**Discussion Leader (DL) Worksheet (20pts)**

When you are the discussion leader, please create a single-sided, single spaced, handout sheet (not 2 pages, not double-spaced) with the summary of your opening remarks. Please see the sample following.

DL worksheets should include the following:

1. Introducing the author/s and title
2. The overall theme/s of the work/s
3. 3-4 main points and supporting quotes that you feel are essential to author’s the overall argument
4. How do these points relate to something specific in our course content to date (e.g. what overlap, disagreement, alternative perspective emerges . . . ).
5. 1-2 personal insights or reflections on the reading in lieu of the above
6. 1-2 questions for the group

You will not be able to give a comprehensive analysis of everything in the reading. Rather, focus on overall theme/s while citing and reflecting on 2-4 main points. You also may not be able to say everything on the sheet in class; prepare for a 10-15 minute presentation.

**Sample 1** Student. A. Reader

Sex and the Metaphysics of Substance

Theology of the Body 2/15/19

*Metaphysics* is a branch of philosophy concerned with explaining the essence of being, and the ordering of the world.

**Cataphatic**—what we can say about an Other

**Apophatic**—what we can’t say

All the writers are critiquing “Metaphysics of substance” (Butler 28), i.e., the illusion of substantial (fixed) or isolated identity.

Unifying (metaphysical) question for readings is: “How do bodies attain meaning?” If identity is an expression of meaning and it is not fixed, where does dynamic identity issue from?

4 Views

1. **By Doing** (metaphysics optional or denied)—Deeds cannot be turned into BEING (26). Per Nietzsche, “there is no ‘being’ behind doing…; ‘the does’ is merely a fiction added to the deed—the deed is everything” (34). *Deed produces relation*.

* All is here as products of the mind (immanent), ascertainable (cataphatic)—little/no apophatic transcendence or otherworldliness necessary (Spretnak in Gudmardottir 277)

2. **By Relations and Function** (metaphysics very helpful)—[Non]Identity as social, body politic. *Relation produces deed.*

* Ward explains this as difference between *soma* and *sarx* (meaningless flesh), whereby the body takes on meaning through its apophatic role in the body of Christ (248-9).
* Stevenson explains this as becoming “wolf,” part of an “rhizomatic” (93, 103) external pack as well as internal multiplicity (per Butler and Deleuze), aka. “self” as coordinated wolf pack (96-102).

3. **By Deconstructing Oppressive Frameworks** (metaphysics implicit)—Contextual, ongoing method of life that negates fixed meaning and develops new language.

* Gudmardottir admits apophasis and cataphasis depending on context (274, 278, 281-2) and ultimately advocates for a feminist skepticism as negative theology where all Ultimates (woman, God, Goddess, divine) are names that infinitely negate (Keller) due to the liminality of terms (284-5).

4. **By Movement**—Bodies as ultimate ground for metaphysical meaning.

* Casey shows how Kant and Whitehead locate body as orientation point for ideas, geography and mathematics. Human is primarily bodily, not mind or intuitive (203, 205, 207).
* Nature becomes placeless, as well as qualityless, in so far as it is bodiless (212, 235). The body regulates our cognizance and participates in sense perception (213).
* Transcendence emerges from our locatedness (213, 219) “Somatocentric” (237)
* We never move into a fixed space (232).
* Bodies know place through routine actions (Husserl) and only bodies can be implaced (Merleau-Ponty) (Casey 225, 233, 240)

**What drives these types of Meaning?**

*Where is the hidden (apophatic) potential located between what is and what might be?*

* “yearning” outside matter (Ward 250) or “potential” driving Hegelian politics (239)
* God as shadowy “perception of achievement (not fixed objective)…that assures of the passage between past and future” (Irigaray in Gudmarsdottir 283)
* Body as origin of potential or corporeal intentionality (Merleau-Ponty in Casey 219, 232)
* Motivation (Husserl in Casey 219)
* Body as “potentiality of this or that region…” (Whitehead and Merleau-Ponty in Casey 233)
* Role of imagination and virtual (Casey 235, 240)
* Repetition (Deleuze) as novelty (Stephenson 95, 93), elsewhere described by Deleuze as “virtual”

Though Butler’s position seems to eschew metaphysics, Stephenson, through a comparison with Deleuze, begins to reveal the apophatic (and thus metaphysical) impulse in Butler, creating necessary linkages between emergent, nonessentialized performance of identity in socalled “secular” culture and transcendent/immanent metaphysics.

**Questions:**

1. How is Deleuze’s virtual similar to or different from the “potential” of Whitehead and MerleauPonty?

2. Of the 4 ways that bodies make meaning, which has the most potential to undermine oppressive frameworks?

**Sample 2**

Student B. Reader

Global Perspectives: What is Justice

21 January 2016

Discussion Leader: “’For the Judgment Is God’s’” by Haim Shapira

**Overview**

Haim Shapira begins his article by claiming that there exist many different conceptions of the relationship between God and humans in Judeo-Christian justice. These are evident in a handful of texts: the Hebrew Bible, the Talmud, and medieval and other literature. Shapira notes these relationships range from a God who has no practical influence on judgment/justice to a God who “inspires the judges and even allows them to appeal to God and to involve Him in the legal decision” (273).

The reading for today covered one side of this dichotomy in one text: the Bible. The form of judgement expounded on here is what Shapira calls “Divine Judgment.” In this type of judgment, justice is a form of “Divine decision,” in which God is present in some way in the judicial process (274).

**Hebrew Bible and a God Who Judges**

The idea that God should be a supreme judge is—according to Shapira—derivative of His status as supreme ruler (276). In most forms of divine justice, especially the ones we read for today, God authorizes judges to act in His name. Thus, humans carry out judicial processes, but “[claim] to represent the Divine decision” (277).

I. The first form of Divine judgment comes by Means of Lot.

The lot is perceived as “an expression of Divine will” designed to identify an offender of some kind of law or norm; interestingly, it was not used to convict an offender. The offender had to first confess before sentencing could occur (278). The example of Saul having a priest invoking a lot to identify Jonathan as the offender is an example of a formal lot (278). The example of the fishermen casting a lot to find Jonah guilty is an example of an informal lot (279). To be considered formal, a lot must be cast by an “expert therein,” usually a priest (279). The general formula to keep in mind is that a lot is cast, the offender is thusly identified, and sentencing only follows a confession of guilt by the offender.

II. Divine judgment by Means of Ordeal

“An ordeal is a physical test intended to determine the guilt of a person suspected of a crime and to pass sentence onto him” (282). For an example, turn to page 283 and take a look at the ordeal of being tossed into a river to determine the verdict of sorcerers and adulterers. This type of judgment is rarer in the Hebrew Bible than the casting of the lot.

**Questions**

1. Does Divine judgment in any way satisfy the criteria of retributive justice? I.e., is the punishment always proportionate to the crime committed? and, Is there any room for offenders who cannot be held accountable for their actions?

2. How—if at all—does Divine judgment address the concerns of criminal punishment? If it does, how does it and why? If not, where does it fall short? Is there any trace of Divine judgment in our contemporary judicial processes or metaphors we invoke when discussing justice?