

## Social Theory II

This course will provide an overview of contemporary social theory, with an emphasis on critical or radical theoretical perspectives. Among the questions to be addressed are: Does Marxism provide an adequate theoretical foundation for the critique and transformation of capitalist society? What are the critical theoretical alternatives within and beyond Marxism? What are the limitations of Marxism as a theory of human liberation and how have other radical theoretical perspectives addressed these limitations? How does critical social theory inform sociological research and political practice?

Evaluation will be based primarily on class participation. Each week each student will be asked to introduce and lead discussion on a specific topic or question focused on one or more primary readings. In addition, students are required to submit three brief “though papers” during the course of the term (maximum length of 8 pages each) that explore, critique, extend, or apply the theoretical concepts encountered in one or more readings for a specific week. The first of these is due no later than our class meeting on Week 4; the second no later than Week 7; and the third no later than Week 10. Further details about my expectations for these papers will be provided at our first meeting.

I encourage you to purchase David Held, *Introduction to Critical Theory*, and George Ritzer, *Postmodern Social Theory*, which we will use extensively. Other required readings will be made available on reserve or in Xerox or PDF format. Further details about gaining access to the readings will be provided at our first class meeting.

### Course Readings (\*asterisk indicates required reading)

#### Week 1. Introduction (January 11)

No readings.

#### Week 2. The Origins of Western Marxism (January 18)

\*Peter Gay, *The Dilemma of Democratic Socialism: Eduard Bernstein's Challenge to Marx*, chapters 6-8.

\*Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 1-26, 83-110.

\*Carl Boggs, *Gramsci's Marxism*, chapters 1-3.

Eduard Bernstein, *Evolutionary Socialism*.

Lucio Colletti, “Bernstein and the Marxism of the Second International,” in *From Rousseau to Lenin*.

Andrew Arato and Paul Breines, *The Young Lukacs and the Origins of Western Marxism*.

Gareth Stedman Jones, “The Marxism of the Early Lukacs,” in *New Left Review*, eds., *Western Marxism: A Critical Reader*.

Andrew Feenberg, *Lukacs, Marx, and the Sources of Critical Theory*.  
 Istvan Meszaros, *Lukacs' Concept of Dialectic*.  
 Martin Jay, *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukacs to Habermas*.  
 Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, especially pp. 5-14, 123-205, 321-343.  
 Joseph Femia, *Gramsci's Political Thought*.  
 Ann Showstack Sassoon, ed., *Approaches to Gramsci*.  
 Chantal Mouffe, ed., *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*.  
 Christine Buci-Glucksmann, *Gramsci and the State*.  
 G. D. H. Cole, *A History of Socialist Thought*, Vol. 3.

### **Week 3. The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory (January 25)**

\*David Held, *Introduction to Critical Theory*, especially pp. 16-23, 65-134, 148-199, 250-400.  
 Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination*.  
 Phil Slater, *The Origin and Significance of the Frankfurt School*.  
 Douglas Kellner, *Critical Theory, Marxism, and Modernity*.  
 Perry Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism*.  
 Goran Therborn, "The Frankfurt School," in *New Left Review*, eds., *Western Marxism: A Critical Reader*.  
 Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory*.  
 Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*.  
 Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*.  
 Herbert Marcuse, *Negations*.  
 Jurgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, appendix.  
 Jurgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, chapter 6.  
 Jurgen Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, chapter 4 (sections 1-5).  
 Jurgen Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*, chapter 6.  
 Jurgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, part 2.  
 Thomas McCarthy, *The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas*.  
 John B. Thompson and David Held, eds., *Habermas: Critical Debates*.  
 Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere*.  
 Tom Rockmore, *Habermas on Historical Materialism*.  
 Steven K. White, *The Recent Work of Jurgen Habermas*.

### **Week 4. The Positivism Debate (February 1)**

\*Anthony Giddens, "Introduction." Pp. 1-22 in A. Giddens, ed., *Positivism and Sociology*.  
 \*David Frisby, "The Popper-Adorno Controversy: The Methodological Dispute in German Sociology." *Philosophy and Social Science* 2 (1972): 105-119.  
 \*Theodore Adorno, "Sociology and Empirical Research." Pp. 68-86 in T. Adorno et al., *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*.

- \*Russell Keat, *The Politics of Social Theory*, chapters 1-2.
- \*George Steinmetz, "Scientific Authority and the Transition to Post-Fordism: The Plausibility of Positivism in U.S. Sociology since 1945." Pp. 275-323 in G. Steinmetz, ed., *The Politics of Method in the Human Sciences: Positivism and Its Epistemological Others*.
- \*Val Burris. "Fordism and Positivism in U.S. Sociology," *Social Science History* 31 (2007): 93-104.
- Karl Popper, "The Logic of the Social Sciences." Pp. 87-104 in T. Adorno et al., *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*.
- Theodore Adorno, "On the Logic of the Social Sciences." Pp. 105-122 in T. Adorno et al., *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*.
- Hans Albert, "The Myth of Total Reason." Pp. 163-197 in T. Adorno et al., *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*.
- Jurgen Habermas. "A Positivistically Bisected Rationalism." Pp. 198-225 in T. Adorno et al., *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*.
- Karl Popper, "Reason or Revolution?" Pp. 288-300 in T. Adorno et al., *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*.
- Albrecht Wellmer, "Empirico-Analytical and Critical Social Science." Pp. 9-65 in *Critical Theory of Society*.

### **Week 5. Structuralist Marxism and Its Critics (February 8)**

- \*Val Burris, "Marxism and Structuralism," *Current Perspectives in Social Theory*, Vol. 2, 1981.
- \*Robin Blackburn and Gareth Stedman Jones. "Louis Althusser and the Struggle for Marxism," in Dick Howard and Karl Klare, eds., *The Unknown Dimension*.
- \*Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, pp. 87-111, 200-218.
- \*Nicos Poulantzas and Ralph Miliband, "The Problem of the Capitalist State," in Robin Blackburn, ed., *Ideology in Social Science*.
- \*Douglas V. Porpora, "The Role of Agency in History: The Althusser-Thompson-Anderson Debate," *Current Perspectives in Social Theory*, Vol. 6, 1985.
- Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, pp. 127-186.
- Louis Althusser, *Essays in Self-Criticism*.
- Nicos Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes*.
- Nicos Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*.
- Nicos Poulantzas, *State, Power, Socialism*.
- Ted Benton, *The Rise and Fall of Structural Marxism*, chapter 7.
- Norman Geras, "Althusser's Marxism: An Account and an Assessment," *New Left Review*, No. 71, 1972.
- E. P. Thompson, *The Poverty of Theory*, pp. 193-295.
- Perry Anderson, *Arguments within English Marxism*, chapters 1-3.
- Bob Jessop, *Nicos Poulantzas: Marxist Theory and Political Strategy*.
- Simon Clarke et al., *One-Dimensional Marxism: Althusser and the Politics of Culture*.

## **Week 6. Analytical Marxism and Rational-Choice Theory (February 15)**

- \*Erik Olin Wright, "What is Analytical Marxism?" *Socialist Review*, No. 89/4, 1989.
- \*Jon Elster, "Marxism, Functionalism, and Game Theory," *Theory and Society*, Vol. 11, 1982.
- \*John Roemer, "New Directions in the Marxian Theory of Exploitation and Class," in John Roemer, ed., *Analytical Marxism*.
- \*Ronald A. Kieve, "From Necessary Illusion to Rational Choice? A Critique of Neo-Marxist Rational-Choice Theory," *Theory and Society*, Vol. 15, 1986.
- \*Ellen Meiksins Wood, "Rational Choice Marxism: Is the Game Worth the Candle?" *New Left Review*, No. 177, 1989.
- G. A. Cohen, "Reply to Elster on 'Marxism, Functionalism, and Game Theory,'" *Theory and Society*, Vol. 11, 1982
- Adam Przeworski, "Material Interests, Class Compromise, and the Transition to Socialism," in John Roemer, ed., *Analytical Marxism*.
- G. A. Cohen, "Reconsidering Historical Materialism." *Nomos*, Vol. 26 (Marxism), 1983.
- Michael A. Lebowitz, "Is 'Analytical Marxism' Marxism?" *Science and Society*, Vol. 52, No. 2, 1988.
- Erik Olin Wright, "Class Analysis, History and Emancipation," *New Left Review*, No. 202, 1993.
- Erik Olin Wright, *Classes*, especially chapters 1-4.
- John Roemer, *A General Theory of Exploitation and Class*.
- Jon Elster, *Making Sense of Marx*.
- G. A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defense*.
- Andrew Levine and Erik Olin Wright, "Rationality and Class Struggle," *New Left Review*, No. 123, 1980.
- Alan Carling, "Rational Choice Marxism," *New Left Review*, No. 160, 1986.
- Philippe Van Parijs, "Functionalist Marxism Rehabilitated: A Comment on Elster," *Theory and Society*, Vol. 11, 1982.
- John E. Roemer, "Methodological Individualism and Deductive Marxism," *Theory and Society*, Vol. 11, 1982.
- Johannes Berger and Claus Offe, "Functionalism versus Rational Choice?" *Theory and Society*, Vol. 11, 1982.
- Andrew Levine, Elliott Sober, and Erik Olin Wright, "Marxism and Methodological Individualism," *New Left Review*, No. 162, 1987

## **Week 7. The Marx-Weber Debate (February 22)**

- \*Wolfgang J. Mommsen, "Capitalism and Socialism: Weber's Dialogue with Marx," in Robert J. Antonio and Ronald M. Glassman, eds., *A Weber-Marx Dialogue*.
- \*Douglas Kellner, "Critical Theory, Max Weber, and the Dialectics of Domination," in Robert J. Antonio and Ronald M. Glassman, eds., *A Weber-Marx Dialogue*.
- \*Anthony Giddens, *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, Introduction.
- \*Erik Olin Wright, "Giddens's Critique of Marxism," *New Left Review*, No. 138, 1983.
- \*Val Burris, "The Neo-Marxist Synthesis of Marx and Weber on Class," in Norbert Wiley, ed., *The Marx-Weber Debate*.

- Reinhard Bendix, "Inequality and Social Structure: A Comparison of Marx and Weber," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 39, No. 2, 1974.
- Bryan S. Turner, *For Weber*.
- Karl Loewith, *Max Weber and Karl Marx*.
- Johannes Weiss, *Weber and the Marxist World*.
- John Lewis, *Max Weber and Value-Free Sociology: A Marxist Critique*.
- Max Weber, "Socialism," in J. Eldridge, ed., *Max Weber: The Interpretation of Reality*.
- Randall Collins, "Weber's Last Theory of Capitalism," in *Weberian Sociological Theory*.
- Frank Parkin, *Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique*.
- Raymond Murphy, "Exploitation or Exclusion?" *Sociology*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 1985.
- J. M. Barbalet, "Social Closure in Class Analysis: A Critique of Parkin," *Sociology*, Vol. 16, No. 4, 1982.

### **Week 8. Postmodernism and Its Critics (February 29)**

- \*Michael Rosenthal, "What Was Postmodernism?" *Socialist Review*, Vol. 22, No. 3, 1992.
- \*George Ritzer, *Postmodern Social Theory* (chapters 1, 3-6, 9, 12).
- \*Pauline Marie Rosenau, *Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences* (chap. 1,7,8).
- Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*.
- Jean Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production*.
- Jean Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*.
- Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.
- Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*.
- Alex Callinicos, *Against Postmodernism: A Marxist Critique*.
- Steven Best and Douglas Kelner, *Postmodern Theory*.
- Roy Boyne and Ali Rattansi, eds., *Postmodernism and Society*.
- Terry Eagleton, "Capitalism, Modernism and Postmodernism," *New Left Review*, No. 152, 1985.
- Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," *New Left Review*, No. 146, 1984.
- Fredric Jameson, "Marxism and Postmodernism," *New Left Review*, No. 176, 1989.
- David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*.
- Jurgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*.
- Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*.
- Bryan S. Turner, ed., *Theories of Modernity and Postmodernity*.
- Andrew Ross, ed., *Universal Abandon? The Politics of Postmodernism*.
- Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism*.
- Douglas Kellner, *Critical Theory, Marxism, and Modernity*.
- Michael Ryan, *Marxism and Deconstruction: A Critical Articulation*.
- Barry Smart, *Foucault, Marxism and Critique*.

### Week 9. Marxism, Feminism, and Postmodernism (March 7)

- \*Zillah Eisenstein, "Constructing a Theory of Capitalist Patriarchy and Socialist Feminism," in Karen V. Hansen and Ilene J. Philipson, eds., *Women, Class and the Feminist Imagination*.
- \*Heidi Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union," in Lydia Sargent, ed., *Women and Revolution*.
- \*Jane Humphries, "Class Struggle and the Persistence of the Working-Class Family" in Anthony Giddens and David Held, eds., *Class, Power, Conflict*.
- \*Iris Young, "Beyond the Unhappy Marriage: A Critique of the Dual Systems Theory," in Lydia Sargent, ed., *Women and Revolution*.
- \*Sandra Harding, "What is the Real Material Base of Patriarchy and Capital?" in Lydia Sargent, ed., *Women and Revolution*.
- \*Jane Flax, "Postmodernism and Gender Relations in Feminist Theory," in Linda J. Nicholson, ed., *Feminism/Postmodernism*.
- Val Burris, "The Dialectic of Women's Oppression: Notes on the Relationship between Capitalism and Patriarchy," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, 1982.
- Michele Barrett, *Women's Oppression Today*.
- Brenner, Johanna and Maria Ramas. "Rethinking Women's Oppression." *New Left Review*, No. 144, 1984.
- Barrett, Michele. "Rethinking Women's Oppression: A Reply to Brenner and Ramas." *New Left Review*, No. 146, 1984.
- Annette Kuhn and AnnMarie Wolpe, eds., *Feminism and Materialism*.
- Zillah Eisenstein, ed., *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism*.
- Alison M. Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*.
- Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse, and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory*.
- Jane Flax, *Thinking Fragments: Psychoanalysis, Feminism and Postmodernism in the Contemporary West*.
- Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*.
- Lise Vogel, *Marxism and the Oppression of Women*.
- Hester Eisenstein, *Feminism Seduced*.

### Week 10. Theoretical Realism and the Wright-Burawoy Debate (March 14)

- \*Erik Olin Wright et al., *The Debate on Classes*, chapter 2.
- \*"Symposium on the Foundations of Radical Social Science," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 34, 1989, pp. 51-56, 65-85, 111-135, 165-186, 209-249.
- Andrew Sayer, *Method in Social Science: A Realist Approach*.
- Roy Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory of Science*.
- Roy Bhaskar, *The Possibility of Naturalism*.
- Roy Bhaskar, *Scientific Realism and Human Emancipation*.
- Rom Harre, *Varieties of Realism*.
- Jarrett Leplin, ed., *Scientific Realism*.
- Garry Potter and Jose Lopez, eds., *After Postmodernism? Critical Realism*.
- Russell Keat and John Urry, *Social Theory as Science*.