



CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF DEMOCRACY

MA International Relations and Political Theory

The Human Sciences Perspectives and Methods

(IISP7A2)



Module Leader: Professor John Keane (with Professor Bhikhu Parekh,
Professor Ali Paya and Giovanni Navarra)

Location: 309 Regent Street, Room 354, Tuesday, 10am-1pm,
Second Semester

Office Hours: Tuesday afternoons, 1-2 pm, by appointment

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Course Blackboard:

<http://www.johnkeane.net/teaching/blackboard/blackboard.htm>

Course Aims:

This course has had a long and rather unusual history at CSD - and is arguably unique in its expansive and experimental view of the disciplines of politics, international relations and regional and cultural studies. It aims to familiarise students with the strengths and weakness of the main accounts of the human sciences in Europe during the past hundred years. The course gives some consideration to their eighteenth- and nineteenth-century origins, but particular emphasis will be placed on the need to understand the twentieth-century work of a selection of the most influential thinkers, each of whom has reflected deeply upon what they consider to be the distinctive characteristics of the natural or human sciences. Lectures and seminar discussions give special prominence to the strengths and weaknesses of their overlapping and conflicting perspectives on language, concept formation, power and the political dangers of unthinking indifference. The course will examine the wider public relevance of their approaches, and the potential benefits of attempting to synthesise their core perspectives and methods with the study of the interplay of governments, civil societies and cultures. Consideration will be given as well to the public responsibilities of intellectuals and the political potential of human science interpretations of the contemporary world.

2007 Seminar Programme

- 16 January – Welcome; The Problem of Unthinking Indifference: Harry Frankfurt's *On Bullshit*
- 23 January – The Twilight of the Gods: Max Weber's *Science as a Vocation* and *Politics as a Vocation*
- 30 January – The Power of Action: Hannah Arendt's Conception of Politics
- 6 February – The Dangers of Normal Science: Karl Popper's *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (AP)
- 13 February – Bhikhu Parekh on the Limits of Reason in Politics (BP)
- 20 February – Paradigms: Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (AP)
- 27 February – Post-Modernism? Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition*
- 6 March – Language Games : Wittgenstein's *On Certainty*

- 13 March – From the Archaeology of Knowledge to Governmentality: Michel Foucault's theory of power (GN)
- 20 March – A Post-Philosophical Culture? Richard Rorty's *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*
- 27 March – The new social morphology of our societies: Manuel Castells' theory of *The Network Society* (GN)
- 3 April – Course summary (JK/GN)

Assessment

Students are required to write one essay of around 5,000 words in length. The essay should be typed, with footnotes and a bibliography. Deadline: Tuesday April 24th, 2007. Please note CSD's strict rules against plagiarism.

Reading:

Please note that asterisked reading is compulsory, and that, as far as possible, all of it is posted on the Human Sciences course blackboard: <http://www.johnkeane.net/teaching/blackboard/blackboard.htm>.

All other reading listed is available from either the University of Westminster library, or the Internet and other London libraries, use of which is strongly encouraged.

Seminar Topics/Reading

The following seminar topics will also serve as essay questions:

1. How convincing is Harry Frankfurt's *On Bullshit*?

Reading:

* Harry G. Frankfurt, *On Bullshit*

2. What did Max Weber mean by ‘objectivity’? How successful was his attempt ‘objectively’ to make sense of the modern world?

Readings:

* Max Weber, *Politics as a Vocation*

*Max Weber, *Science as A Vocation*

H Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society*, ch. 8

H H Gerth and C Wright Mills, *From Max Weber*, ‘Introduction: The Man and His Work’

Karl Jaspers, ‘Max Weber as Politician, Scientist, Philosopher’, in *Leonardo, Descartes, Max Weber*

M Albrow *Bureaucracy*, pp. 37-49, and ch. 3

John Rex, ‘Max Weber’, in Timothy Raison (ed.), *The Founding Fathers of Social Science*

W Mommsen, *The Age of Bureaucracy*

* John Keane, *Public Life and Late Capitalism*, chapter 1

David Beetham, *Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics*

3. What did Arendt mean by the concept of ‘politics’? Why did she think that its defence was imperative? Was she right?

Readings:

* Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

* Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*

Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution*

Bernard Crick, *In Defence of Politics*

Bhikhu Parekh, *Hannah Arendt and the Search for a New Political Philosophy*

Dana Villa (ed.), *The Cambridge Correspondence to Hannah Arendt*

Juergen Habermas, 'Hannah Arendt's Communications Concept of Power', *Social Research* (Spring 1977), pp. 3-24

4. Is it possible to preserve 'objectivity' in the human and social sciences?

Readings:

* Karl Popper, 'Normal Science and its Dangers', in Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave (eds.), *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, pp. 51-58 (a reply to Kuhn)

* *Interview with Karl Popper*

* 'Professor Sir Karl Popper : Obituary'

Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*

Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, plus excerpts from his other works : *The Poverty of Historicism; Conjectures and Refutations ; In Search of a Better World; The Myth of the Framework; The Lesson of this Century; and All Life is Problem-solving*

John Watkins, 'The Unity of Popper's Thought', in Paul Schilpp (ed.), *The Philosophy of Karl Popper*

Paul Levinson (ed.), *In Pursuit of Truth : Essays on the Philosophy of Karl Popper on the Occasion of His 80th Birthday*

Anthony Giddens, *Positivism and its Critics*

David Miller, *A Pocket Popper*

Brian Magee, *Popper*

Karl Popper, *Unended Quest : An Intellectual Biography*, pp. 7-18

Peter Scott, *An Occasional Revolutionary*

Paul Feyerabend, 'How to Defend Society Against Science', in Ian Hacking (ed.), *Scientific Revolutions* (OUP 1983)

T S Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, preface and introduction

Barry Barnes, *T S Kuhn and Social Science*, pp. 10-14

Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein, The Duty of Genius*

Peter Munz, *Our Knowledge of the Growth of Knowledge : Popper or Wittgenstein*

Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, including the 'Foreword' by Fredric Jameson

A. O'Hear (ed.), *Karl Popper: Philosophy and Problems*

Karl Popper. *Objective Knowledge*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.

Karl Popper: A Centenary Assessment: Volume I Popper's Life and Times; Values in a World of Facts [= moral & political philosophy]; Volume II Metaphysics and Epistemology; Volume III Science and Social Science, edited by Ian Jarvie, et.al, London: Ashgate Publications, 2006.

William A. Gorton. *Karl Popper and Human Sciences*, SUNY Press, 2006.

Popper's Open Society After Fifty Years: The Continuing Relevance of Karl

Popper, Edited by Ian Jarvie and Sandra Pralong, London: Routledge, 1999.

5. What does it mean to speak of 'reason' in human affairs? Is its defence important in our times?

Bhikhu Parekh, *Notes on the Limits of Reason in Politics*

Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*

6. Is 'paradigm' a truly useful theoretical tool for the social and political sciences?

Readings:

* T S Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, preface and introduction

T S Kuhn, *The Essential Tension*

Thomas Kuhn, *The Road Since Structure : Philosophical Essays, 1970-1993, with an Autobiographical Interview*

Alexander Bird, *Thomas Kuhn*

Paul Hoyningen-Huene, *Reconstructing Scientific Revolutions: Thomas Kuhn's Philosophy of Science*

Paul Horwich, *World Changes: Thomas Kuhn and the Nature of Science*

Karl Popper, 'Normal Science and its Dangers', in Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave (eds.), *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, pp. 51-58 (a reply to Kuhn)

Garry Gutting, *Paradigms and Revolutions*

Barry Barnes, *T S Kuhn and Social Science*, pp. 10-14

Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein, The Duty of Genius*

Peter Munz, *Our Knowledge of the Growth of Knowledge : Popper or Wittgenstein*

Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, including the 'Foreword' by Fredric Jameson

Edwin Hung. *Beyond Thomas Kuhn: Scientific Explanation, Theory Structure, Incommensurability and Physical Necessity*, London: Ashgate, 2006.

R. Donmoyer. "Take my paradigm ... please! The legacy of Kuhn's construct in educational research," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in education*, Jan-Feb. 2006.

Steve Fuller. *Kuhn vs. Popper: The Struggle for the Soul of Science*. London: Icon Books, 2001.

7. How successful is Lyotard's defence of the 'postmodern' attitude?

Readings :

*Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*

Jean-François Lyotard, *Political Writings*, especially part 1.

John Keane, *The Modern Democratic Revolution: Reflections on Jean-François Lyotard's La Condition postmoderne*

*Jean-François Lyotard, 'Wittgenstein "After"', in *Political Writings*

8. What was Wittgenstein getting at when he wrote: 'Suppose it were forbidden to say "I know" and only allowed to say "I believe I know"'? Why did he think our lives would have to change if we supposed the permanence of uncertainty? Was he right?

Readings:

* Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*

Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *Wittgenstein and Justice*

A. Janik & S. Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, chapter 7.

Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein, The Duty of Genius*.

Ernest Gellner, *Language and Solitude : Wittgenstein, Malinowski, and the Habsburg dilemma*

James Tully, 'Wittgenstein and Political Philosophy', *Political Theory*, volume 17, no 2 (1989).

Robin Holt, *Wittgenstein, Politics and Human Rights*

Norman Malcolm, *Wittgensteinian Themes*

Peter Winch, *The Idea of a Social Science and Its Relation to Philosophy*

Aryeh Botwinick, *Wittgenstein, Scepticism, and Political Participation : An Essay in the Epistemology of Democratic Theory*

*Jean-François Lyotard, 'Wittgenstein "After"', in *Political Writings*

9. Discuss the nexus between power and knowledge in Foucault's thought and critically assess its political implications for the art of governing people.

Readings:

*Michel Foucault, 'Governmentality' in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (eds) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991, pp. 87–104 (on the blackboard)

Michel Foucault, 'We Other Victorians', 'The Repressive Hypothesis', and 'Method', in *The History of Sexuality*, (Penguin, 1984), vol. 1.

Michel Foucault, 'The Body of the Condemned', and 'Docile Bodies', from *Discipline and Punish* Penguin, 1977.

*Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, chs 1-4 (electronic versions of the introduction and first 3 chapters can be found at: http://foucault.info/documents/archaeologyOfKnowledge/foucault.archaeologyOfKnowledge.00_intro.html and <http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/fr/foucault.htm>

Michel Foucault, 1978, *The History of Sexuality* – an Introduction Vol. 1,

Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, NY: Vintage Books. Especially the section on Panopticism. An electronic version of this text is available online at the following address: <http://cartome.org/foucault.htm>

Mitchell Dean, 1999, Governmentality: power and rule in modern society, introduction on the blackboard

Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977

Michel Foucault, “Panopticism”, from Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison, NY: Vintage Books. An electronic version of this text is available online at the following address: <http://cartome.org/foucault.htm>

Michel Foucault, 'The Subject and Power', Afterword to Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault, Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*

Michel Foucault, From Biopower to Biopolitic by Maurizio Lazzarato, on the blackboard

Thomas Lemke, *Governmentality, and Critique, Rethinking Marxism*, 14. Jg., No. 3, 2002, S. 49-64. on the blackboard

For many electronic resources on Foucault go to:
<http://www.yorku.ca/isin/courses/6320/2003.htm>
<http://foucault.info/documents/>

10. Why does Rorty place a great emphasis on irony? Is he right to do so?

Readings:

Richard Rorty, “The Priority of Democracy to Philosophy”, in Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth: Philosophical Papers*, volume 1

* Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*

Richard Rorty, ‘Human Rights, Rationality, and Sentimentality’, in *Truth and Progress : Philosophical Papers*, volume 3, pp. 167-185

Richard Rorty, “Thugs and Theorists: A Reply to Bernstein”, *Political Theory* (1987), pp 564-580 (and Bernstein’s original essay)

Martyn Oliver, “A Post-Modern Bourgeois Liberal: An interview with Richard Rorty”, *CSD Bulletin*, vol 1, 3 (summer 1994)

Martyn Oliver, "Philosophy and Politics", *CSD Bulletin*, vol 4, 3 (summer 1997)

11. Critically discuss the argument of Manuel Castells that 'networks constitute the new social morphology of our societies'

*Manuel Castells, 'The Information Technology Revolution' (pp 29-64) and 'The Culture of Real Virtuality' (pp. 327-375), in *The Rise of The Network Society* (Blackwell, 1996).

*Manuel Castells, 'Informationalism, Networks, and the Network Society: A Theoretical Blueprint' in Manuel Castells (Ed.) The Network Society: a cross-cultural perspective, Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2004.

Manuel Castells, The Rise of Network Society, Maine: Blackwell Publishers.

Manuel Castells, The Power of Identity, Maine: Blackwell Publishers.

Manuel Castells, The End of Millennium, Maine: Blackwell Publishers.

Felix Stalder, Manuel Castells: The Theory of the Network Society (Key Contemporary Thinkers)