

SPRING 2008

POSC 250: CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL THEORY

“Whatever the public may think, it is often the case that powerful processes have already initiated torture long before many people know it is being used in their name.”

Darius Rejali, *Torture and Democracy* (2007)

“Empire is materializing before our very eyes. Over the past several decades, as colonial regimes were overthrown and then precipitously after the Soviet barrier to the capitalist world market finally collapsed, we have witnessed an irresistible and irreversible globalization of economic and cultural exchanges. Along with the global market and global circuit of production has emerged a global order, a new logic and structure of rule—in short, a new form of sovereignty.”

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (2000)

The twentieth century is over. New ways of making sense of the old and attempts to make sense of the new have already begun to take shape in 21st century political analysis. This course sets recent texts into conversation with critical political theories of the 19th and 20th centuries. Central questions include the status of democratic legitimacy and national sovereignty. We will investigate new and newly apparent ways in which power circulates and becomes manifest in the world, the hemisphere, the nation, the community, the family, and the thinking and feeling subject’s mind and body.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*

Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*

Michael Hardt and Negri, *Empire*

Darius Rejali, *Democracy and Torture*

Khristina Haddad

haddad@moravian.edu

Comenius 112

610.861.1559

Office Hours: Wednesday 3:45-5:00, Thursday 10:20-12:00, and by appointment

Wednesday, January 16
Friday, January 18

Introduction
bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, Chapter 5, “Theory as Liberatory Practice”
Leo Strauss, *What is Liberal Education?* (online)

Wednesday, January 23
Friday, January 25

Allan Bloom, *The Democratization of the University* (online) **JIM**
Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History?* (online) and *After Neoconservatism* (NYT, 2006)
JARED

Wednesday, January 30
Friday, February 1

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*
Marx and Engels **NICK**

Wednesday, February 6
Friday, February 8

Marx and Engels
Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*

Wednesday, February 13
Friday, February 15

Schmitt **MIKE**
Schmitt

Monday, February 18

Paper #1. Please give your paper to Mrs. Ortiz in Com 206 by 4 p.m.

Wednesday, February 20
Friday, February 22

Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, Part I
Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, Part II, 2.1-2.2 **JAN**

Wednesday, February 27
Friday, February 29

Hardt and Negri, Part II, 2.1-2.2
JARED AND JIM, SECONDARY SOURCES

Wednesday, March 12
Friday, March 14

Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, Part III, 3.1 and 3.3
NICK, SECONDARY SOURCES

Tuesday, March 18
Wednesday, March 19

Research paper proposal due to Mrs. Ortiz by 4 p.m.
Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, Part III, 3.4 and 3.6

Wednesday, March 26
Friday, March 28

Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, Part IV
Closing discussion on *Empire*

Tuesday, April 1
Wednesday, April 2
Friday, April 4

Draft of paper #2 due.
Darius Rejali, *Democracy and Torture*
Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (on reserve) **DANI**

Wednesday, April 9
Friday, April 11

Rejali
Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (on reserve)

Wednesday, April 16
Friday, April 18

Rejali
JAN AND MIKE, SECONDARY SOURCES

Wednesday, April 23
Friday, April 25

Rejali
DANI, SECONDARY SOURCES

Friday, May 2

Final paper due.

Assignments, Evaluation, and Calendar

Paper #1	15%	February 18
Proposal for Paper #2	10%	March 18
Draft of Paper #2	Ungraded	April 1
Final Paper #2	25%	May 2
Shared text presentation	10%	As scheduled
Self-selected text presentation	10%	As scheduled
Engagement	30%	Ongoing

Our work together

- If you do not come to my office hours, you deprive me of the pleasure of your company and thought. I am happy to talk through readings and projects with you.
 - We will discuss all assignments two weeks in advance of a given due date. Please ask questions.
 - You cannot pass this course without completing all assignments and requirements.
- I recommend taking drafts to the Writing Center. I should not have to comment on clarity, orthography, and punctuation in an advanced-level theory class. The more you work on your writing, the more interesting comments I will write on your papers.
 - I do not accept late assignments, except in appropriately documented emergency situations.
- The readings in this course will sometimes be long, dense, intellectually challenging, and at times, emotionally disturbing. They are also worth the time and effort it takes to understand anything complex.
 - Students with a documented learning disability who desire accommodations for this course must first visit the Office of Learning Services (ext. 1510) and follow college procedures for receiving accommodations.
- Plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment in this class. Please see Moravian College Student Handbook for an account of academic honesty. See www.moravian.edu/studentlife/handbook/academic2.htm
- We work as a group. Your presence and thoughts make all the difference. Undocumented absences harm your engagement grade at the rate of 5% per absence.
 - 10) Please support a culture of discussion.

Presentation Instructions

I. Three passages, three questions

Please send three passages and three questions intended to guide our discussion to me by e-mail outline by 5 p.m on the day **before** you are scheduled to present. I will respond in the evening or early in the morning so you will have plenty of time to make any necessary revisions and to make copies for the class. Please bring seven copies for the group.

II. Secondary sources

Find an article related to the text we are reading together. One book review (these tend to be quite short) and one full-length secondary article that helps us get a critical perspective on the main text. In the case of *Empire*, you will be able to find a lot of scholarship and commentary. In the case of *Torture and Democracy*, you will probably need to look for related scholarship on similar subjects. What I am looking for in this presentation: 1) Your particular angle of interest in this material; 2) Critical distance from the texts we are reading; 3) Careful analysis of competing arguments and an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of a text.

Two options for circulating your selected sources: 1) Place seven copies of the material in the basket on my door by noon on the day before class; 2) Circulate your sources by e-mail (see addresses below). Sources sent by e-mail should be printed and brought to class by individual students. How I can help: 1) I am happy to copy materials at the expense of the Political Science department. Please contact me in advance of the deadline. 2) The choice of secondary sources is yours, and you are also welcome to my input. Feel free to be in touch during the selection process.

Dani: stdmc02

Jan: stjcd02

Jared: stjrh03

Nick: stnsh01

Jim: stjll09

Mike: stmcp03