Capitalism and Critique:
The Frankfurt School

PHIL 641 / CRN 26317
MW 2-3:50
PLC 353

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Office Hours: R 2-4
and by appointment
PLC 331

Course Description:
Following the legacy of Marx and Weber, thinkers of all generations of the Frankfurt School have sought to theorize paradoxes of capitalist modernization. They have given accounts of the crises of capitalism and the crises of critique throughout the twentieth century, and in response have offered conceptions of social justice informed by normative concepts such as freedom and alienation. This seminar will examine critiques of capitalism within three generations of the Frankfurt School. It will also assess critical-theoretic approaches to an analysis of contemporary paradoxes of neoliberal capitalism, and will consider current proposals for rethinking critique in the neoliberal context. We will discuss texts by Marx, Weber, and Lukács; Benjamin, Horkheimer, and Adorno; Habermas, Fraser, Honneth, and Azmanova; Harvey, Boltanski and Chiapello, among others.

Required texts:
1. Marx, Early Political Writings, Capital, vol.1.
2. Weber, For Marx Weber
3. Lukács, History and Class Consciousness
4. Benjamin, “Critique of Violence” and “Theses on History”
5. Adorno and Horkheimer, Dialectic of Enlightenment
6. Habermas, Legitimation Crisis
7. Habermas, Theory of Communicative Action
8. Fraser, Unruly Practices; “Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History,” “Marketization, Social Protection, Emancipation: Toward a Neo-Polanyian Conception of Capitalist Crisis”
9. Harvey, Neoliberalism: A Short Introduction
10. Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics
12. Honneth, “Paradoxes of Capitalism” and “Organized Self-Realization”

All primary texts are available at the Duckstore or available on Blackboard.

Course Structure, Requirements, and Policies:
Written and Oral Work:
~Presentations:
You will be required to lead a seminar discussion. Leading a discussion involves writing a 5-page report on the text, which you will distribute via email to the class the day before the class session in which you will present meets. The report should reconstruct the argument of the text and raise a set of critical questions. You will open the discussion with a 10-15 minute presentation working off your written report.
~Prospectus:
You will submit a one-page prospectus stating the topic of your paper and the argument that you intend to pursue. Please include an annotated bibliography with a list of secondary sources that you intend to use. Submission of final paper is contingent on approval of your prospectus. **Your prospectus is due on Friday of week 7.**

~Final Paper:
This 3,000 wd. paper may develop further—both exegetically and critically—your presentation, although it need not. It may engage a different text among those discussed in class. As a research paper, you must engage secondary literature and pursue an original thesis.

*All final papers are due by 4pm on March 18, 2013 at the Philosophy Department* (box at the counter). No late papers will be accepted, unless accompanied by proof of illness or emergency.

**Statement on Plagiarism:**
Plagiarism is grounds for **failing the course**.
For more information, see [http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/](http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/).

**Grading Standard:**
- A+ = superb. No mistakes, well-written, well-researched, and pursues an original thesis.
- A = excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.
- B = good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.
- C = OK. Some errors, but basic grasp of the material.
- D = poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.
- F = failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or complete lack of effort.

**Grading:**
- Class participation 20%
- Presentation 20%
- Prospectus and Annotated Bibliography 10%
- Final paper 50%

**Participation:**
Coming prepared to discuss the assigned text and participating in class discussions are requirements.

**Attendance:**
You are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly. More than 3 absences will result in a failing final grade, unless proof of illness or emergency is provided.

**Accommodation for a Disability:**
If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon.
**Schedule of Readings:**

**Wk. 1**
- Mon., Jan. 7: Introduction to the course and syllabus: *Capitalism, Critique, and the Return of a Critique of Political Economy*
- Wed., Jan. 9: Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts;* Introduction to the *Grundrisse;* Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy;* chapter 1 of *Capital*

**Wk. 2**
- Wed., Jan. 16: Lukács, “What is Orthodox Marxism?” in *History and Class Consciousness*

**Wk. 3**
- Mon., Jan. 21: **MLK – No Classes**
- Wed., Jan. 23: Lukács, “Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat,” in *History and Class Consciousness*

**Wk. 4**
- Mon., Jan. 28: Benjamin, “Critique of Violence” and “Theses on History”
- Wed., Jan. 30: Adorno and Horkheimer, “Preface” and “The Concept of Enlightenment,” in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*

**Wk. 5**
- Wed., Feb. 6: Jürgen Habermas, “Crisis Tendencies in Advanced Capitalism,” in *Legitimation Crisis*
  - Recommended: “On the Logic of Legitimation Problems,” in *Legitimation Crisis*

**Wk. 6**
- Mon., Feb. 11: Jürgen Habermas, “From Lukács to Adorno: Rationalization as Reification” and “Intermediate Reflections: Social Action, Purposive Activity, and Communication,” parts 3 and 4, vol. 1 of *Theory of Communicative Action*

**Wk. 7**
- Wed., Feb. 20: Fraser, “‘Gender and the Politics of Need Interpretation,’’ part 3 of *Unruly Practices*

**Wk. 8**
- Mon., Feb. 25: Harvey, *Neoliberalism,* introduction, chapters 1-3, 6-7; Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics,* lectures 4, 5, 6, 9 10
Wk. 9
Wed., Mar 6  Fraser, “Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History,” “Marketization, Social Protection, Emancipation: Toward a Neo-Polanyian Conception of Capitalist Crisis”

Wk. 10
Wed. Mar. 13  Final Paper Workshop

Wk. 11
Wed., Mar 18  Final Essay is due