

University of Victoria
Graduate Program in
Cultural, Social and Political Thought

CSPT Core course, 501/601
2009-2010

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This is a required course for students enrolled in the CSPT Program. It is intended to provide a broad introduction to some exemplary texts and thinkers currently shaping theoretical explorations of cultural, social and political practice. Although formally designated as a 1.5 unit course, it will be extended over both Fall and Spring terms, meeting in alternate weeks so as to permit more sustained engagement with the chosen texts. Texts will be selected in consultation with course participants, but also in a way that combines both familiar and unfamiliar material. All students will be expected to help introduce specific topics and texts for class discussion. While the overall ambition of the course is to canvass and assess a wide range of material, it is expected that written work will focus fairly precisely on a specific theme and work through an argument with analytical rigour.

MA level students will be expected to write two papers relating to two different themes discussed in the course. One will be due by Mid-December and one by mid-April; they will be assigned equal weight (45%) in the final class grade. Doctoral level students will be expected to write a single paper, due in mid-April. In both cases, 10% of the overall grade will be assigned to general class participation, and oral presentations of specific topics will be taken into account in the evaluation of written work.

I would like to discuss and approve the precise paper topic with each student, preferably on the basis of a single-page outline/abstract.

Outline of topics and texts

The first three classes are intended to shape some common ground through discussion of what it now means to engage in what is now both celebrated and disparaged as “theory” in the social sciences and humanities. I especially want to register my own concern with the possible consequences of the parochialism of forms of theory grounded in European and Anglo-American intellectual traditions, a concern I will seek to keep on the agenda as the course moves along.

PART I

September 14: Introduction.

September 21: Concepts of Theory; general discussion

September 28: Concepts of Culture, Society and Politics; general discussion

PART 2

October 19: Spatialities/Temporalities.

Suggested:

- Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (University of California Press, 1997).
Karsten Harries, *Infinity and Perspective* (MIT Press, 2001).

Recommended:

- Edward Casey, *The World at a Glance* (Indiana University Press, 2007).
Edward Casey, *Getting Back into Place* (Indiana University Press, 1993).
Max Jammer, *Concepts of Space: The History of Theories of Space in Physics* (Harvard University Press, 1954/1979).
Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Harvard University Press, 1983).
Doreen Massey, *For Space* (Sage, 2005).
Pierre Hadot, *The Veil of Isis: An Essay on the History of the Idea of Nature* (Harvard University Press, 2006 [2004]).
Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore* (University of California Press, 1967).
Martin W. Lewis and Karen E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (University of California Press, 1997).
Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Blackwell, [1974] 1991).
Alfred Schmidt, *The Concept of Nature in Marx* (New Left Books, [1965], 1971).

October 26: Boundaries/Interdisciplinarity

Suggested:

- Michel Serres, *The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies* (Continuum Books, 2008 [1985]).
Tim Ingold, *Lines: A Brief History* (Routledge, 2007).

Recommended:

- Fritjof Capra, *The Science of Leonardo* (Random House, 2007).
Karol Berger, *Bach's Cycle, Mozart's Arrow* (University of California Press, 2007).
Gary Shapiro, *Archeologies of Vision: Foucault and Nietzsche on Seeing and Saying* (University of Chicago Press, 2003).
Claudia Brodsky Lacour, *Lines of Thought: Discourse, Architectonics, and the Origin of Modern Philosophy* (Duke University Press, 1996).
R.B.J. Walker, *After the Globe, Before the World* (Routledge, 2010).

November 2: Contingencies/Predictabilities

Suggested:

- Ian Hacking, *The Emergence of Probability: A Philosophical Study of Early Ideas About Probability, Induction and Statistical Inference* (Cambridge University Press, 1975, 2nd edition 2006); and/or Ian Hacking, *The Taming of Chance* (Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Recommended:

- Albert Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests* (Princeton University Press, 1977).
Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

November 16: Science/Secularization

Suggested:

- Isabelle Stengers, *The Invention of Modern Science* (1993) (University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

Recommended:

- Stephen Gaukroger, *The Emergence of a Scientific Culture: Science and the Shaping of Modernity, 1210-1685* (Clarendon Press, 2006).
Lorraine Daston, ed., *Things That Talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science* (Zone Books, 2004).

November 30: Modernity/Subjectivity

Suggested:

Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," [1919] and "Science as a Vocation," [1917/1919] in Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures* (Hackett Publishing 2004).

Recommended:

Max Weber, "The Nation State and Power Politics," ["Freiburg Address," 1895] in *Weber: Political Writings* (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

January 11: History/Difference/Translation

Suggested:

Walter Benjamin, on "The Angel of History." See eg., "Theses on the Philosophy of History," no. 9, in Benjamin, *Illuminations*, edited by Hannah Arendt (Harcourt Brace, 1968), 257.

Recommended:

Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, 3 volumes, (Harvard University Press).

Stephane Moses, *The Angel of History: Rosenzweig, Benjamin, Scholem* (Stanford University Press, [2002] 2009).

Beatrice Hanssen, *Walter Benjamin's Other History: Of Stones, Animals, Human Beings, and Angels* (University of California Press, 1998).

Constantine Fasolt, *The Limits of History* (University of Chicago Press, 2004).

Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (MIT Press, [1979] 1985).

Michael Taussig, *Walter Benjamin's Grave* (University of Chicago Press, 2006).

Franz Kafka, anything, or everything.

PART 3

January 18: Bodies/Imagination

Suggested:

Laura Hengehold, *The Body Problematic: Political Imagination in Kant and Foucault* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007).

Recommended:

Beatrice Han, *Foucault's Critical Project: Between the Transcendental and the Historical* (Stanford University Press, [1998] 2002).

Keith Robinson, "An Imminent Transcendental: Foucault, Kant and Critical Philosophy," *Radical Philosophy*, January/February 2007, 12-22.

January 25: Liberty/Security

Suggested:

Michel Foucault, "Society Must Be Defended," *Lectures at the College de France, 1975-1976* (Picador 2003).

Recommended:

Michael Dillon and Andrew Neal, eds., *Foucault on Politics, Security and War* (Palgrave, 2008).

Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* Princeton University Press, [1832] 1984).

Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology* (University of Chicago Press, [1922/34] 1985).

February 8: Political/Theology

Suggested:

Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, edited by Gil Anidjar, especially "Force of Law," (Routledge, 2002).

Recommended:

Martin Hagglund, *Radical Atheism: Derrida and the Time of Life* (Stanford University Press, 2008).

February 22: Sovereignities

Suggested:

Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason* (Stanford University Press, 2005 [2002]).

Recommended:

Jacques Derrida, *Sovereignities in Question: The Poetics of Paul Celan* (Fordham University Press, [1984-2005] 2005).

Pheng Cheah and Suzanne Guerlac, eds., *Derrida and the Time of the Political* (Duke University Press, 2009).

Michael Nass, *Derrida From Now On* (Fordham University Press, 2008).

PART 4

March 8: Alterity/Orientalism

Suggested:

William V. Spanos, *The Legacy of Edward W. Said* (University of Illinois Press, 2009).

Recommended:

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Vintage, 1979).

Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (Knopf, 1993).

Richard Kearney, *Strangers, Gods and Monsters* (Routledge, 2003).

Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy* (Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1983).

James Clifford, "Fort Ross Meditation," in Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Harvard University Press, 1997).

Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia* (Columbia University Press, 2005).

March 22: Democracies

Suggested:

Jacques Rancière, *Hatred of Democracy* (Verso, [2005] 2006).

Jacques Rancière, *On the Shores of Politics* (Verso, [1992] 1995).

Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (University of Minnesota Press, 1998).

Recommended:

Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible* (Continuum, 2004).

Claude Lefort, *Democracy and Political Theory* (Polity, [1986] 1988).

Bernard Flynn, *The Philosophy of Claude Lefort: Interpreting the Political* (Northwestern University Press, 2005).

Cornelius Castoriadis, *World in Fragments: Writings on Politics, Society, Psychoanalysis, and the Imagination* (Stanford University Press, 1997).

C. Douglas Lummis, *Radical Democracy* (Cornell University Press, 1996).

David Campbell and Morton Schoolman, eds., *The New Pluralism: William Connolly and the Contemporary Global Condition* (Duke University Press, 2008).

David Couzens Hoy, *Critical Resistance: From Poststructuralism to Post-Critique* (MIT Press, 2005).

March 29: Freedom/Community

Suggested:

Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Experience of Freedom* (Stanford University Press, 1993 [1988]).

Jean-Luc Nancy, *Being Singular Plural* (Stanford University Press, 2000 [1996]).

Recommended:

Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Sense of the World* (University of Minnesota Press, 1997 [1993]).

Jean-Luc Nancy, *A Finite Thinking* (Stanford University Press, 2003 [1990]).

Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Creation of the World, or Globalization* (SUNY Press, 2007 [2002]).

Ian James, *The Fragmentary Demand: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Jean-Luc Nancy* (Stanford University Press, 2006).