

CSS 371 - JUNIOR COLLOQUIUM

College of Social Studies

CSS 371, PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL INQUIRY

Spring, 2016

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I. THEMES

One of the themes of the Sophomore Colloquium is that modern industrial society is distinctive in human history—that its forms of organization, its principal activities, and the principles and values on which it rests make it fundamentally different from what has preceded it. This Colloquium, mindful that the Sophomore Colloquium ended with social theory up to World War I, will continue to develop this theme, but now with works written since World War II. The course will focus on five post World War II philosopher/social theorists who have developed compelling large-scale theories about the nature of modern society: Hannah Arendt, Jurgen Habermas, Francis Fukuyama, John Rawls, and Michel Foucault.

The course focuses on these five in part because they are great thinkers who have deep things to say about how we live and how we ought to live today, but also in part because they appropriate materials studied in the Sophomore Colloquium: Habermas attempts to amend and extend Marx's thought; Fukuyama the thought of Hegel; Rawls that of Kant, Mill and the liberal tradition of political thought (and also Pragmatism, which is not represented in the Sophomore Colloquium); Foucault that of Nietzsche; and Arendt's book reads like a meditation not only on classical Greek philosophy of Aristotle and Plato, but also on the entire corpus of the Sophomore Colloquium reading list (including Rousseau, Marx, Locke, among others).

The course also has the aim of reflecting on the nature of social and political analysis, especially in relation to their role in modern society. Thus, it will also explore various aspects of the question, what is involved in social inquiry of the sort studied in the Government, Economics, and History tutorials in the CSS? As a result, the course is also a course in the *metatheory* of social analysis ("metatheory" because it investigates theories about the theories of social life). Another reason for picking the five social theorists for the course is that in addition to being important social theorists they also provide important metatheories of the social and political analysis: Habermas's critical theory; Foucault's genealogy; Rawls' "political liberalism"; Fukuyama's idealism; and Arendt's anti-behaviorism.

A note about the study of Rawls. His work is massive, and it underwent large changes as he developed his basic insight that justice is fairness. He also spent lots of time refining his ideas and responding to specific criticisms of others. The result is that there isn't a single work of reasonable length and clarity that encompasses his best thinking on the idea of justice in a pluralist setting; it's in part for this reason that I have never assigned his work in the Colloquium. But fortunately we now have a masterwork that succinctly, clearly, and cogently captures Rawls' approach better than anything Rawls himself did: J Donald Moon's *John Rawls: Liberalism and the Challenges of Late Modernity*. You may have heard of Moon, and if we're lucky he might come to discuss the book after we've read it.

The order in which the books are assigned bespeaks an underlying logic to be presented at the first meeting. Note, too, that unlike the Sophomore Colloquium the books will be read slowly: another aim of the class is to develop skill in careful and, especially, critical reading and analysis.

II. MATERIALS

Books

Arendt, Hannah, *The Human Condition* (ISBN: 0-226-02953-4)
Foucault, Michel, *The Foucault Reader* (ed. Dreyfus and Rabinow) (ISBN: 978-0-3947-1340-3)
Fukuyama, Francis, *The End of History* (ISBN: 0-7432-8455-0)
Habermas, Jurgen, *Towards a Rational Society* (ISBN: 0-8070-4177-7)
Habermas, Jurgen, *Legitimation Crisis* (ISBN: 978-0-8070-1521-6)
Habermas, Jurgen, *The Crisis of the European Union* (ISBN: 978-0-7456-6242-8)
Donald Moon, *John Rawls: Liberalism and the Challenges of Late Modernity* (ISBN: 1442238275). **Please Note:** if Moon's book is not out in paper by the time of the class, we'll arrange to get electronic copies of it for you from him. So there is no need to buy the hardback version.

Articles (available on electronic reserve)

Foucault, Michel, "Two Lectures"

III. SYLLABUS

Jan 25	Introductory meeting	
Jan 27	Hannah Arendt, Parts I and II	
Feb 1	Hannah Arendt, Parts III and IV	
Feb 3	Hannah Arendt, Part V	
Feb 8	Hannah Arendt, Part VI	
Feb 10	Habermas, Jurgen, <i>Legitimation Crisis</i> , Part I	
Feb 15	Habermas, Jurgen, <i>Legitimation Crisis</i> , Part II, chaps 1-6	Paper #1 Due
Feb 17	Habermas, Jurgen, <i>Legitimation Crisis</i> , Part II, chaps 7-8, and Part III, chaps 1-3	
Feb 22	Habermas, Jurgen, <i>Legitimation Crisis</i> , Part III, chaps 4, 5 and 6	
Feb 24	Habermas, Jurgen, <i>The Crisis of the European Union</i> : (1) Preface; (2) Interview (102-118); (3) "The Crisis of the European Union," 1-20 and 53-58	
Feb 29	Moon, Chap 1: "Challenge to Liberalism"	
Mar 2	Moon, Chap 2: "Political Liberalism"	Paper #2 Due

-----Semester Break-----

Mar 21	Moon, Chap 3: "Political Liberalism and Inclusion"	
Mar 23	Moon, Chap 4: "Class, Inequality, and Distributive Justice"	
Mar 28	Moon, Chap 5: "Global Pluralism and International Justice"	
Mar 30	Moon, Chap 6: "Conclusion"	
Apr 4	Foucault, "Lecture #1"; <i>Reader</i> , 76-97	
Apr 6	Foucault, <i>Reader</i> , 170-238	Paper #3 Due
Apr 11	Foucault, "Lecture #2"; <i>Reader</i> , 51-75; 258-290	
Apr 13	Foucault, <i>Reader</i> , 292-328	
Apr 18	Foucault, <i>Reader</i> , 333-390	
Apr 20	Fukuyama, Introduction (xi-xxii); Part I (3-51)	
Apr 25	Fukuyama, Part II (55-139)	
Apr 27	Fukuyama, Part III (143-208)	Paper #4 Due
May 2	Fukuyama, Part IV (211-284)	
May 4	Fukuyama, Part V (287-339), and Afterword (341-354)	

May 16 **Final paper due**

III. PROCEDURES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Each class will consist of discussions of the material assigned for that day. Each student must *study* (not just read) this material before the class meeting. *All students are expected to participate in class discussion, and may be called on from time to time to insure that this occurs.*

When students wish to speak they must raise their hands and be recognized by me, rather than just interjecting their ideas as the spirit moves them; this is to prevent the aggressive from dominating others who might wish to speak. Students must come to class on time, and remain in the classroom until the end of the class session. If you are late for class, do not attempt to enter after the door is closed, and if you have to leave for any reason do not come back into the classroom for that day. Late comings and goings disrupt class discussion, and will not be tolerated.

Four short papers will be assigned throughout the semester; a final paper will be due after the class period has ended. Incompletes will not be given except for *very* serious cause (for instance, incapacitating illness).

IV. GRADING

Grades will be determined principally on the basis of the written papers (67%), but classroom participation will also be a quite significant factor (33%).

V. MEETING WITH INSTRUCTOR OUTSIDE OF CLASS

By appointment. Email bfay@wesleyan.edu and suggest some meeting times and I will select one from among them.

VI. DISABILITY RESOURCES

Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Disability Resources as soon as possible.

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Dean Patey in Disability Resources, located in North College, Room 021, or call 860/685-5581 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations.