

POT 6067: Contemporary Political Theory (Spring 2018)

Prof. Steven Klein
Monday 11:45 AM- 2:45 PM
Office: Anderson Hall 004

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Political Science Conference Room
Office Hours: Thurs 10:40 AM – 12:35 PM

Course Description: This seminar explores recent debates in political theory. Questions we will pursue include: what is the nature and basis of social critique? How should political theorists analyze normative concepts like equality and how do such analyses relate to the real world? What is the role of identity and subjectivity in politics? In the last portion of the course, we will examine the tools provided by political theory for addressing recent political problems: the return of unregulated capitalism, the increasing importance of global interconnections and migration flows, and looming environmental risks.

Seminar Requirements and Grading:

This is a reading and discussion focused seminar. You are expected to come to the seminar having completed all the readings and prepared to discuss the material.

Your seminar grade will be based on three components.

1. Research Paper

One research paper (20-25) on a topic of your choice, due by 5 PM on April 30th. This is worth 50% of your grade. You must get your topic approved by me by April 1st.

2. Presentations

You will be required to do one in-class presentation on the readings for that week. This presentation should situate the readings in larger debates and questions, explain what you take to be the *key* points about the readings, and pose *two* discussion questions for the class. *Assume your audience has done the readings – do not summarize.* Rather, the goal of the presentation is to already tease out key arguments and points of tension in the text.

On April 22nd, you will give a short (5 minute) presentation of your final paper argument. Each presentation is worth 7.5% of your grade.

3. Seminar Participation

35% of your grade will be based on your preparation for discussion and active seminar participation.

As part of your seminar participation, send me one question about the reading by Sunday at 8 PM. This question can be about anything – things you didn't understand, questions you want us to discuss in the class. I will not share the questions but use them to help prepare our seminar discussion.

If you require accommodation for disability, you must register with the Dean of Students Office and provide their documentation. If you need an accommodation, please contact me as soon as possible. All students are required to abide by UF's Academic Honesty Guidelines, which may be viewed at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/honestybrochure.php>.

Required Texts:

1. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Stanford)
2. Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories of Subjection* (Stanford)
3. Linda M. G. Zerilli, *Feminism and the Abyss of Freedom* (Chicago)
4. Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution* (Zone)
5. Nancy Fraser and Rahel Jaeggi, *Capitalism: A Conversation in Critical Theory* (Polity)
6. Simony Caney, *Justice Beyond Borders: A Global Political Theory* (Oxford)
7. Seyla Benhabib, *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents, Citizens* (Cambridge)

All other readings will be available as PDFs on the Canvas page.

A list of further suggested readings will also be available on the course Canvas page.

Reading Schedule

1. Jan 7: Introduction

Part I: Critical Social Theory Before and After Habermas

2. Jan 14: Dialectic of Enlightenment

- Jürgen Habermas, "The Entwinement of Myth and Enlightenment: Horkheimer and Adorno," *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures* (Polity, 1987), 106-130.
- Horkheimer and Adorno, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, "The Concept of Enlightenment," "Excurses I: Odysseus or Myth and Enlightenment," "Excurses II: Juliette or Enlightenment and Morality"

Highly Recommended:

- Amy Allen (2014) "Reason, power and history: Re-reading the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*" *Thesis Eleven* 120 (1): 10-25.
- Axel Honneth (2008) "The Possibility of a Disclosing Critique of Society: The *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in Light of Current Debates in Social Criticism." *Constellations* 7 (1): 116-127.
- Rahel Jaeggi (2005) "No Individual Can Resist": *Minima Moralia* as Critique of Forms of Life." *Constellations* 12 (1): 65-82.
- Ernesto Verdeja (2009) "Adorno's Mimesis and its Limitations for Critical Social Thought." *European Journal of Political Theory*, 8 (4), 493-511.

Jan 21: MLK Jr. Day – No Class

3. Jan 28: Dialectic of Enlightenment, cont'd

- Horkheimer and Adorno, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception,” “Elements of Anti-Semitism: Limits of Enlightenment,”
- Axel Honneth, (2004) “A Social Pathology of Reason: On the Intellectual Legacies of Critical Theory”
- Rainer Forst (2011) “The Ground of Critique: On the Concept of Human Dignity in Social Orders of Justification.” *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 37 (9): 965-976.

Part II: Post-Rawlsian Analytic Political Theory (with Cristian Pérez Muñoz, Associate Professor of Political Science, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile)

4. Feb 4: Equality

- Ronald Dworkin (1981) "What is Equality? Part 1: Equality of Welfare." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 10 (3): 185-246.
- Richard J. Arneson (1989) "Equality and equal opportunity for welfare." *Philosophical Studies* 56(1): 77-93.
- Martha C. Nussbaum (1992) "Human functioning and social justice: In defense of Aristotelian essentialism." *Political Theory* 20 (2): 202-246.
- Elizabeth Anderson (1999) "What is the Point of Equality?." *Ethics* 109 (2): 287-337.

5. Feb 11: Ideal vs. Non-Ideal Theory

- Zofia Stemplowska (2008) “What’s Ideal About Ideal Theory?” *Social Theory and Practice* 34 (3): 319–340
- A. John Simmons. (2010) “Ideal and Nonideal Theory,” *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 38, (1): 5–36
- Adam Swift (2008) “The Value of Philosophy in Nonideal Circumstances,” *Social Theory and Practice* 34 (3): 363–387
- Elizabeth Anderson (2009) “Toward a Non-Ideal, Relational Methodology for Political Philosophy” *Hypatia* 24 (4): 130–145

Part III: Rethinking Identity and Subjectivity

6. Feb 18: Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power*

7. Feb 25: Linda Zerilli, *Feminism and the Abyss of Freedom*

Spring Break – No Class

Part IV: Theorizing Capitalism

8. March 11: Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*
9. March 18: Nancy Fraser and Rahel Jaeggi, *Capitalism: A Conversation in Critical Theory*

10. March 25: Race, Colonialism, and Capitalism

- Michael C. Dawson (2016) "Hidden in Plain Sight: A Note on Legitimation Crises and the Racial Order" *Critical Historical Studies* 3 (1): 143-161.
- Nancy Fraser (2016) "Expropriation and Exploitation in Racialized Capitalism: A Reply to Michael Dawson" *Critical Historical Studies* 3 (1): 163-178.
- Jodi Melamed (2015) "Racial Capitalism." *Critical Ethnic Studies* 1 (1): 76-85.
- Nikhil Pal Singh (2016) "On Race, Violence, and So-Called Primitive Accumulation." *Social Text* 34 (3): 27-50
- Onur Ulas Ince (2018). "Between Equal Rights: Primitive Accumulation and Capital's Violence." *Political Theory*, 46 (6), 885-914.

Part V: Global Political Theory

11. April 1: Simon Caney, *Justice Beyond Borders*

12. April 8: Seyla Benhabib, *The Rights of Others*

13. April 15: Environmental Political Theory

- Andrew Dobson et al (2009) "Trajectories of Green Political Theory." *Contemporary Political Theory* 8 (3): 317-350.
- Simon Caney (2012) "Just Emissions." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 40 (4): 255-300.
- Robyn Eckersley (2015) "The common but differentiated responsibilities of states to assist and receive 'climate refugees'." *European Journal of Political Theory* 14 (4): 481-500.
- Jason W. Moore (2017) "The Capitalocene, Part I: On the Nature and Origins of Our Ecological Crisis." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 44 (3): 594-630.
- Jason W. Moore (2018) "The Capitalocene, Part II: Accumulation by Appropriation and the Centrality of Unpaid Work/Energy." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 45 (2): 237-279.

14. April 22: Paper Presentations

Tuesday, April 30th: *Research Papers Due*