

**Philosophy 5253-001**  
**Philosophy of History**  
**Professor Lewis R. Gordon**  
**Time: Mondays, 6:00 PM–8:30 PM**  
**Spring 2010**  
**ph: 215-204-8292 / email: gordonl@temple.edu**  
Office hours: Mondays: 10:30 AM–11:55 AM

What is the relationship between history and freedom? What does it mean to say that history has meaning? To what extent is history impacted by myth? And what is involved in the notion that history is explainable? Drawing upon insights from Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche, this course will explore these questions through readings from Sartre, Foucault, Bourdieu, and Blumenberg to recent work, such as Buck-Morss and Henry, in Africana and decolonial philosophical thought.

Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*. MIT Press. · **ISBN-10:** 0262521059  
· **ISBN-13:** 978-0262521055.

Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge UP. · **ISBN-10:** 052129164X  
· **ISBN-13:** 978-0521291644

Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*. Pittsburgh UP. · **ISBN-10:** 082295978X  
· **ISBN-13:** 978-0822959786

Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*. Vintage. · **ISBN-10:** 0679753354  
· **ISBN-13:** 978-0679753353

Lewis Gordon, *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy*. Cambridge UP. · **ISBN-10:** 0521675464  
· **ISBN-13:** 978-0521675468

Paget Henry, *Caliban's Reason: Introducing Afro-Caribbean Philosophy*. Routledge. · **ISBN-10:** 0415926467 · **ISBN-13:** 978-0415926461

Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Critique of Dialectical Reason*, vols 1 and 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Verso. · **ISBN-10:** 1844673952 · **ISBN-13:** 978-1844673957

Excerpts from additional texts will be posted on blackboard.

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**Evaluation and requirements:**

Each student will be expected to present a 10-15 minutes introduction to one of the session's readings and raise a set of problems to consider in our discussion. A paper proposal should be submitted by March 1, 2010 (by email attachment). The final paper is due by email attachment on Friday, May 7, 2010, by 3 PM. The paper should be submitted by attachment in MS Word or MS RTF to lewgord@gmail.com.

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**Date Assignment**

- 1/25/2010 **Will meet regular time at 6 PM.** Handout syllabus, outline of course, and discussion of administration of the course. Introduction: What is Philosophy? What is Philosophy of history? Impact of transcendental idealism on the study of history.
- 2/01 **Commence meeting at 12 PM (including or all subsequent sessions).** *Reading:* Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*
- 2/08 Sartre, continued
- 2/15 Sartre, continued
- 2/22 *Reading:* Foucault, *The Order of Things*

- 3/01 Foucault and submission (no pun intended) of proposals.
- 3/8 Spring break
- 3/15 *Reading: Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory of Practice*
- 3/22 *Reading: Susan Buck-Morss, Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*
- 3/29 *Reading: Blumenberg, The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*
- 4/5 Blumenberg
- 4/12 *Reading: Paget Henry, Caliban's Reason*
- 4/19 *Reading: Paget Henry, and Lewis Gordon, An Introduction to Africana Philosophy*
- 4/26 Gordon, continued. Concluding discussion. Final papers due by email attachment to the account: [lewgord@gmail.com](mailto:lewgord@gmail.com) at 12 PM on Monday, May 3, 2010
- 4/30 *Symposium in honor of Jitendra Mohanty. Details to be announced on the Philosophy Department website.*

Any student who has a need for special accommodations due to disabilities should speak with me as soon as possible to discuss the specific situation and contact Disability Resources and Services, located in Ritter Annex, at 215.204.1280.