

FALL 2012

Martin Beck MATUSTIK, Lincoln Professor of Ethics & Religion, FAB N 235

Tuesdays 6:00-8:45 PM @ ASU – West Campus, SANDS 221

MAS 550-REL 585-JHR 598-REL 494-PHI 494

Philosophical and Spiritual Issues in Death & Dying (3)

From Plato to Heidegger to Derrida, philosophers and spiritual writers have examined how death and dying contribute to an understanding of human existence. Does the discontinuity of death yield to a higher continuity, or do religious traditions deny death? How ought I to live, once I awaken to the reality of death?

Texts

Ernest Becker. *The Denial of Death*. Free Press, 1997. 978-0684832401.

Joan Halifax. *Being with Dying: Cultivating Compassion and Fearlessness in the Presence of Death*. Shambhala, 2009. 978-1590307182.

Søren Kierkegaard. *The Sickness unto Death*. Princeton UP, 1983. 978-0691020280.

Leo Tolstoy. *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*. CreateSpace, 2010 & on Kindle. 978-1451582543.

Online readings from <http://classics.mit.edu/index.html>

Plato's *Apology*

Aristotle's *On the Soul*

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* (Books II and IV)

Epicurus, "Letter to Menoecus"

Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things* (Book III)

Blackboard selections on the soul and resurrection:

Biblical attitudes about the resurrection (Ezekiel & the Passion narrative)

Aquinas on Aristotle's *On the Soul*

Copleston on Aristotle & Aquinas on the soul and the resurrection

Jewish Pastoral Care: Eilberg (new ed: 374-399)

Nishitani, *Religion and Nothingness* (chap. 1)

Halifax's video, "Being with Dying": www.upaya.org; and www.zencare.org: "Contemplative Care"

Films: Bergman, *Seventh Seal* & *Wild Strawberries*

		TUESDAY IN CLASS SESSION READINGS	
WEEK /TU	SUGGESTED TOPICS	Sign up for <u>ONE</u> of the readings to present under activity option A	Other activity schedule options (sign up for TWO other options (different classes – follow activity schedule) options A & C follow the syllabus schedule; options B, D, E are not on any schedule; options F or G, H, I have specific dates assigned
I 8/28	Read for the first class Care for/cure of the soul – two meanings of <i>cura animarum</i> & Death and Its Meaning for Life	Plato's <i>Apology</i> http://classics.mit.edu/index.html or any other standard edition you own Tolstoy, <i>The Death of Ivan Ilyich</i> (required text)	For option C: Discuss images of heaven & hell, meanings of suffering and redemption in your (non)religious traditions and practices. Or options A, B, D, E
II 9/4	Should death and dying be of concern to us?	On http://classics.mit.edu/index.html Marcus Aurelius, <i>Meditations</i> (Books II and IV) Epicurus, "Letter to Menoecus" Lucretius, <i>On the Nature of Things</i> (Book III)	For option C: with focus on end of life care. Or options A, B, D, E
III 9/11	The Immortal Soul, or "Dry Bones" or No-Self?	Biblical attitudes (Ezekiel & the Passion on BB) Aquinas (excerpts on BB) Copleston, on Aquinas (BB) <i>Jewish Pastoral Care: Eilberg</i> (new ed: 374-399)	Double credit for this option C: <i>Aristotle's On the Soul</i> http://classics.mit.edu/index.html Find and reflect on significant links between Aristotle's text and the in-class readings by Aquinas, Maimonides, Copleston. Or options A, B, D, E
IV 9/18	Immortality and Heroism: Despair, Neurosis & Death	Becker, <i>The Denial of Death</i> (chaps. 1-2) Kierkegaard, <i>The Sickness unto Death</i> (pp. 5-9 & consult the chart of stages of existence (BB) (We will work through pp. 13-14 in class)	Option C: What is the main issue of dying & dying: physical longevity, spiritual immortality, life to be lived elsewhere or after-life, living in the now knowing one's death? Or options A, B, D, E
V 9/25	Existential & depth psychological attitudes towards death and dying	Becker, <i>The Denial of Death</i> (chaps. 3-4) Kierkegaard, <i>The Sickness unto Death</i> (pp. 14-28)	Option D films: Ingmar Bergman, <i>Winter Light</i> (dying man's return to lost innocence) Or options F or G Or options A, B, E
VI 10/2		Becker, <i>The Denial of Death</i> (chaps. 5 & 7) Kierkegaard, <i>The Sickness unto Death</i> (pp. 29-42)	Option D films: Bergman, <i>Seventh Seal</i> (chess game with death) Or option H Or options A, B, E
VII 10/9		Becker, <i>The Denial of Death</i> (chaps. 8-9) Kierkegaard, <i>The Sickness unto Death</i> (pp. 42-74)	Option D films: Bergman, <i>Wild Strawberries</i> (coming to terms with oneself) Or options F or G Or options A, B, E
VIII			

10/16	Fall Break Oct. 13-16		
IX 10/23		Becker, <i>The Denial of Death</i> (chap. 11 & supplementary text on the BB) <i>Nishitani, Religion and Nothingness</i> (chap. 1 on BB)	Option C: Becker's death-bed interview (BB) Or options A, B, D, E
X 10/30	Transference and the "Great Death"	Kierkegaard, <i>The Sickness unto Death</i> (pp. 76-131) Halifax, <i>Being with Dying</i> (Part I, with focus on chaps.1, 2 and 4)	Option D films: Kim ki-duk, "Spring, Summer..." (Buddhist cycle of death and life) Or Option H Or options A, B, E
XI 11/6	Mindfulness and No Fear	Halifax, <i>Being with Dying</i> (Part II)	Option I: Halifax's video, "Being with Dying," www.upaya.org Or options A, B, D, E
XII 11/13	Dying, Living, Loving	Halifax, <i>Being with Dying</i> (Part III) <i>Jewish PasC</i> : Friedman (Letting..., new ed.. 344-373) & Raphael (new ed. 400-432) - BB	Option I: "Contemplative Care" www.zencare.org Or options A, B, D, E
XIII 11/20 11/22-23 Thanks giving	Buddhist, Jewish, Christian stages of coming to terms with death, dying, living and loving. How do practices of dying or burial rites express these stages?	<i>In class option D: We will view in class: Antonia's Line</i> (write as Option A – both readings) "Wash Out Your Mouth" (<i>The Gospel of Zen</i>) and "Jesus and Buddha" (<i>The Raft Is Not the Shore</i>) [on BB]	Write as option I - Meditation Write your response to both: "Wash Out Your Mouth" (<i>The Gospel of Zen</i>) and "Jesus and Buddha" (<i>The Raft Is Not the Shore</i>) [on BB] Or options A, B, D, E
XIV 11/27	Supplemental readings uploaded by students one week before class presentation	Final Presentations	
XV 12/4	Supplemental readings uploaded by students	Final Presentations	
XVI 12/11	Supplemental readings uploaded by students	Final Presentations	The Last Day of Classes

The final projects are due at on TU of the final exam week by 9 p.m. – electronic submission in MS-Word format in Safe Assign box on the blackboard. In case our class size increases, we reserve TU of the exam week for the last class session.