

CONCEPTS OF HOME
PHIL 3750 / SPRING 2008 / TUEDIO

Course Texts

Klaver and Tuedio (eds.), Concepts Of Home: Philosophical Explorations Of Home And Identity (course reader) [L185]

Cisneros, The House on Mango Street (Vintage) [Kiva]

Ritivoi, Yesterday's Self: Nostalgia and the Immigrant Identity (Rowman & Littlefield) [Kiva]

Course Focus

This course addresses key themes marking the emergence of a “postmodern” concept of home, that is, a concept contained not within definitions marking the boundaries of security but within conceptions that transgress the boundaries of a firm and fixed definition. We will focus initially on the dependence of home on preservation. Then we will discuss home as a place of hospitality and as a site of belonging/not-belonging. This will lead to reflections on home as place, and on the search for home as a response to displacement. Our primary goal is to expand our sense for the meaning and value of home in contemporary life, and more specifically within the “home setting” of the elementary school classroom. We will investigate possibilities for discussing concepts divined from the readings and applying these to practices that might serve to “enhome” the elementary school classroom setting (the way one might endow a person with character).

Calendar of Readings

Note: all selections are in the course reader unless noted by a book title:

the PRESERVATION of home

- T 2/19 McCorkle (pp. 1-6) and Angelou (pp. 17-21)
Th 2/21 Harrison (pp. 7-15), Olds (p. 16) and Dickinson (p. 65)
- T 2/26 Tuedio (pp. 41-52)
Th 2/28 Young (pp. 187-200.4)
- T 3/04 Young (pp. 200.5-210)
Th 3/06 Douglas (pp. 55-64)

- T 3/11 The House on Mango Street (pp. 3-83)
Th 3/13 The House on Mango Street (pp. 84-110)
- T 3/18 Haughton (pp. 275-283)
Th 3/20 "Pleasantville" (film)
- T 3/25 *Spring Break*
Th 3/27 *Spring Break*

HOMING/UNHOMING: the HOMEPLACE of home

- T 4/01 Jackson (pp. 75-82)
Th 4/03 Ehrlich (pp. 85-94)
- T 4/08 Heidegger (pp. 143-150)
Th 4/10 Bachelard (pp. 153-160)
- T 4/15 Platt (pp. 161-170)
Th 4/17 hooks ("homeplace"), Morrison, and Rich (pp. 173-184)
- T 4/22 hooks ("margin") (213-218)
Th 4/24 Nietzsche (pp. 247-252)

DISPLACEMENT and NOSTALGIA: situating the LONGING for home

- T 4/29 Wyschogrod (pp. 323-333)
Th 5/01 Yesterday's Self (pp. 1-10, 13-23)
- T 5/06 Yesterday's Self (pp. 23.8-39 and 61-68)
Th 5/08 Yesterday's Self (pp. 73-98)
- T 5/13 Yesterday's Self (pp. 101-119)
Th 5/15 Yesterday's Self (pp. 121-138)
- T 5/20 Yesterday's Self (pp. 153-170)

Writing Assignments

I. The **first** paper, assessing the themes of "preservation" and "hospitality" in relation to home, will be due on Friday, April 4th. Projected length: **1000 words**

II. The **second** paper, assessing the theme of "place" in relation to home, and including application to the context of the elementary school classroom setting, will be due on Friday, May 9th. Projected length: **1500 words**

III. The **final** paper, on a theme emerging from our reading and discussion of Yesterday's Self (Ritivoi), will be due Thursday May 29th. Projected length: **1000 words**

Guidelines for writing these papers will be provided primarily during class meetings, so it will be important to attend class on a regular basis. And, yes, you probably will miss something if you miss a class.

Class sessions will emphasize analysis and discussion of central passages in the readings, and we will do our best to address questions arising in response to the assigned reading. Course grades will be determined primarily by the quality of your written work, but the impact of your participation in class discussion will influence the final determination of your grade. So it will be important for you to complete reading assignments in advance of our class discussion of assigned passages. Some papers may require revision before receiving a final grade.

Contact Information

My email address is <tuedio@altair.csustan.edu>. Feel free to email me any questions you would like considered in class discussion. You can also discuss course themes and issues during my office hours, which I will hold in my Philosophy office (L185d) on Tuesdays after class (1:30-2:30pm) and by appointment when necessary to fit your schedule. I will also be in my Honors Program office (IC 100d) on Thursdays (2:30-4pm). My office phone is 667-3286 (w/voice mail for messages).

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of engaging in conversation with these ideas. This is pretty challenging material to absorb without engaging in some interactive discussion. If you aren't getting this connection from our class discussions, you need to seek me out during my office hours to help establish a better connection to the ongoing analysis. Feel free to come by in small groups if this works better for you than coming alone.

Please do not wait until you feel lost or overwhelmed to come see me. Start connecting early so it becomes a practice. Let's not just study philosophy. Let's try to **do** some. But be ready: the object of this undertaking is the subject of our experience. What is it to think about concepts of home from the standpoint of human experience, rather than, say, from the standpoint of the definitional norms of the society or subculture in which we have grown up? Can we do so (that is, think about home from the standpoint of human experience) in a manner sufficient to establish a community of understanding? Or is the subject matter too unwieldy to establish such a base of understanding, as when e.g., we allow concepts of home to transgress stabilizing boundaries of definitional normativity?