

**Syllabus - SOC 335 Winter 2017**  
**Lec A1**

**THEMES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORY:  
POWER AND SUBJECTIVITY**

**Time:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30-4:50pm  
**Location:** TB 38

**Instructor:** Dr. Robyn Lee  
**Email:** robyn5@ualberta.ca  
**Office:** Tory 6-9  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30-2:30 and by appointment

**TA:** Solomiya Draga draga@ualberta.ca

**Prerequisite:**  
SOC 212 or consent of the instructor. Not open to students with credit in SOC 332, 333, or 334.

**Course Description:**

How are we formed as individuals? What freedom or agency do we have in determining who we are and how we act? How is knowledge – of ourselves and of the world we live in - enmeshed in relations of power?

This course will investigate these questions through an examination of the relationship between power and subjectivity. We will explore how power operates through various processes including morality, culture, punishment and surveillance, racialization, colonization, the regulation of sexuality, gender, and our relationships with other species. In doing so, we will examine how relations of power result in both forms of oppression and possibilities for resistance and transformation.

In this course we will explore key theorists and debates on power and subjectivity in order to gain the tools to think critically about contemporary society. Students will identify basic frameworks and concepts of social theories and apply them to contemporary social processes and current events. The course will also encourage students to think conceptually and to improve their skills in critical analysis and oral and written communication.

## **Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completion of the course students should be able to:

1. Develop skills in close reading and critical analysis of major texts in social theory
2. Comprehend key concepts in contemporary social theory including morality and culture, the regulation of bodies, race and colonialism, feminist theory, and technology
3. Explore how contemporary social issues reflect and challenge developments in social theory
4. Examine evolving relationships between power and subjectivity through a variety of theoretical lenses

## **Important Dates:**

Course Drop and Add (on Bear Tracks)	January 20
Course Withdrawal Deadline (50% refund)	February 8
Easter (University closed)	March 25 and 28
Reading Week (No classes)	February 20-24
Course Withdrawal Deadline (No fee refund)	April 5
Classes End	April 12

## **Required Readings:**

Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*

Donna Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto*

Additional required readings available as a course pack, on reserve in the library, and online in eClass

## **Evaluation:**

*Detailed assignment handouts will be posted on eClass*

### **30% First essay** *Be Your Own Film Critic* (4-6 pages double spaced)

#### **Due February 14**

In class we will watch Alfred Hitchcock's film *Rope*. Your essay will discuss the film in relation to one of the theorists we will explore in this class. Detailed essay requirements will be posted on eClass.

### **30% Second essay** *Theorizing Social Issues* (4-6 pages double spaced)

#### **Due March 30**

In class we will discuss a number of contemporary social issues. In this assignment, you will choose one of the issues explored in class and discuss it in relation to one of the theorists we will read. Detailed essay requirements will be posted on eClass.

### **30% Final take home exam**

#### **Due April 25**

Reading comprehension and essay question format. Exam questions will be made available April 11. The exam is cumulative, covering content drawn the entire course. Sample questions will be discussed in class and/or will be made available on eClass.

### **10% Participation**

Based on attendance and completion of in-class activities

Examples: peer teaching, exercises in textual analysis/reading comprehension and writing thesis statements

You will need to be present in class in order to complete the activities and receive credit for completing them. These activities will require you to have completed the assigned course readings and are designed to prepare you for your assignments and exam.

## **In-course feedback:**

In order to best facilitate your learning in this course, I will be asking you to anonymously complete two short in-class questionnaires. As well, I am happy to receive comments in person or by email.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

January 10 Introduction to the Course

### **MORALITY AND CULTURE**

Friedrich Nietzsche *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1887)

January 12 Preface, pp. 15-23

January 17 First Essay: Good and Evil, Good and Bad, pp. 24-56

Sigmund Freud *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1929)

January 19 chapters I-IV

January 24 chapters V-VIII

Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944)

January 26 The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception, pp. 120-167

January 31 The Culture Industry (continued)

February 2 Walter Benjamin *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1936), pp. 217-251

### **DISCIPLINE, POWER, KNOWLEDGE**

February 7 Michel Foucault *History of Sexuality: Volume 1* (1976)

We 'Other Victorians', pp. 3-13; The Incitement to Discourse, pp. 17-35

February 9 Michel Foucault *History of Sexuality: Volume 1*

Scientia Sexualis, pp. 51-74

February 14 **First Essay due**

Michel Foucault *Discipline and Punish* (1975)

The Body of the Condemned, pp. 3-31

February 16 Michel Foucault *Discipline and Punish*, "Panopticism" pp. 195-228

Thomas McMullan, What Does the Panopticon Mean in the Age of Digital Surveillance?  
*The Guardian* (2015).

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/jul/23/panopticon-digital-surveillance-jeremy-bentham>

Reading Week – no classes

February 28 'I Tweet in My Dreams': The Rise of the Networked Individual

Paul Mason (2012), pp. 127-152

## **RACE**

March 2 W.E.B. Du Bois *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)  
Our spiritual strivings, pp. 7-17; Of the Dawn of Freedom, pp. 17-40

George Yancy and Judith Butler, What's Wrong with 'All Lives Matter'?  
*New York Times* (2015)  
[http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/01/12/whats-wrong-with-all-lives-matter/?mtrref=undefined&assetType=opinion&\\_r=0](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/01/12/whats-wrong-with-all-lives-matter/?mtrref=undefined&assetType=opinion&_r=0)

March 7 Patricia Hill Collins *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (2000)  
The Politics of Black Feminist Thought, pp. 3-23

March 9 Collins, Distinguishing Features of Black Feminist Thought, pp. 24-48

## **COLONIALISM**

March 14 Edward Said *Orientalism* (1978)  
Introduction, pp. 1-28

March 16 Edward Said *Orientalism* Knowing the Oriental, pp. 31-49  
Rami Khouri, Arab Spring or Revolution? *The Globe and Mail* (2011)  
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/arab-spring-or-revolution/article626345/>

March 21 Frantz Fanon *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961)  
On Violence, pp. 1-52

March 23 Fanon On Violence (continued)

## **GENDER AND MULTISPECIES RELATIONS**

March 28 Judith Butler *Gender Trouble* (1990) Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire, pp. 1-46

March 30 **Second Essay due**  
Judith Butler, Conclusion: from parody to politics, pp. 183-203

Donna Haraway *Companion Species Manifesto* (2003)  
April 4 pp. 1-32  
April 6 pp. 33-65

April 11– review – take home exam questions distributed

**Take home exam due April 25**

## Sociology Department Undergraduate Grading Scale

Letter	Numerical Grade	GPA	Description
A+	90+	4.0	Exceptional work and achievement
A	86–89	4.0	Excellent and displays high comprehension of material
A-	82–85	3.7	Great work with good comprehension of material
B+	78–81	3.3	Good and better than average comprehension
B	74–77	3.0	Solid understanding of course material
B-	70–73	2.7	Satisfactory to good performance
C+	66–69	2.3	Satisfactory work
C	62–65	2.0	Slightly exceeds minimum requirements
C-	58–61	1.7	Meets minimum requirements
D+	54–57	1.3	Poor engagement with course material
D	50–53	1.0	Barely acceptable work
F	0–49	0.0	Unacceptable engagement with course material

### Policy for Late Assignments

Late papers and final exams will be marked down 5% percent for each day past the deadline, and will not be accepted after one week past the deadline. Please contact me in advance if you will have difficulty meeting a deadline for health or personal reasons.

### Required Notes

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the Evaluation Procedures and Grading System section of the University Calendar.”

### Academic Integrity

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at <http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx> ) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

### Learning and working environment

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or

- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department. For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the Office of the Student Ombuds . Information about the University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures is described in UAPPOL.

### **Academic Honesty**

**All students** should consult the information provided by Student Conduct and Accountability regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook and Information for Students). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the Academic Discipline Process .

### **Recording of Lectures**

“Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).”

### **Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components**

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult the Calendar regarding Attendance and Examinations sections of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

**In this course**, attendance and participation is graded based on completion of ongoing in-class assignments.

### **Student Accessibility Services**

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with Student Accessibility Services, contact their office immediately ( 1-80 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381).