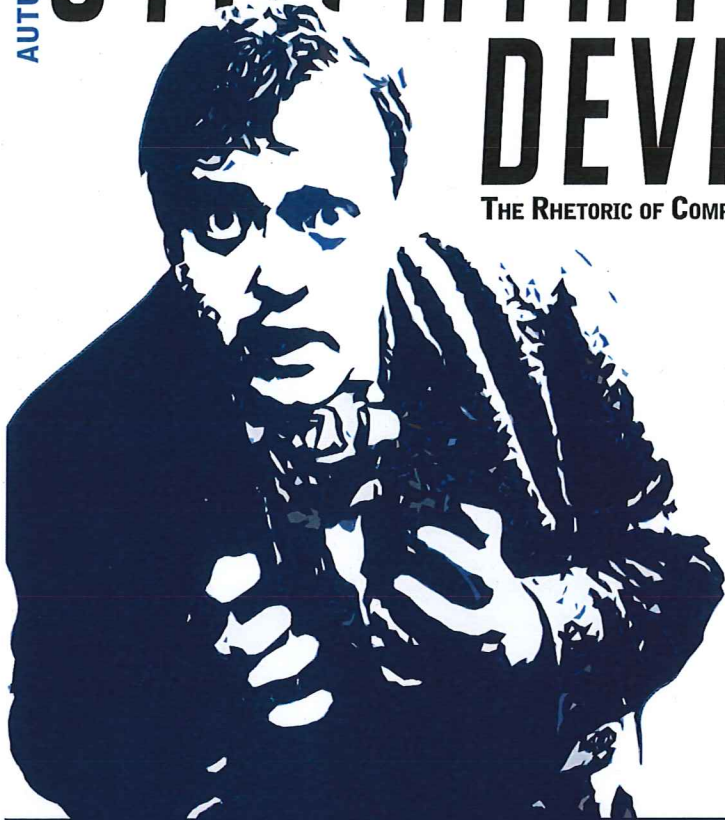


AUTUMN 2018

SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL

THE RHETORIC OF COMPASSION



AUTUMN 2018

SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL

GERMAN 385A (sln: 23152)
C LIT 357A
PHIL 301A

MWF 12:30 - 1:20pm, THO 101
5 credits, *DIV/VLPA/I&S*
Instructor: Ellwood Wiggins
wiggins1@uw.edu

English Language Course

Is compassion the foundation of human morality
or a dangerously unreliable emotion?

GERMAN 385A C LIT 357A PHIL 301A

5 credits *DIV/I&S* MWF 12:30-1:20
Ellwood Wiggins, wiggins1@uw.edu



Arts & Sciences Humanities Germanics
germanics.washington.edu
uwgerman@uw.edu

Readings and discussion in English.

Poster design by Stephanie Welch

*Is compassion the foundation of human
morality or a dangerously unreliable
emotion?*

Is compassion the foundation of human morality or a dangerously unreliable emotion? This course examines the strategies and motivations in different media of fostering empathy for commonly held enemies or discriminated groups. We examine the ways that casting minorities as objects of pity can strategically forward, but structurally undermine, the project of creating a more open and tolerant society. The syllabus runs from Ancient Greece to depictions of Nazis and terrorists in modern film, and considers philosophical assessments of sympathy alongside examples of its aesthetic manufacture. Half of our readings are in moral philosophy (e.g., Aristotle, Cicero, Rousseau, Adam Smith, Kant, Nietzsche, Arendt), and in each case we use the literary text or film (e.g., Aeschylus, Sophocles, Shakespeare, Lessing, Eliot, Brecht) as a kind of experimental field to evaluate the philosophers' concepts and claims about the moral efficacy of compassion. Students will also work creatively to engender sympathy in four genres (rhetoric, drama, narrative, film).

This course engages in team-based learning. Students will complete four projects that include both creative and analytical components. Groups work to engender sympathy for a 'bad guy' in four genres: a speech, a scene, a story, and a visual project. During the final, groups will present their project to the class.

Readings and discussions will be in English.

