922 (Courseworks, 4 pp.)
- Editorial from the *Chicago Defender*, “If Monkeys Could Speak,” 1925 (Courseworks, 1p.)
- Editorial from *The Crisis* (Journal of the NAACP), 1925 (Courseworks, 1 p.)
- Recommended: *Inherit the Wind*, 1960 (film directed by Stanley Kramer)

April 12 (W): Sociobiology

- Required:
 - Edward O. Wilson, selections from *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*, 1975 (A, 409-415)
 - Marshall Sahlins, selections from *The Use and Abuse of Biology: An Anthropological Critique of Sociobiology*, 1976 (Courseworks, pp. ix-xv, 3-26)
- Recommended: B, 347-365

April 17 (M): The Selfish Gene

- **Assignment due: Paper Stage 3**
- Required:
 - Richard Dawkins, selection from *The Selfish Gene*, 1976 (Courseworks, pp. 1-20)
 - Richard C. Lewontin, “A Reasonable Skepticism” and “All in Our Genes?” from *Biology as Ideology*, 1991 (Courseworks, pp. 3-37)

April 19 (W): The Politics of Descent

- Required:
 - Stephen Jay Gould, “Why We Should Not Name Human Races – A Biological View,” “The Nonscience of Human Nature,” “Racist Arguments and IQ” from *Ever Since Darwin: Reflections in Natural History*, 1977 (Courseworks, pp. 231-250)
 - Alondra Nelson, selection from *The Social Life of DNA: Race, Reparations, and Reconciliation after the Genome*, 2016 (Courseworks, pp. 141-156)

April 24 (M): Intelligent Design

- **QUIZ 4**
- Required:
 - Michael Behe, “Irreducible complexity: Obstacle to Darwinian Evolution,” in *Debating Design*, 2004 (Courseworks, pp. 352-370)
 - Kenneth R. Miller, “The Flagellum Unspun: The Collapse of “Irreducible Complexity,” in *Debating Design*, 2004 (Courseworks, pp. 81-97)
- Recommended: B, pp. 366-382

April 26 (W): Visitor: Paul White from the Darwin Correspondence Project

May 1 (M): Evolving Life

- Required:
 - Ronald Amundson, “Against Normal Function” (Courseworks, pp. 33-53)
 - Adrienne Asch and James E. Block, “Against the Enhancement Project” (Courseworks, pp. 25-33)
- Recommended: Debate between Marcy Darnovsky and Nita A. Farahany, “Should We Design Our Babies?” (available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQso93V2wLs>)

May 5: Paper Stage 4 Due