

I. Film and Philosophy

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20 h, biweekly, seminar for PhD students

The approach to philosophy in this course is decidedly Continental, with some American idealism and process philosophy in support. The emphasis is on the primacy of time as a key to interpreting human experience. In that regard, existentialism, phenomenology, and process philosophy are the better guides to thinking about time in my view than the more popular approaches that depend on language analysis. The figures discussed belong to the more humanistic strains of the history of philosophy, and the favorite sources of analytic philosophy (especially the Moderns) do not make an appearance. In their place, apart from Socrates/Plato, is the Continental tradition descending from Kant, and this generally includes the American figures chosen, all of whom might loosely be described as Kantian humanists. Still, students will learn what Kant called "intellectual imagination," how it works in the creation of stories, from mythic to modern. If one were to think of a single philosopher whose theories are closest to what is in this book, it would be Hayden White (who is not even mentioned in the book, but whose humanism is a point of reference, for those who know his work), that would work well as a suggested collection of texts for such an introductory course. A number of other late twentieth-century humanists would also be useful traveling companions, such as Isaiah Berlin, Francis Yates, Owen Barfield, Hans Georg Gadamer, Umberto Eco, Claes Ryn, and Donald Phillip Verene.

1. Inception

Once upon a Time

Dream Time

2. The Wizard of Oz

Lions and Tigers and Bears

I'm Melting! Melting! (from a different book)

3. Pulp Fiction

Vinnie's Very Bad Day

4. The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

The Good the Bad and the Beautiful

5. Super 8

The Monster and the Mensch

6. The Princess Bride

I know Something You Don't Know

7. Lifeboat

Democracy Adrift