

## CULTURE AND POLITICS Fall 2010 CULP 045: Theorizing Culture and Politics

Professor Rochelle Davis  
 Thursday, 2:15-4:05  
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This course introduces students to the basic conceptual questions which constitute the Culture and Politics Major's intellectual identity. The course is designed to be broadly comparative by reading socio-cultural and political theory and emphasizing critical engagement with various disciplinary methodologies and sources. One goal of the course is to introduce students to various approaches to the systematic and comparative study of political and cultural institutions and practices. To this end, major theoretical texts will be placed in historical contexts and read alongside applications of those theories as they appear in a variety of scholarly texts of social analysis. A second goal of the course is to familiarize students with related but often opposing views on the interaction of culture and Politics. The intent is to provide students with a sound understanding of theory and with an appreciation of the complexity of the field as a precondition for a learned debate.

This year, for the first (and likely only) time, the class is part of the Wikipedia Public Policy Initiative ([http://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Public\\_Policy\\_Initiative](http://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Public_Policy_Initiative)). As such, a major component of the course's written assignments will focus on Wikipedia articles. You will be trained in how wikis work and the Wikipedia's ethos ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:Getting\\_started](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:Getting_started)). If you have been studiously avoiding the web until this moment, you will find useful information about Wikipedia here (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:About>). And even if you think you know everything there is to know about Wikipedia, you should still read these links pretty carefully. They are going to be part of your life for the next 4 months.

### Requirements

**1) Weekly Assignments, Attendance, and Discussions:** Each week I will send out an assignment for class that is based on the readings. They may be written assignments or presentations. You are expected to turn the written assignments to me via email by 9am on Thursday morning. Late responses will not be counted. The assignments will vary and may be used during class time. Be prepared to be called on. These will be graded, and around mid-semester I will give you feedback on your participation and assignments. Each unexcused absence will reduce your final grade by one-third of a grade.

(20% of your grade).

**2) Wikipedia Article:** You will choose a topic in consultation with me to work on as a Wikipedia article over the semester. You must choose a topic that relates to a community or group that you belonged to in the past, or belong to in the present. We will investigate through this process what it means to write from a neutral point of view about a subject that is part (or has been part) of your life and about which you have insider knowledge.

(20% of your grade upon first submission; 20% upon final submission)

**3) Wikipedia Journal:** You are required to keep a journal with four entries about your progress on the assignments and your reflections on the process of your work.

(15% of your grade).

**4) Final Paper Project:** Your final piece of work will consist of your analysis, using some of the theories, concepts, and ideas we explore in class, of the subject matter you created for Wikipedia.  
(25% of your grade).

*Failure to complete any of these requirements will result in failure of the entire course. If you miss three or more class meetings, excused or unexcused, I reserve the right to ask you to withdraw from the course or to issue you a failing grade.*

### Readings

#### **Books to buy**

Keith Basso. *Wisdom Sits in Places*. University of New Mexico Press, 1996.  
Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities*. Verso, NEW edition 2006

#### **Blackboard**

The remaining readings will be available via Blackboard for the class.

### Expectations and Responsibilities:

I expect you to do all of the reading, to participate actively in the class, to be polite and courteous to me and to your fellow students, and to be intelligent, motivated, and engaged.

Both you and I are bound by the Georgetown Honor Pledge.

*In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

[http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/hc/site\\_map.html#The Honor System](http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/hc/site_map.html#The_Honor_System)

We both are protected by and enjoy principles of academic freedom.

From the Faculty Handbook: <http://www.georgetown.edu/facultysenate/FacHbk.pdf> (p 26)

*Academic freedom is essential to teaching and research. Such freedom requires free inquiry, free expression, intellectual honesty, respect for the academic rights of others, and openness to change. The rights and responsibilities exercised within the academic community must be compatible with these requirements. All members of the faculty, in common with all other members of the community, share the responsibility for maintaining a professional atmosphere in which violations of academic freedom and responsibility are unlikely to occur. The University endorses the American Association of University Professors' 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, with clarifications that place it in the Georgetown University context (see Section XXI).*

**:: CLASS SCHEDULE ::****September 2 :: Introduction to the Course ::**

Terms and framework - paradigms of modern life

**September 9 :: Society, Government, and Property ::**

John Locke, Selections from *The Second Treatise of Civil Government* (1690)

Jean Jacques Rousseau, Selections from *The Social Contract or Principles of Political Right* (1762).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_contract](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_contract)

**September 16 :: Modernity and Labor ::**

Philip Deloria. Introduction, Natural Indians and Identities of Modernity, and Conclusion.

*In Playing Indian*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998. Pp. 1-9; 95-127; 181-191.

Selections from Karl Marx, Selections from:

“Wage Labor and Capital,” pp. 203-217.

Marx and Engels. Selections from “The German Ideology”

“The so-called primitive accumulation,” from *Capital I*, pp. 431-438.

“Estranged labor,” pp. 70-93

John D’ Emilio, “Capitalism and gay identity” in Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell and Sharon Thompson, eds., *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality* (1983).

**September 23 :: wiki-day ::**

(DAVIS absent) Computer lab class with Yonatan Moskowitz and Rob Pongsajapan.

**September 30 :: Society, Government, and Property, redux::**

Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places*. University of New Mexico Press, 1996.

**October 7 :: Nation ::**

Ernest Renan, “What is a nation?” (1882) Reprinted in *Nation and Narration*. Edited by Homi Bhabha (Routledge, 1990), pp. 8-22.

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. (Revised edition, 2006). Preface, chs 1-3 (xi-46).

Liisa Malkki. “National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees,” *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1992, pp. 24-44.

**October 14 :: Wiki-day #2 ::****October 21 :: Power ::**

Michel Foucault. Selections from *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. (Vintage, 1995) pp. 1-31; 135-228.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The History of Sexuality*. (NY: Vintage Books, 1980), pp. 92-97.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Truth and Power.” In *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*. Edited by Colin Gordon. New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1980. pp. 131-3.

Timothy Mitchell. *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity*. (Berkeley: UCalifornia Press, 2002). Introduction (pp 1-15), Ch 1: Does the Mosquito Speak (19-53).

**October 28 :: Resistance ::**

James Scott. Chapters 1, 2, and 8 from *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. (Yale, 1990). Pp. 1-44, 202-227.

Selections from Steven Biko and Malcolm X.

Selection from Kay Warren, *The Violence Within: Cultural and Political Opposition in Divided Nations: Interpreting La violencia in Guatemala* (25-56)

**November 4 :: Identity and Ethnicity ::**

Rogers Brubaker. "Ethnicity without Groups" in *Remaking Modernity: Politics, History, and Sociology*. Ed. By Julia Adams, Elisabeth Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff. (Duke UP: 2005), pp. 470-492.

Reider Visser. "The Western Imposition of Sectarianism on Iraqi Politics," *Arab Studies Journal*. Vol. XV No. 2/Vol XVI No.1, Fall 2007/Spring 2008, pp. 83-99.

**November 11 :: Race::**

Nell Irvin Painter. Selections from *The History of White People* (Norton 2010).

**November 18 :: Wiki-day #3 ::**

**November 25 (Thanksgiving)**

**December 2 :: Culture ::**

Samuel Huntington. "The Clash of Civilizations," *Foreign Affairs*; Summer 1993, Vol. 72 Issue 3, pp. 22-49.

Amartya Sen. "How Does Culture Matter?" in *Culture and Public Action: A Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue on Development Policy*, edited by Vijayendra Rao and Michael Walton (Stanford, 2004), pp. 37-58.

Stuart Hall, 'The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power', in Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben (eds.), *Formations of Modernity: Understanding Modern Societies* (Cambridge, 1992).

**December 9 :: Development ::**

Arturo Escobar. *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton University Press, 1994, pp. **10-28, 212-226**

Tim Mitchell. "America's Egypt: Discourse of the Development Industry" *Middle East Report*, No. 169, (Mar. - Apr., 1991), pp. 18-34+36. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3012949>