

PS 8440/399g/4996: Political Theory and Identity
441 GH, T 5:30-8 pm
Spring 2017

Professor Heath Fogg Davis
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Office Hrs: R 10 am to 2pm
+ by Appointment

Course Description

What does identity have to do with politics? In this seminar, we take up this question from the perspective of the scholarly debates that have shaped the discipline of political theory since the 1970s. Which theories (or models) best capture the relationship between personal and public conceptions of familiar modern identities such as race, sex, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender expression, age, and ability? How might we best portray the intersections that exist between and among such identities? As we grapple with these questions, we will also consider identities not usually discussed under the rubric of “identity politics,” such as criminality, medical status, family membership, and rebellion. Our ideas about “the political” will also come under scrutiny as we study formal political venues such as political representation, social movements, and law and public policymaking, as well as informal and emergent political realms such as film/video and Internet social networking.

Course Requirements

Discussions

Students are expected to have completed the weekly reading assignment before each meeting, and to come to class prepared to discuss the material. This seminar is a **learning community** that depends on everyone’s **active engagement**. We need you and your ideas in order to make this a vibrant space in which we all learn and grow intellectually. Our readings provide an anchor, not a limit, for our weekly discussions. I encourage you to make connections between the ideas you find in these texts and your own experiences, opinions, and questions. As a community, I encourage you to get to know your fellow students and to respond directly to one another in a respectful manner.

Attendance

We need you! You may miss one class without a grade penalty.

Discussion Questions

Please post one substantive question based on the weekly reading assignment to our Blackboard site no later than noon each Tuesday. These questions can be based on any aspect of the assigned readings for that class and must demonstrate substantive critical engagement with at least one major argument from the reading assignment. Presenters should post a question as well.

Resonance Presentation

Each student will take a turn in leading our seminar discussion with a short presentation. Here are the instructions:

Step 1. Select an artifact from our contemporary world that is connected in some way to the reading assignment for that day. The artifact might be a brief YouTube video of a movie or television scene, a commercial, a news article, an artistic image, song lyrics, a poem, a

photograph, an object, or anything else that you'd like to share with us. Be creative! You have 5-10 minutes to show us the artifact.

Step 2: Spend 5-10 minutes explaining the resonance you've identified between the artifact and the reading assignment. You can discuss any aspect of the reading. For example, is there a sentence or example that drew your attention, perhaps because you strongly agreed or disagreed with it? How does your reaction connect with your artifact?

The total time of the presentation should not exceed 20 minutes. Check out the rubric on BB to see how you will be evaluated. Important tip: Do not assume that previous presenters have followed the instructions and model your presentation on theirs.

My hope is that you will find this format less daunting and more interesting than a traditional class presentation. I will post the rubric for this presentation to BB.

Research Paper

Students are required to write a 20 page research paper that stems from one or more of our course readings.

- a) A research paper prospectus, including a preliminary bibliography, is due in class on **2/23**
- b) Final drafts of research papers are due on **5/6**.

Grade Break-down

Resonance presentation = 10%

Critical discussion participation throughout the semester (includes weekly discussion questions posted to Blackboard, and contributions to class discussion) = 20%

Research paper prospectus=10%

Research Presentation= 10%

Research paper = 50%

Note on Academic Conduct

You are expected to abide by the University's rules of academic honesty. When you turn in someone else's work under your own name, and/or paraphrase, quote, or borrow ideas that are not your own without proper citation, you commit plagiarism, a serious academic offense (not to mention a total waste of your time in school) with consequences ranging from failing the course, to disciplinary action by the Dean, to academic dismissal. Given the seriousness of these infractions, there will be no second chances and no leniency concerning plagiarism.

Students with Disabilities

Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Contact Disability Resources and Services at 215-204-1280 in Ritter Annex to arrange for reasonable accommodations for documented disabilities.

Statement on Academic Freedom

Freedom of speech is not only a constitutional principle that we will explore this semester; it is also crucial in fostering a learning environment in which all feel welcome to participate. Please respect your colleagues' viewpoints even when they clash with your own. I also encourage you

to consult the University's policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy # 03.70.02): http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02

Readings

Posted to BB under "Content"

Reading Assignments and Class Meeting Schedule

Week 1: 1/17

Introduction

No reading assignment

Week 2: 1/24

- Kymlicka, Contemporary Political Theory
- Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition"
- The Craft of Research, chapters 1-2

Week 3: 1/31

- Young, Justice and the Politics of Difference
- Fraser, "Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics" in Redistribution or Recognition?
- The Craft of Research, chapter 3

Week 4: 2/7

- Rogers, "The People, Rhetoric and Affect"
- Hooker, "Black Lives Matter and the Paradoxes of US Politics"
- Beltran, "Crossings and Correspondences"
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Week 5: 2/14

- Schwartz, The Future of Democratic Equality: Rebuilding Social Solidarity in a Fragmented America
- The Craft of Research, chapter 5

Week 6: 2/21

- Brown, Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire
- Sampaio, Terrorizing Latino/a Immigrants (selected chapters)
- The Craft of Research, chapter 6

Research Prospectus Due 2/23 by 11:59 via BB

Week 7: 2/28

- Metz, Untying the Knot
- The Craft of Research, chapter 7

Midterm Participation Self-Assessment (in class)

Week 8: 3/7

- Macedo, “The Case of God vs. John Rawls”
- Singh, “Religious Agency and the Limits of Intersectionality”
- The Craft of Research, chapter 8

Week 9: 3/14

Spring Break-No Class

Week 10: 3/21

- Clare, “The Mountain” from *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness and Liberation* [available online via TU Library]
- Hamraie, “Designing Collective Access: A Feminist Disability Theory of Universal Design”
- The Craft of Research, chapters 9-10

Week 11: 3/28

- Showden, The Choices Women Make (selected chapters)
- Markovits and Bickford, “Constructing Freedom: Institutional Pathways to Changing the Gender Division of Labor”
- The Craft of Research, chapters 11+ 12

Week 12: 4/4

- Burgess, “Gender and Sexuality Politics in the James Bond Film Series”
- Butler, “Doing Justice to Someone and the Allegories of Transsexuality”
- Davis, “Sex-Discrimination as Transgender Discrimination”
- The Craft of Research, chapters 13 +14

Week 13: 4/11

WPSA—no class

- The Craft of Research, chapters 16 +17

Week 14: 4/18

Research Presentations

Week 15: 4/25

Research Presentations

Final Research Papers Due 5/8 by 11:59 via BB.