***Thinking in Dark Times:* JCU Critical Theory Seminar**

Critical theory seeks to identify the contradictions, crisis tendencies and lines of actual or potential conflict in contemporary society, and to demarcate and politicize possibilities for more progressive, socially just, emancipatory and sustainable forms of life. The JCU Critical Theory Seminar is an open space to work through ideas, make sense of the world, and imagine new possibilities. Each seminar involves a brief introduction of readings by a presenter, followed by an open-ended discussion of the readings in relation to contemporary socio-cultural and political dynamics. All are welcome to join informal discussion of contemporary and classic critical theory texts in an effort to make light in dark times.

The rise of racist nationalism, the demise of liberal democracy and citizen rights, the expulsion of growing numbers of people from the ranks of legitimate life, the cultural and technological legitimation of inequality, and the gloomy subjectivity of ecologically assured destruction hark back to the dark times that gave rise to the Frankfurt School of critical theory, and to Arendt’s appeal to critical thought as our primary defense against the banality of evil. In the context of the entrepreneurial university, meanwhile, thinking (and reading) is increasingly an externality. This seminar aims to foster citizenship through critical thought and discussion of the contemporary moment, and relations among culture, politics and technology. This year’s topic addresses the question ‘what ideas are good to think with in our current dark times’?

**Freedom, Servitude and Expulsion**



The Semester Two Critical theory program considers contradictions and complementarities in liberalism and capitalism, rights and justice, political order and resistance, feminism and intersectionality, community and immunity, servitude and freedom.

**Semester Two, 2017, Thursdays 11am-1pm, p*lease note weekly room changes.***

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| **Date/Week/Room** | **Presenter/Chair** | **Topic/Readings** |
| 27 Jul  1  TSV: 9-2  CNS: B1-103 | Robin Rodd | **Emancipation and Servitude**  De la Boétie, É. 1552. *The politics of obedience: The discourse of voluntary servitude*.  Lordon, F. 2014. *Willing slaves of capital: Spinoza & Marx on desire*. London: Verso. Ch. 3: Domination, liberation. Pp. 105-162. |
| 10 Aug  3  TSV: 40-105  CNS: B1-103 | Monique Briggs | **Feminism and Intersectionality**  Crenshaw, K. 1989. Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago legal forum* 1989(1):139-167.  Cho, S., Crenshaw, K. & McCall, L. 2013. Toward a field of intersectionality studies: theory, applications and praxis. *Journal of women in culture and society*. 38(4):785-810.  Ahmed, S. 2017. *Living a feminist life*. Duke University Press. Introduction, pp. 1-18. |
| 24 Aug  5  TSV: 40-105  CNS: B1-103 | Kearrin Sims | **Expulsion, Capitalism, Brutality**  Sassen, S. 2015. *Expulsions: When complexity produces elementary brutalities*. Harvard University Press. Introduction: The savage sorting. Pp. 1-11.  Klein, N. 2014. *This changes everything: Capitalism vs the climate.* New York: Simon & Schuster. Introduction.  Harvey, D. 2004. The new imperialism: Accumulation by dispossession. *Socialist register*. 40:63-87.  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3a9TAbQHzjQ>  http://newpol.org/content/systemic-edge |
| 14 Sep  7  TSV: 145-030  CNS: B1-108 | Simon Foale | **The Capitalocene**  Moore, J. 2014. The capitalocene. Part 1: On the nature and origins of our ecological crisis.  Moore, J. 2014. The capitalocene. Part 2: Abstract social nature and the limits to capital. |
| 28 Sep  9  TSV: 40-105  CNS: B1-103 | Robin Rodd | **Freedom, Community, Democracy**  Honneth, A. 2014. *Freedom’s right: The social foundations of democratic life*. New York: Columbia University Press. Ch. 3: Social freedom and the doctrine of ethical life. Pp. 42-67, pp, 329-335.  Esposito, R. 2013. *Terms of the political: Community, immunity, biopolitics*. Trans. Rhiannon Welch. New York: Fordham Press. Ch. 5: Freedom and immunity. Pp. 47-56. |
| 12 Oct  11  TSV: TBA  CNS: TBA | Alexandra McEwan | **Animal Protection as a Bourdieusian Field**  McEwan, A. 2016. *Australia's Animal Protection Regime as a Bourdieusian Field*.  Bourdieu, P. 1985. The Genesis of the Concepts of ‘habitus’ and of ‘field’’. *Sociocriticism* 11. |
| 26 Oct  13  TSV: 9-2  CNS: B1-103 | Alexandra McEwan | **Liberalism**  Phil Badger, 'What is Liberalism' (2011) 82 *Philosophy Now*  <https://philosophynow.org/issues/82/What_is_Liberalism>  Daniel B Klein, 'The Origins of Liberalism', *The Atlantic* (13 Feb 2014)  <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2014/02/the-origin-of-liberalism/283780/>  Toula Nicolacopoulos, *The Radical Critique of Liberalism: in memory of a vision* (2008, re.press Melbourne) chapter 1.  <http://www.re-press.org/book-files/OA_Version_9780980305258_Nicolacopoulos.pdf> |
| 2 Nov  14  TSV: 9-2  CNS: B1-103 | Robin Rodd | **Constituent Struggle and Constitutional Order**  Hardt, M. & Negri, A. 2012. *Declaration.* New York: Argo. Ch. 1: Subjective figures of the crisis, Ch. 3: Constituting the common. Pp. 49-99.  Wolin, S. 2016. *Fugitive democracy and other essays*. Ed. Xenos, N. Ch. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Ch. 4: Norm and form: The constitutionalizing of democracy. Pp. 77-99. |