

Sample Syllabus: Empathy in Theory and Practice

PROFESSOR G. CAMPELIA

Course Description

The concept of ‘empathy’ has been explored in various fields, including philosophy, psychology, neuroscience and medicine. We will be covering the development of empathy in social theory and philosophy (from the German Idealists through contemporary feminist theory) in conjunction with its increasing popularity in the applied sciences, social sciences, and in the field of medicine.

The objective of this course is to investigate a new way of shaping medical discourse and an under-appreciated dimension of patient care. First, this means understanding what empathy is. To this end, we will do some critical reading of the differing viewpoints in philosophy, psychology and neuroscience. Second, we will explore the relation between empathic practices and medical practices. We will be using the particular discourse on empathy to reflect on the broader ways in which emotion and reason are valued in medical practice and to think more critically about some of the standard principles and concepts of bioethics (e.g. autonomy and informed consent).

Session Readings

Why Empathy?

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| Week 1 | (1) <u>Chapters 1&2</u> of de Waal, F. <i>The Age of Empathy</i> . Three Rivers Press: New York, 2009.
(2) Hojat, M. et al. (2011) Physicians empathy and clinical outcomes for diabetic patients. <i>Academic Medicine</i> , 86(3): 359-364. |
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What is Empathy?

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| Week 2 | (1) <u>Chapters 3-5</u> of de Waal, F. <i>The Age of Empathy</i> . Three Rivers Press: New York, 2009. |
| Week 3 | (1) Zahavi, D. and Overgaard, S. Empathy without Isomorphism: A Phenomenological Account. In Decety, J. (ed), <i>Empathy: From Bench to Bedside</i> (3-20). MIT Press: Boston, 2011.
(2) Young, A. Empathy, Evolution, and Human Nature. In Decety, J. (ed), <i>Empathy: From Bench to Bedside</i> (21-38). MIT Press: Boston, 2011. |

A Brief History

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| Week 4 | (1) Hume, D. Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion. In T. H. Green and T. H. Grose (eds), <i>The Philosophical Works of David Hume</i> . Volume 3, London: Longman, Green, 1874–75.
(2) Scheler, M. (1970). <i>The Nature of Sympathy</i> . Peter Heath, Hamden (tr.), CN: Archon Books (first printing, London: Routledge & Kegan Press, 1954). (selections) |
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Week 5	(1) <u>Chapters 5-6</u> of de Waal, F. <i>The Age of Empathy</i> . Three Rivers Press: New York, 2009.
Emotion, Relationality, and Crossing Boundaries	
Week 6	(1) Singer, T. and Lamm, C. (2009). The Social Neuroscience of Empathy, <i>Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences</i> , 1156(1): 81-96. (2) Echols, S. and Correll, J. (2012). It's More than Skin Deep: Empathy and Helping Behavior across Social Groups. In Decety, J. (ed), <i>Empathy: From Bench to Bedside</i> (21-38). Boston: The MIT Press.
Week 7	(1) Tai and Hill Tai and Hill (2011). A Confucian perspective on bioethical principles in ethics consultation. <i>Clinical Ethics</i> , 2(4): 201-207. (2) Vieth, A. (2011). Inclusive Consultation: A Hermeneutical Approach to Ethical Deliberation in the Clinical Setting. <i>HEC Forum</i> , 23 (4), 295-304.
Empathy and Knowledge	
Week 8	(1) Code, L. (2006). I Know Just How You Feel: Empathy and the Problem of Epistemic Authority. In <i>Rhetorical Spaces: Essays on Gendered Locations</i> . New York: Psychology Press. (2) Halpern, J. and Little, O. (2009). Motivating health: empathy and the normative activity of coping. In <i>Naturalized Bioethics: Toward Responsible Knowing and Practice</i> . New York: Cambridge University Press.
Empathy and Decision Making	
Week 9	(1) Fleming, J.K. (2008). Empathy and the Blurring Effect. <i>American Journal of Bioethics</i> , 8(5): 25-28. (2) Rosenberg, J.E. and Towers, B. (1986). The practice of empathy as a prerequisite for informed consent. <i>Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics</i> , 7(2).
Resistance and Disabling Conditions	
Week 10	(1) Stueber, K. (2011). Imagination, Empathy, and Moral Deliberation: The Case of Imaginative Resistance. <i>The Southern Journal of Philosophy</i> , Vol. 49, 156-180. (2) Gleichgerrcht, E. and Decety, J. (2012). The Costs of Empathy among Health Professionals. In Decety, J. (ed), <i>Empathy: From Bench to Bedside</i> (21-38). Boston: The MIT Press.
Week 11	(1) Goldie, P. (2011). Anti-Empathy. In Coplan, A. and Goldie, P. (eds), <i>Empathy: Philosophical and Psychological Perspectives</i> (pp. 318-330). New York: Oxford University Press. (2) Rakel et al. (2009). "Practitioner Empathy and the duration of the common cold." <i>Family Medicine</i> , Vol. 41, 494-501.
Empathy in Medical Education	

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Session	Readings
Week 12	(1) Shapiro, J. (2012). The Paradox of Teaching Empathy in Medical Education. In Decety, J. (ed), <i>Empathy: From Bench to Bedside</i> (21-38). Boston: The MIT Press.