

Phil 335A Power and Oppression

Professor Sylvia Berryman
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Office: Buchanan E-269
Office Hours: MW 11-12pm

Winter Term 1 2023-24
MWF 2-3pm
Buch D 322

This course examines philosophical theories of power and oppression and the significance of these phenomena in human interactions. The image of power and its potential oppressive effects on the human psyche and civil society has haunted political thought: changing social structures produce different nightmares and narratives of oppressive power. As philosophers attempt to articulate these concerns, analyses of the nature of power and oppression sometimes identify our deepest values as individuals and as a human community. We will foreground the history of colonialism, capitalism and globalization as sites of power and oppression.

Readings: available on the course website. Students will research and choose one additional reading for their projects during the last two weeks of term. Readings subject to minor revision.

Week 1: WF Sept 6/8 Images of Power
Bartolomé de las Casas, 'Summary/Preface,' *In Defense of the Indians*

Week 2 MWF Sept 11/13/15 Images of Power
Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* Part 1, ch. 10-11, 13
Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, selection

Week 3 MWF Sept 18/20/22 Images of Power
Tully, 'The Two Treatises and Aboriginal Rights'
Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, selection

Week 4 MWF Sept 25/27/29 Images of Power
Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* 1&2
Hannah Arendt, 'Ideology and Terror,' *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

Week 5 MWF Oct 2/4/6 Images of Power
J.S. Mill, *On Liberty*, ch. 3, 'On Individuality'
Herbert Marcuse, ch. 1, *One-Dimensional Man*

First paper due Thursday Oct 5th

Week 6 WThF Oct 11/12/13 Theories of Power
Stephen Lukes, 1-7 in *Power: A Radical View*, 2nd Ed.
Scott Anderson, 'Sex Under Pressure,' *Res Publica* (2005)

Week 7 MWF Oct 16/18/20 Theories of Power
Michel Foucault, 'Panopticism,' ch. 3 of *Discipline and Punish*
Michel Foucault, 'The Repressive Hypothesis,' ch. 2 of *Hist. of Sexuality* vol. 1
Charles Taylor, 'Foucault on Freedom and Truth'

Week 8 MWF Oct 23/25/27 Theories of Power
Isaiah Berlin, 'Two Concepts of Liberty'

Phillip Pettit, 'Freedom as Anti-Power'

Week 9 MWF Oct 30/Nov 1/3 Theories of Oppression
Iris Marion Young, 'Five Faces of Oppression'
reading on cultural imperialism

Second paper due Thurs Nov 2nd

Week 10 MWF Nov 6/8/10 Global Economic Oppression
John Rawls, 'The Law of Peoples'
Allen Buchanan, 'Rules for a Vanished Westphalian World'

Week 11 F Nov 17 Oppression and Resistance
Vaclav Havel, 'The Power of the Powerless', selection

Week 12 MWF Nov 20/22/24 Oppression and Resistance
Iris Marion Young, 'Responsibility, Social Connection, and Global Labor Justice'
Alison Jaggar, 'Saving Amina: Global Justice for Women & Intercultural Dialogue'

Week 13 MWF Nov 27/29/Dec 1
Class presentations

Week 14 MW Dec 4/6
Class presentations

Final exam at scheduled time

Evaluation: Students will be asked to write two short papers (approx 1500 words) and a literature exam. Students will work individually or in pairs to research/present on a issue of their choice concerning power and oppression.

First paper: 20% Second paper: 25%
Class Presentation: 15% Literature Exam: 40%

Expectations: Students are asked to read the assigned material before class and bring the appropriate reading to lecture. Philosophical writing is typically dense and difficult: you may need to read more than once, take notes, and/or reread the material again following lecture. The exam will be an opportunity to show your understanding of the assigned reading. Attendance at class is expected, and is essential to understanding the material and doing well in the course. Taking notes will help you process and retain ideas.

Late penalties (2%/day) apply to work submitted after the deadline; they may be waived in case of family emergencies or medical reasons. Students registered with Access and Diversity Services and requesting accommodation because of a disability are asked to contact the instructor as soon as possible.