

Power, Identity, Resistance III

Social Sciences (SOSC) 11300
Spring Quarter 2017

Professor: Aaron Benanav
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Office: Gates-Blake Hall Room 303
Office Hours: Tu/Th 2:00pm-2:50pm

Section 8: Tu/Th 12:00pm-1:20pm, Classics 405
Section 14: Tu/Th 3:00pm-4:20pm, Classics 405

Course Description

This seminar is the third quarter of a three-quarter sequence in the social sciences. It examines the ways in which power both constitutes and is constituted by economics, politics and culture in the modern era. We look at the different modes by which power is exercised as well as at various means of resisting domination. We also look at the ways in which economic, political and cultural forces interact to shape our identities. Through exposure to canonical texts, this seminar will provide you with tools for thinking through social problems and will enhance your argumentative skills. More broadly, it will help you develop your capacity for critical reasoning and writing. This spring, we will examine forms of social domination that are neither simply economic nor simply political, such as racism, imperialism, and sexism. What cultural forces motivate and maintain these relations of power? How do they shape, or undermine, efforts to create a more just world?

Required Texts

- Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals* (Cambridge)
- Du Bois, *Darkwater* (Dover)
- Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism* (Harcourt)
- Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time* (Vintage)
- De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (Vintage)
- Other texts will be made available on Chalk

Breakdown of Grades

- Attendance, 10 percent
- Short Assignments, 5 percent
- Classroom Presentation, 5 percent
- Midterm Paper, 30 percent
- Final Paper, 20 percent
- Classroom Participation, 20 percent

Course Expectations

This course serves as an introduction to social thought. Class time will be spent reconstructing and evaluating the arguments of classic texts as well as comparing these arguments to one another. The course will work best if it is a collective effort in which we all participate. For that reason, your attendance is required. One absence per quarter will be excused, as long as you notify me of your absence by email before the start of class (exceptions will be made for emergencies). Additional absences will result in the loss of 3.33 points off of your final grade.

Of course, not only attendance but also participation in discussion is essential for a successful seminar. Please take notes by hand rather than on a computer, as screens put distance between classroom participants. Students are expected to bring their own, marked-up copies of the readings to class. Read all of the required reading and to be prepared to discuss it in detail. Over the course of the quarter, you will be also expected to complete a series of writing assignments.

Writing Assignments

There are two kinds of writing assignments in this class. Short writing assignments should take about one hour. Longer assignments should take 8 hours (that is to say, an afternoon and probably an evening as well). These time estimates are suggestive of what I am looking for in terms of content. Short assignments should be approximately 500 words, single-spaced, with parenthetical citations as needed. By contrast, long assignments must be 1800-2100 words, double-spaced, and in 12pt font with one-inch margins. Long assignments should also use proper, Chicago-style footnotes for citations. For all assignments, include your name, my name, and the course number, including the section number, at the top. Also, always give your paper a substantial title. Any papers that are longer than a page should include page numbers at the bottom of each page.

Short assignments. These are meant to be “exploratory” writings. Use writing as a way to figure out what you think about a text. Here are some questions to consider. What (theoretical/practical) problem does the author address? What are his or her main points? How does the author seek to prove these points? What sort of reasoning does he or she provide and what evidence? If you had the author sitting next to you, what would you say to him or her? How would you evaluate the author’s arguments? How do the author’s points reflect on the way you choose to live your life? Please note: you don’t have to answer all of these questions in your paper. You will be given a check for any writing that shows you are making a real effort (half-credit is also possible).

Long assignments. For these, you are expected to do exploratory writing on your own and then to organize your thoughts into a polished piece of writing. One week in advance of each assignment’s due date, I will provide two questions from which you will choose one. In your essay, be sure to explain what theoretical problem or question you will address. Then, put forward an argument based on your reconstruction and evaluation of positions taken by the authors we read in class. Essays should be well organized and well written. Each paragraph must have a clear topic sentence that advances the argument by one step. You should back up the points you make using both reasoning and evidence, but note that in this class, evidence will consist solely of quotations from the texts we read, properly cited. At the end of your essay, be sure to explain the significance of the arguments you have reconstructed as well as of your evaluations (why does any of this matter?). Also, please include a works cited section with proper bibliographic information.

Note that short assignments will not be accepted late. Long assignments will be accepted late, but they will be marked off by a third of a letter grade for every day a paper is late (unless arrangements have been made with me before the original due-date has passed).

Short Class Presentations

On the first day of class, I will provide a sign-up sheet for in-class presentations. You will each do one presentation this quarter. For these presentations, you will choose one paragraph from the days' reading that is worth emphasizing for any of the following reasons: it makes a key point; it makes a perplexing point; it provides a crucial piece of evidence; or it opens the author up to criticism. At the start of class, you will do a 5-7 minute presentation on the paragraph and why you chose it. You will also provide the class with one or two questions that follow from your reading of the passage. I would prefer that you not read your presentation, but feel free bring notes/outlines.

Appendix: Additional Course Policies

Disabilities: Please contact me and Student Disability Services (<https://disabilities.uchicago.edu/request-review>) by the end of the second week if you have a documented disability so we can make reasonable accommodations. All discussions will remain confidential.

Citations: For essay assignments, cite by author, title and page number any ideas that are (a) not common knowledge and (b) not your own idea. Anything covered in lecture counts as common knowledge. Put quotations in quotation marks and, again, identify their source. When possible, paraphrase from sources (and cite them) rather than quoting them directly. For citation style, I prefer the Chicago Manual of Style, which uses footnotes for citations. If you are unfamiliar with this citation style, please see: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/03/>

Academic Dishonesty: Acts of plagiarism, cheating, or copying work from other students, as well as other sorts of academic dishonesty, are serious violations of university policy. Do not copy ideas, quotations, portions of papers or entire papers from friends, websites, books, articles, or term-paper mills. You will get caught, either in this course, or in a later one. The consequences of cheating for your education and your moral character will last a lifetime.

Discrimination, Intimidation & Harassment: It is the right of all students to have equal access to course content in an environment free of prejudice, discrimination, and harassment. Learn your fellow students names. Treat them with respect regardless of differences of perspective.

Questions: If you have any questions, do not hesitate to visit me in office hours. I will also answer emails pertaining to the course, but I will do so only during office hours. In other words, I prefer that if you have a substantial question, you ask me in person. If you cannot come to my office hours because of a scheduling conflict, or for any other reason, we can always arrange to meet at another time. I am also regularly in my office, so feel free to come by and say hello.



READING SCHEDULE

Week I

March 28th: Kant, "Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View"
March 30th: Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, Book 1

Week II

April 4th: Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, Book 2
April 6th: Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, Book 3

Week III

April 11th: Du Bois, *Darkwater*, Ch. 1-5
April 13th: Du Bois, *Darkwater*, Ch. 6-10

Week IV

April 18th: Arendt, *Origins*, Preface to First Edition & Preface to Part I, Chapters 1-3
April 20th: Arendt, *Origins*, Preface to Part II, Chapters 5-7

Week V

April 25th: Arendt, *Origins*, Chapter 9
April 27th: Arendt, *Origins*, Preface to Part III, Chapters 10-11

Week VI

May 2nd: Arendt, *Origins*, Chapter 12-13
May 4th: *From Civil Rights to Black Power*, Part 1;¹ *The Fire Next Time*, Part 1 (pp. 1-10)

Week VII

May 9th: Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, Part 2 (pp. 11-106)
May 11th: *From Civil Rights to Black Power*, Part 2²

Week VIII

May 16th: De Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, Vol. 1, Introduction & Part 1, Ch. 1-3 (pp. 3-68)
May 18th: De Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, Vol. 1, Part 3, Ch. 1 (pp. 159-213)

Week IX

May 23rd: De Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, Vol. 2, Introduction & Ch. 2-4 (279; 341-436)
May 25th: De Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, Vol. 2, Ch. 10-12, 14 & Concl. (638-708; 712-766)

Week X

May 30th: *From Civil Rights to Black Power*, Part 3³
June 1st: READING PERIOD

¹ Oliver C. Cox, "The Race Problem in the US;" James Baldwin, "Nobody Knows My Name," "In Search of a Majority;" Edward Rodman, "Portsmouth: A Lesson in Non-Violence;" MLK Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"

² Malcolm X, "Message to the Grassroots," "A Declaration of Independence," "The Ballot or the Bullet," & "The Black Revolution;" James Boggs, "The City is a Black Man's Land;" Huey Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide* (selections); Eldridge Cleaver, "On Lumpen Ideology;" Adolph Reed, "Black Particularity Reconsidered"

³ Claudia Jones, "An End to Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman," Frances Beal, "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female," & Angela Davis, "The Approaching Obsolescence of Housework"

WRITING SCHEDULE

Week I

March 28th:

March 30th:

Week II

April 4th: Reading Response (Nietzsche)

April 6th:

Week III

April 11th:

April 13th: Reading Response (DuBois)

Week IV

April 18th:

April 20th: Reading Response (Arendt)

Week V

April 25th:

April 27th:

Week VI

May 2nd:

May 4th:

Week VII

May 8th: **Mid-Term Paper Due Monday in Gates-Blake 310 by 4:30pm**

May 9th:

May 11th: Reading Response (Baldwin & Black Power)

Week VIII

May 16th:

May 18th: Reading Response (De Beauvoir)

Week IX

May 23rd:

May 25th:

Week X

May 30th:

June 1st: READING PERIOD

Finals Week

June 7th: **Final Paper Due Wednesday in Gates-Blake 310 by 4:30pm**

PRESENTATION SCHEDULE, SECTION 8

<i>Week I</i>	Presenter	Reading
March 30th:	Gaurav K.	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , Book 1
<i>Week II</i>		
April 4th:	Luis V.	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , Book 2
April 6th:	Elizabeth C.	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , Book 3
<i>Week III</i>		
April 11th:	Lucas C.	Du Bois, <i>Darkwater</i> , Ch. 1-5
April 13th:	Nicole H.	Du Bois, <i>Darkwater</i> , Ch. 6-10
<i>Week IV</i>		
April 18th:	Jasper + Hsin Min	Arendt, <i>Origins</i> , First two Prefaces, Chapters 1-3
April 20th:	Tina T.	Arendt, <i>Origins</i> , Preface to Part II, Chapters 5-7
<i>Week V</i>		
April 25th:	Sam M.	Arendt, <i>Origins</i> , Chapter 9
April 27th:	Axel E.	Arendt, <i>Origins</i> , Preface to Part III, Chapters 10-11
<i>Week VI</i>		
May 2nd:	Stacy W.	Arendt, <i>Origins</i> , Chapter 12-13
May 4th:	Tobi O.	<i>From Civil Rights to Black Power</i> , Part 1; <i>The Fire Next Time</i> , P. 1 (pp. 1-10)
<i>Week VII</i>		
May 9th:	Perry S.	Baldwin, <i>The Fire Next Time</i> , Part 2 (pp. 11-106)
May 11th:	Tyler R.	<i>From Civil Rights to Black Power</i> , Part 2
<i>Week VIII</i>		
May 16th:	Angel C.	De Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> , Vol. 1, Intro. & Part 1, Ch. 1-3 (pp. 3-68)
May 18th:	Alice Q.	De Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> , Vol. 1, Part 3, Ch. 1 (pp. 159-213)
<i>Week IX</i>		
May 23rd:	Lizzie H.	De Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> , Vol. 2, Introduction & Ch. 2-4 (279; 341-436)
May 25th:	Nikita C.	De Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> , Vol. 2, Ch. 10-12, 14 & C. (638-708; 712-766)
<i>Week X</i>		
May 30th:	Ben C.	<i>From Civil Rights to Black Power</i> , Part 3

PRESENTATION SCHEDULE, SECTION 14

<i>Week I</i>	Presenter	Reading
March 30th:	Henry M.	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , Book 1
<i>Week II</i>		
April 4th:	Bryant J.	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , Book 2
April 6th:	Ben W.	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , Book 3
<i>Week III</i>		
April 11th:	Chris C.	Du Bois, <i>Darkwater</i> , Ch. 1-5
April 13th:	Jaehwan S.	Du Bois, <i>Darkwater</i> , Ch. 6-10
<i>Week IV</i>		
April 18th:	Natalie L.	Arendt, <i>Origins</i> , First two Prefaces, Chapters 1-3
April 20th:	Cyrus P.	Arendt, <i>Origins</i> , Preface to Part II, Chapters 5-7
<i>Week V</i>		
April 25th:	Alexa S.	Arendt, <i>Origins</i> , Chapter 9
April 27th:	Lina R.	Arendt, <i>Origins</i> , Preface to Part III, Chapters 10-11
<i>Week VI</i>		
May 2nd:	Lancy Z.	Arendt, <i>Origins</i> , Chapter 12-13
May 4th:	Sebastian H.	<i>From Civil Rights to Black Power</i> , Part 1; <i>The Fire Next Time</i> , P. 1 (pp. 1-10)
<i>Week VII</i>		
May 9th:	Andrew F.	Baldwin, <i>The Fire Next Time</i> , Part 2 (pp. 11-106)
May 11th:	Eli W.	<i>From Civil Rights to Black Power</i> , Part 2
<i>Week VIII</i>		
May 16th:	Corinne R.	De Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> , Vol. 1, Intro. & Part 1, Ch. 1-3 (pp. 3-68)
May 18th:	Rachel A.	De Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> , Vol. 1, Part 3, Ch. 1 (pp. 159-213)
<i>Week IX</i>		
May 23rd:	Sara H.	De Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> , Vol. 2, Introduction & Ch. 2-4 (279; 341-436)
May 25th:	Alice F.	De Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> , Vol. 2, Ch. 10-12, 14 & C. (638-708; 712-766)
<i>Week X</i>		
May 30th:	N/A	<i>From Civil Rights to Black Power</i> , Part 3