Philosophy 2100: Values and Society  
Gabriel Soldatenko, Asst. Prof. of Philosophy  
MW 3:30-4:45, Room: SO 3010, Fall 2011

Office Hours: Monday 11-Noon, Tuesday 10-Noon, and by appointment.  
Social Science #4091

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Course Description: “Values and Society” takes as its object of inquiry those aspects of our society that most directly affect and shape our everyday lives. In this way, the course shows how philosophy can be helpful in thinking more deeply about everyday life by focusing on those social relations, institutions, and systems that structure the way we live, and which we often take as givens. Put another way, if one of the classical projects of philosophy has been to define and outline “the good life”, then this course traces some of the central features through which social life has been arranged in our present. Consequently, this course encourages students to ask critically, and reflect on, how close we have (or have not) come to that “good life” in our modern society.

Text: All course materials will be provided through Georgia View.

Student Learning Outcome: By the end of the course students will have gained
- a firm historical sense of the roots of what we call “Western” or “modern” society;
- a hemispheric understanding of our society, such that North American social formation cannot be thought as developing independently from the rest of the Americas;
- a general understanding of the philosophical discourse around the themes of race, patriarchy, the nation-state, and capitalism;
- a localized sense of how these themes have been arranged and put into practice in our society; and
- a practical sense of how philosophy can be used as a lever for thinking about everyday life, and one’s location in society.

Evaluation: There will be four in-class writing exams covering each of the major sections of the course. Each will be worth 22% of your grade. The other 12% of your grade will be an evaluation of students’ in-class participation, and short writing assignments.

Extra Credit: You may acquire extra credit, but all exams must have been completed to receive points. Extra credit is obtained by completing a 500-word summary of any philosophically relevant lecture you attended at KSU or off campus (check with instructor for eligibility). A summary is an objective (no critique) account of the presenter’s main ideas that also includes the specific details of when and where the event took place, who spoke, and the title of the speaker’s presentation.
Academic Integrity Statement: Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University’s policy on academic honesty, including but not limited to provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, and misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program.

Absence Policy: There are no excused absences in college. Students are responsible for making up class by conferring with classmates (i.e. getting notes and discussing the main topics of conversation). Students are responsible for all material covered: readings, lectures, and documentary presentations. I will allow make-up exams only if I’m contacted at least two days prior to the exam date.

Schedule of Readings:

August 17: Introduction: Modern/Western Society, América, and Coloniality

I. Race and Racism

“Lust for Gold, Lust for Silver”

August 24: John Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire (W.W. Norton: NY, 2001)
“Colonial Crucible”

August 29: Ronald Takaki, A Different Mirror (Little, Brown, and Co.: NY, 1994)
“The Tempest in the Wilderness”

August 31: James Walvin, Black Ivory (Blackwell: Malden, Mass., 1992)
“Consuming Passions”
C.L.R. James, The Black Jacobins
“The Property”
“The Owners”

September 5: (No Class)

“King Sugar and Other Agricultural Monarchs”

September 12: Anibal Quijano, “Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality”
Follow the link to the article:
“Eurocentrism and Modernity”
September 14: Derrick Bell, *And We Are Not Saved* (Basic Books: NY, 1989)  
“The Real Status of Black Folks Today”  
“Overview”

September 19: Exam #1

**II. Gender, Patriarchy and Heterosexism**

“The Bow and the Basket”

“Introduction”  
“The Ways of Our Grandmothers”

September 28: Andrea Smith, *Conquest*  
“Sexual Violence as a Tool of Genocide”  
“Rape of the Land”

October 3: James Walvin, *Black Ivory*  
“Women”  
“Sex in the Slave Quarters”

October 5: Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and United States Imperialism in Puerto Rico*  
“Introduction”  
“Sexuality, Medicine, and Imperialism”

October 10: Angela Davis, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*  
“I Used to be Your Sweet Mama”  
“Mama’s Got the Blues”

October 12: James Baldwin, *Collected Essays*  
“Freaks and the American Ideal of Manhood”  
Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider*  
“Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power”

October 17: Exam #2

**III. The State**

October 19: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*  
Book I and II

October 24: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*  
Book III and IV
October 26: Walter Trattner, *From Poor Law to Welfare State*
   Ch. 13: Depression and a New Deal

October 31: Walter Trattner, *From Poor Law to Welfare State*
   Ch. 14: From World War to Great Society

November 2: Walter Trattner, *From Poor Law to Welfare State*
   Ch. 16: War on the Welfare State

November 7: Christian Parenti, *Lockdown America*
   “A War for All Seasons”

November 9: Loic Wacquant, “Race as Civic Felony” (*International Social Science Journal* 181, Spring 2005) can be found at the following link: [http://sociology.berkeley.edu/faculty/wacquant/wacquant_pdf/RACEASCIVICFE_LONY-final.pdf](http://sociology.berkeley.edu/faculty/wacquant/wacquant_pdf/RACEASCIVICFE_LONY-final.pdf)

November 14: Exam #3

**IV. Capitalism**

November 16: E.J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital 1848-1875*
   “The Great Boom”
   “City, Industry, the Working Class”

November 21: Karl Marx, *Early Writings*
   “Wages of Labor”
   “Profit of Capital” (1 & 2)
   “Estranged Labor”

November 23 (No Class)

November 28: Karl Marx, *Capital Vol. 1*
   “The Labor Process and the Valorization Process”
   “Constant Capital and Variable Capital”

November 30: Pedro Cabán, *Constructing a Colonial People: Puerto Rico and the United States, 1898-1932*
   “U.S. Imperialism and the New Colonial Era”
   “The Colonial State at Work”

December 5: Noam Chomsky, *Profit Over People*
   “Neoliberalism and Global Order”

December 7 (5-7pm): Exam #4