

Radical Political Thought

<p>POLI 364 Fall 2015</p> <p>RPHYS 118 T/TH 10:05-11:25 AM</p>	<p>Professor Yves Winter email: yves.winter@mcgill.ca twitter: @whywinter Office: 418 Ferrier Office hours: M 3:30-4:30 TH 2:00-3:00</p> <p>Sign up for slots at http://bit.ly/winterschedule</p> <p>TA: Janine Kanters janine.kanters@mail.mcgill.ca</p>
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Description

Most modern social and political institutions make explicit or tacit claims to embody principles of freedom, justice, equality, and/or solidarity. Radical political theories fundamentally contest these claims, offering fierce and trenchant critiques of the unfreedom, power, and domination characteristic of modern social life. This course introduces students to key themes and arguments in the analyses of domination and the theories of power and resistance put forward by a variety of authors drawn from the communist, anarchist, feminist, anti-colonial, and post-structuralist traditions.

Each of these theoretical traditions has a distinct analysis of the nature of domination and unfreedom—its structure, appearance, and history—as well as different philosophical presuppositions and concepts that are deployed in its service. This analytical diversity is reflected on the prescriptive level, where different theoretical approaches have varied—and often conflicting—accounts of the collective strategies and trajectories against domination and unfreedom. As we proceed through the course, we will therefore pay special attention to the links between the analyses of unfreedom, power and domination, and the forms of struggles and tactics of resistance.

Prerequisites

This is a 300-level course. In accordance with departmental regulations, this means that students must have taken a 200-level course in the same field (i.e. POLI 231 or 232).

Required Texts

The following books are available for purchase from **The Word Bookstore, 469 Milton Street** (cash or cheque only). They will also be on reserve in the Humanities & Social Sciences Library.

Michel Foucault. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. (New York: Vintage, 1990). ISBN 978-0679724698

Kathi Weeks. *The Problem With Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries*. (Durham : Duke University Press, 2011). ISBN 978-0822351122

Glen Coulthard. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014. ISBN 978-0816679652

Frantz Fanon. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Richard Philcox. New York: Grove Press, 2004. ISBN 978-0802141323

All other readings (starred *) will be available on **myCourses**.

Students are encouraged to read texts in the original languages. Contact me for bibliographic information.

Assignments and Grades

Written assignments for this course will consist of **three** (5-6 page) **papers** and **two** sets of **peer evaluations**.

All assignments are due on the dates indicated in the syllabus. They are to be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class. Late papers will be docked one third of a letter grade for every day late, including weekends. Extensions are available only for serious and documented reasons, and they must be requested ahead of time. No extensions will be granted on (or after) an assignment's due date. Do not send assignments via email unless otherwise instructed.

Your written work will be graded on originality, reasoning and argument, organization, clarity of exposition, and style. Peer evaluations are graded pass/fail and essays are graded on the letter grade scale (A to F) where the individual letters correspond to the following grade points:

Grade	Grade Points
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
D	1.0
F	0

A detailed grading rubric will be posted on myCourses.

Final grades are calculated according to the following schedule. Note that you must receive a passing grade (D) in each of the following four grade categories in order to receive a passing grade for the course.

First Paper	25%
Second Paper	30%
Third Paper	30%
Class Participation	15%

Office Hours

I am available to meet with students during my regular office hours and by appointment. Please use the online booking software at <http://bit.ly/winterschedule>

Classroom Policies

This course includes **mandatory conferences** which will start in the week of September 21 and continue until November 27. Conferences are currently scheduled in the following four slots. If you want to stay in this class, you **must** enroll in and attend one of the four conference sections:

Tuesday	04:05 PM-04:55 PM	EDUC 338
Thursday	01:05 PM-01:55 PM	EDUC 539
Thursday	04:05 PM-04:55 PM	EDUC 338
Wednesday	08:35 AM-09:25 AM	SH688 355

Conferences have a **strict attendance** policy. Students with three or more absences **should not expect a passing grade** in the course.

Research shows that people learn more when they actively engage the material and the learning process, rather than passively listen to the instructor. Class meetings will involve various forms of active learning, including writing exercises. You are responsible for having read the assigned texts prior to the class meeting. Prepare for class by taking notes and by thinking about questions, ideas, or problems that arise in your reading. Be sure to bring books and hard copy printouts of readings to class.

McGill University values **academic integrity**. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#). Please note that I take plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty seriously, and your work will be reviewed for potential plagiarism issues by means of text-matching software.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant-e a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.

[Research](#) shows that students who take notes by hand significantly outperform students who take notes on **mobile computing devices** (even when the devices are offline and used exclusively for note-taking). For your own educational benefit, While laptops and tablets are not prohibited in this class, I strongly urge you to leave them at home or stowed away in your bags. Needless to say, any use of electronic equipment may only be used for note-taking. Any other use (including e-mail, web surfing, games, chat, messaging, and so on) is distracting and disruptive to fellow students and is not permitted during class time.

As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the [Office for Students with Disabilities/MyAccess](#) (514)398-6009.

Class Schedule

Sep 8 Introduction

Part 1: Labour, Capital, and Structural Domination

Concepts: *bourgeois society; domination; class struggle; capital; labour; reform; revolution.*

Sep 10 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "The Communist Manifesto" [parts I-II only] *

Sep 15 Karl Marx, "Wage Labour and Capital" *

Sep 17 Peter Kropotkin, "From 'Representative Government'," "Our Riches,"
"The Division of Labour," and "From *The Modern State*" *

Sep 22 Rosa Luxemburg: "Reform or Revolution" *
How to write a political theory paper

Part 2: Direct Action and Violence

Concepts: *strike; sabotage; colonialism; de-colonization; law-making and law-destroying violence.*

Sep 24 William E. Trautmann, "Direct Action and Sabotage" [1912]*

Sep 29 Leon Trotsky, *Their Morals and Ours* [skip sections in grey font] *

Oct 1 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 1-43
First Paper Draft DUE

Oct 6 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 44-96
Peer Evaluations DUE

Oct 8 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 97-144
First Paper DUE

Oct 13 Walter Benjamin, "Critique of Violence"*

Oct 15 Walter Benjamin, "Critique of Violence"*

Part 3: The Sexual Division of Labour and the Politics of Refusal

Concepts: *capitalist family; wageless labour; social factory; work ethic; productivism; refusal; autonomy; postwork imaginaries*

Oct 20 Mariarosa Dalla Costa & Selma James, *Women and the Subversion of the Community* *

Oct 22 Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work*, pp. 1-36

- Oct 27 Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work*, pp. 37-78
- Oct 29 Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work*, pp. 79-112
Mario Tronti, "The Strategy of Refusal" *
- Nov 3 Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work*, pp. 113-174

Part 4: Discourse, Biopower, and Resistance

Concepts: sexuality; discourse; biopower

- Nov 5 Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, pp. 1-50
Second Paper Draft DUE
- Nov 10 Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, pp. 51-91
Peer Evaluations DUE
- Nov 12 Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, pp. 92-132
Second Paper DUE
- Nov 17 Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, pp. 133-160

Part 5: The Politics of Settler Colonialism

Concepts: recognition; reconciliation; primitive accumulation

- Nov 19 Glenn Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, pp. 1-24
Film: Alanis Obomsawin, Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance
- Nov 24 Glenn Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, pp. 25-50
- Nov 26 Glenn Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, pp. 51-78; 105-130
- Dec 1 Glenn Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, pp. 131-149
- Dec 3 Glenn Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, pp. 151-179
Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work*, pp. 175-225
- Dec 7 **Third Paper DUE (418 Ferrier by 4:00 PM. Late papers must be turned in to the Political Science Office in 414 Leacock during business hours and date-stamped)**