

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

Archive of the Social Science Seminar



2018-2019 | Crisis and Critique

Cover photograph: Eritrean Refugees on the Verge of Being Rescued in the Mediterranean.
Credit: Paolo Pellegrin for Magnum

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2018-2019

Founded in 1973, the School of Social Science is the most recent and smallest of the four Schools of the Institute for Advanced Study. It takes as its mission the analysis of contemporary societies and social change. It is devoted to a pluralistic and critical approach to social research, from a multidisciplinary and international perspective. Each year, the School invites approximately twenty-five scholars who conduct research with various perspectives, methods and topics, providing a space for intellectual debate and mutual enrichment. Scholars are drawn from a wide range of disciplines, notably political science, economics, law, sociology, anthropology, history, philosophy, and literature. To facilitate intellectual engagement among the visiting scholars, the School defines a theme for each year.

Besides the informal conversations that take place all year long, the scientific activity of the School is mostly centered on two moments. The weekly Social Science Seminar offers the opportunity to all members to present their work, whether it is related to the theme or not. The Theme Seminar meets on a bimonthly basis and is mostly based on discussion of the literature and works relevant to the theme. In 2018-2019, the theme was “Crisis and Critique.” The program was led jointly by Didier Fassin, James D. Wolfensohn Professor in the School, and Distinguished Visiting Professor Axel Honneth, Jack C. Weinstein Professor for the Humanities in the Department of Philosophy at Columbia University and Director of the Institute for Social Research at Goethe University Frankfurt.

**School of Social Science
2018-2019**

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Social Science Seminar

CRISIS AND CRITIQUE: A DISCOURSE ON THE METHOD

Didier Fassin

We inhabit a world in crisis. Or, to formulate it more accurately, we live in a world where the language of crisis has become the most common way of representing a series of situations we face. We have environmental, economic, democratic, diplomatic, humanitarian, refugee, food crises as well as identity, legitimation, solidarity, security, gender crises, and even crises in the social sciences. How can we account for such ubiquity of the word? How can we study both crises and the discourse on crisis? What can be a method to think together crisis and critique?

The talk initially proposed a philological and genealogical approach to the multiple and extensive uses of the word, showing first that since the beginning it implied both the existence and the recognition of a critical moment, second that from its original religious and medical uses it had kept in tension two philosophies of history and conceptions of time in terms of a decisive moment and of recurrent events, third that the association of the meaning of and resort to the notion with Western modernity could be analyzed negatively or positively, as illustrated by Koselleck and Foucault respectively, but should also be questioned.

Crises usually combine an objective and a subjective element, or better said, a factual and a performative one, which leads to analyzing them from the dual perspective of their social production (what caused the problem?) and their social construction (how did it come to be a problem?). But there can be a dissociation of the two dimensions when the problem is not effectively problematized (a critical situation without language of crisis), or when the problematization does not correspond to an actual problem (a language of crisis without critical situation). Inspired by Benveniste, we can therefore ask who has the authority to name a crisis, and who does not, and what the naming of a crisis authorizes, and what it censures. A series of case studies in Europe, North America and South Africa have served as illustrations.

The multiplication of facts described as crises generates another sort of interrogation. Does it mean that all these crises have a common denominator or are reducible to one meta-crisis, whether it is that of capitalism, of progress, or of the relationships among humans and with non-humans? Such thesis would lead to a double paradox: semantic, since a world in crisis would imply a normalization of crisis whereas crisis is supposed to be a rupture in the normal order of things; and epistemological, since the idea of a permanent crisis would tend to essentialize it, while it is in fact always the outcome of a social construction. Following Wittgenstein, it may be more heuristic to consider crisis as a contemporary form of life, leading to explore the sort of truths it reveals. Such exploration supposes to avoid both presentist tendencies and ethnocentric temptations, which are common among the users of the language of crisis, without eluding Gramsci's reflection about moments when "the old is dying and the new cannot be born."

September 17, 2018

THE ROLE OF TROUBLEMAKERS IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Dieter Thomä

Crisis and critique apply to situations in which social coherence, common sense, everyday customs and over-arching consensus are shattered. When talking about crisis and critique – the theme of the year 2018/19 – we need to account for the social and political actors taking a stance and making an impact. Outsiders, outliers, misfits and other marginal or liminal figures practice various modes of dissent and deviation. This lecture outlines a typology of troublemakers who relate and react to crises in extremely different ways. As it turns out, they behave in a critical as well as uncritical manner, i.e. their willingness to embrace *krinein* in the sense of deliberation and decision-making varies. The red thread for the typology of troublemakers is provided by a figure introduced by Thomas Hobbes and re-interpreted by a great number of theorists from the 17th century to the present: the so-called *puer robustus* or “strong and sturdy boy.” The shifting images of this figure serve as a rich repertoire for various forms of troublemaking.

The first type of troublemaker can be called egocentric. Their actions are driven by self-interest only. They expect private benefits from exploiting and aggravating social anomy or by violating rules. The second type of troublemaker acts eccentrically. Self-interest is not accessible to them, as they are still on the way to finding or fashioning themselves. They turn against conformism and do not comply with the order of the day. The third type of troublemaker deserves to be called nomocentric (*nomos* = law) as they turn against an existing order and aim at building a new one. The fourth type of troublemaker practices a distorted or disturbed form of disturbance as they defect from an existing order without being able to endure the experience of liminality. As they eagerly seek to join a homogeneous collective, they can be called massive troublemakers.

It is argued that today’s societies are marked by an uncoupling of crisis and critique. Crises do not necessarily bring about figures embracing the critical faculty of deliberation and decision-making. Egocentric and massive troublemakers behave uncritically in times of crisis. They turn against an order and establish a big disconnect by pursuing purely individualistic interests or by falling for collectivism. In return, eccentric and nomocentric troublemakers maintain a critical perspective by engaging with others and dealing with differences. The future of democracies depends on their ability and willingness to take crises as opportunities for raising critical awareness and reshaping the political order.

September 24, 2018

THE PARTY OF WHICH PEOPLE?

THE EVOLUTION OF THE DEMOCRATS FROM JACKSON TO OBAMA

Michael Kazin

I am writing a history of the Democratic Party from its creation to the present. I examine how, in combination, its ideology, organizational abilities, constituency, and policies have both changed and, in some ways, endured – and what impact those have had on the party’s ability to win elections and govern. U.S. historians have, by and large, neglected the study of major political parties as constantly evolving institutions over long periods of time. Some political scientists do analyze parties historically, of course. Most notable are those in the American Political Development school – whose figures include such eminent scholars as Theda Skocpol, Stephen Skowronek, and Ira Katznelson. But most study one aspect of the party in depth and over a limited period.

My narrative is framed by two interrelated themes, with an argument about each one. The first theme is the shifting demographic makeup of the Democratic constituency – and the party’s unwillingness for a long time and inability at others to unite wage earners and small farmers across ethnic and racial lines – what used to be called a coalition of the “producing classes.” I argue that only when Democrats were able to do this – from 1828 to 1856 and then from 1932 to 1968 – were they able to dominate US politics.

The second theme is a broad continuity in the party’s articulation of a vision of “moral capitalism” – a system that would balance protection for the rights of property owners and employers with an abiding concern for the welfare of men and women of little or modest means who increasingly worked for someone else. Periods when the Democrats made persuasive arguments about their commitment to create and then preserve such a system were the only periods when the Democrats gained a durable majority. From the second decade of the twentieth century onward, the Democrats’ articulation of discourses and enactment of policies to create a moral capitalism have been central to developing the politics of modern liberalism – and to constructing the main pillars of the welfare state in the 20th and 21st century.

Since the start, Democrats have struggled to define which “people” they both represent and want to represent – and this struggle has been central to much else they have managed to accomplish – ideologically, structurally, electorally, and in terms of policies they are able to enact when in power. Their deployment of concepts of moral capitalism both helped and limited the constituency they were able to attract.

October 1, 2018

SECURITY CRISES POPULISM, NATIONALISM AND THREATS TO DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE

Mabel Berezin

Right or extreme nationalist parties and voices (my preferred term for “populism”) have inhabited the European political landscape in various forms since the end of World War II. Since the millennium, populist parties have slowly expanded their constituencies across Europe. If time had stopped in 2008, populist parties would have continued to occupy their tertiary niche in European politics.

Until 2016, European populism barely registered on the radar screen of media commentators and public intellectuals. By 2017, populism became the term *du jour* for a host of disparate phenomena in contemporary European politics. While there is considerable national variation in the form and content of populist parties and movements, there are some constants that apply across cases. First, contemporary European populism is not a new political phenomenon nor is it simply a replay of the politics of the 1930s. Second, populism is not disappearing in the near future. Third, populism is more a political mood than an ideology or to put it another way, a historically contingent aggregation of collective preferences with no coherent ideology to unite them.

Crisis events in 2015 that began in January with the Charlie Hebdo murders in Paris, followed by the different but equally fraught Greece austerity crisis in July and then the fall refugee crisis produced the perfect storm that rippled, and continues to ripple across European politics. The triple crises of 2015 (terror, austerity and refugee) produced a cascade of events in 2016 and widened the opening for right nationalist or populist parties that already existed to mobilize nationalist feelings that were already there.

Security is both a feeling and fact that is embedded in national social, economic, political and cultural institutions. National states are conceptualized as institutional locations of *security* that lend a kind of collective emotional security to citizens. Citizenship, defense, social welfare systems and common language are all, from this perspective, aspects of real and felt security.

Explaining the appeal of the populist right in terms of a *security crisis* is a more robust way of thinking of current events than explanations that focus on facile conceptions of cultural identity as well as purely economic explanations. Security and futurity are linked. Security stabilizes collective meanings around institutional locations—it provides a sense of what happened today will happen tomorrow. Theorizing security in this broad way weds institutions to culture, emotion, historical legacy as well as the more standard ideas of security contained in concepts of social welfare and solidarity.

October 8, 2018

**FROM SLAVERY TO PRECARITY?
AFRICAN LABOR HISTORY AND THE HISTORY OF WORK
IN AFRICA SINCE THE LATE 19TH CENTURY**

Andreas Eckert

The Dutch scholars Jan Breman and Marcel van der Linden recently argued that “the real norm or standard in global capitalism is insecurity, informality or precariousness”. If this is the case, 20th century Africa could be seen as a model case for global capitalism. In this presentation I argue that Africa represents a context in which capitalist production regimes and their related forms of employment have confronted social practices and cultural forms that questioned the normative pretenses of the wage relation and challenged the universalism inherent in ideologies of “free” commodity-producing work. The history of wage, precarious, casual, and informal labor in Africa rather brings into sharp relief the exceptionality and contingency of the social conditions through which capitalist employment can be conducive to socially inclusive deals. The penetration of wage labor across the continent was uneven, delayed, and contested, as it responded to highly localized social processes and coexisted with complex non-capitalist relations. Even where wages relatively quickly became the dominant form of income, as in mining or transportation nodes in urban centers, African workers chose casual labor, despite its precariousness, in opposition to more regular workplace rhythms. Although capital drew significant advances from such arrangements, which allowed for remarkable flexibility and containment of labor costs, they also persistently represented a challenge to capitalist control of the labor force. Wage laborers made only a small percentage of the overall working population in Africa, both in colonial and postcolonial times. Labor markets since the end of colonial rule are characterized much more by short-term hiring and a high turnover of workers than by long-term, stable employment. Precarious labor prevailed, both in the formal and the informal sector. However, it would be misleading to see current informal and precarious work only as a new phase in capitalism in which workers in many parts of the world, and most notably in Africa, have become unnecessary, disposable. Multinational capital might still need many workers from Africa, as long as they are cheap, particularly to reach customers of modest means.

In essence I argue that the history of different labor forms in Africa – as well as how they were categorized in much of the historiography on the continent - have a great deal to offer by way of lessons to both a history of capitalism and a global labor history interested in tracing the historical connections between regions and in critically engaging with the idea of the North Atlantic World as “normal” and the rest as “exceptional” and “in need of explanation”. If our historical analysis of capitalism has to transcend the notion of a single telos modelled after the example of the West, that is supposed to be achieved everywhere, or if we are to go beyond the conception that the non-realization of this telos represents somehow a “lack” or a “lag” in the societies concerned to understanding their specific examples coevally – to echo Johannes Fabian’s insight – with that of the West, then we must take the different social forms – in this case particularly of labor – in Africa seriously in all their complexity, and all their linkages with labor forms elsewhere.

October 15, 2018

THE POWER LOGIC OF JUSTICE IN CHINA

Ji Li

Few institutions in China have undergone a more dramatic transformation than the judiciary. From bare existence in the Cultural Revolution, Chinese courts have evolved into multi-functional institutions resembling their peers in advanced civil law countries. Scholars tracking this process, however, come to hold disparate views about how the courts actually perform. Some find them relatively competent, professional, and outperforming courts in many democratic countries. Yet others portray the same courts as weak, corrupt, and obedient executors of state policies. Quite a few scholars have attempted to theoretically reconcile these conflicting assessments. One line of research attributes the variation in judicial behavior to subject matter differences. Chinese courts, for instance, have made more progress in resolving commercial disputes professionally than in constitutional disputes. Another line of research, applying the legal resource theory, explores how litigants' legal capacity impacts judicial behavior and finds the "haves" generally come out ahead of the "have-nots" in Chinese courts across all subject matter areas. Several other scholars focus on the disputants' power distribution and argue that Chinese courts act neutrally and professionally when adjudicating disputes between parties of relatively equal power status (horizontal power distribution), but demonstrate bias when the disputants' status is unequal (vertical power distribution).

These and other strands of the vast literature on judicial behavior in China have generated valuable insights, yet huge gaps remain open. Lacking in particular is a coherent and trans-substantive analytical framework that can demystify the complex and elusive boundary between Chinese law and politics and explain major post-filing actions of a Chinese court, i.e., what the court does regarding its jurisdiction, which dispute resolution method it prefers (mediation versus adjudication), to what extent it applies the law fairly, how it exercises its discretion in adjudication, and how it subsequently enforces the judgment. Behind all these components of judicial behavior, I contend, lies a coherent power logic. Conceived as a triadic reallocation of interests, litigation in China is shaped by the relative power status of the judicial decision maker and the disputants. Here power is defined as the capacity, both formal and informal, to organize collective action, use brutal force, and deploy other material sources. Because power in China is hierarchically organized in a pyramid shape and the court is situated in the middle of the triangle, there exist all together fifteen patterns of directional triads that each represents a litigation scenario. To be concrete, each of the fifteen triadic power distributions is associated with one set of judicial behavior, which subsumes the exercise of judicial discretion, judicial choice of dispute resolution method, and judicial compliance with the law at the stages of case filing, adjudication, and enforcement of judgments. In addition, each power triad is tied to one or more functions of a Chinese court realized through litigation, i.e., control, lawmaking, and dispute resolution. Not without its limitations, the nuanced power distribution theory offers a unified analytical framework to approach wildering variations in judicial actions not only in China, but also other authoritarian states such as Vietnam.

October 22, 2018

**THE DICTATORSHIP OF CAPITAL
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AND THE QUESTION OF VIOLENCE
IN POST-AUTHORITARIAN SOUTH KOREA**

Hae Yeon Choo

It was 7:00 a.m. on a cold winter day in 2009, when a low-rise commercial building in Yongsan, a central district of Seoul, South Korea, erupted into flames. It was during a police crackdown of the building's tenants-turned-evictees who were staging a militant protest against the redevelopment of the neighbourhood by occupying the building. During the fire, five protesters and one police officer died. In the aftermath of the tragedy, a heated debate ensued over who was accountable for the deaths — a debate that unfolded in courtrooms, in parliament, and on the streets. The Yongsan disaster reveals how urban spaces become contested ground for conflicting desires — among others, land owners and developers' desire for profit, the state's for law and order, and evictees' desire for fair compensation and a voice. Debates over the legitimacy of the actions of police and protesters raised globally reverberating questions about the practice of democratic citizenship.

Based on the parliamentary hearings, court documents, and oral history of the evictee protesters in the aftermath of the Yongsan crackdown, I lay out how the protesters theorise the condition of displacement and exclusion from urban space that takes place under formal democracy as “the dictatorship of capital.” By situating the Yongsan Disaster in the socio-political context of South Korea, I pay attention to the social movement legacy of evictee movements and their increasing isolation under the changing state-society relations. Reading the evictee protesters' account closely, the talk examines the relationship between democratic citizenship, capitalist profit-making, and state violence. How do the state, the market, and the society operate to produce the condition of “the dictatorship of capital,” as the speculative ideal of selfhood centered on maximizing the profit clashes with democratic ideals in post-authoritarian South Korea? The talk sheds light on the limits of formal democracy in the voices of the evictee activists and the vision of radical democracy they propose based on the politics and ethics of the “have-nots.”

October 29, 2018

INEQUALITY, EMPATHY GULFS AND SOCIAL CRITIQUE

Martin Hartmann

Contemporary capitalist societies seem to be driven apart by a whole set of vicious divisions. Most of us, it is often claimed, live in a bubble and completely ignore perspectives other than the ones offered to us through the filter. We are polarized along the lines of political partisanship and do not just ignore other political affiliations but openly despise them. In economic terms inequalities are on the rise. We read statistics explaining to us that, in the United States for example, the top 0.1 percent of households had, in 2007, an income that was 220 times larger than the average of the bottom 90 percent. Moving from income to wealth, the wealthiest 1 percent owned more than a third of the nation's wealth. On a global scale, between 1988 and 2008, 44 percent of the global income gain had gone to the richest 5 percent of people globally.

Typically, research on inequality focuses on economic aspects of growing inequality such as its impact on national output and economic stability. However, as equality is primarily a relation, a way of making a society and of "living in common" (P. Rosanvallon), so is inequality. In broadening the perspective, then, an answer to the following question becomes pressing: What are the impacts of these various inequalities on the way citizens relate to each other, including the emotional ways they relate to each other? On the one hand, it has been claimed that growing inequality produces empathy gulfs that hinder citizens from imaginatively engaging with each other and thus blocks mutual understanding and critique. On the other hand, feelings such as hatred and contempt or envy and resentment seem to have differentially contaminated the social echelons of contemporary capitalist societies. Commonalities seem to be waning, wanted and unwanted distinctions and exclusions are on the rise. Social philosophy needs to develop a language to better understand these processes and drive the study of inequality away from a narrow economic focus.

November 5, 2018

PUBLICITY, VIOLENCE, AND TECHNOLOGICAL MEDIATION

Hector Amaya

Anonymity is a perplexing concept. What to make of a concept that connects sperm donation, digital voting, trolling, digital activism in authoritarian regimes, and online self-help groups? What to make of a social concept that is both intentional, using a penname, and non-intentional, as when anonymity is imposed by institutional processes as in the case of sperm donation? How do we think of a social practice that is state driven and even legitimizes the state, as in the secret ballot, when the same social practice is at the base of dissident behavior that depends on evading or being outside state jurisdiction? How do we theorize a practice that is central to difficult dialogues, as in the confessional, but also central to expressions of despicable hate? What to make of a concept that sometimes seems an example of self-constitution, a "practice of freedom," using Foucault's (1986a; 1986b) late theories of the self, as in cases of anonymous political behavior, and also a property associated with subjugation, as in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, a story about being black and the experience of social invisibility?

This presentation introduces a way of theorizing anonymity that can account for these paradoxical social effects. My goal is to think of anonymity before the paradoxes become readable as such and for this, I need to think of anonymity before the normative and the axiological sets in. It is useful then to think of anonymity not only as a field of practices, but also in terms of the mechanisms by which practices join the field. I propose then to think of anonymity in terms of the logic by which this domain of practices is constituted, to think of anonymity as a *dispositif*, using the Foucauldian term. That is, I propose to think of anonymity as an intellectual and material mechanism that assembles different genealogies together in a way that makes dissociation a key component of specific communicative and social actions.

If understood as a *dispositif* or a mechanism, we can then hypothesize that anonymity tends to work with genealogical materials that converge in the *dispositif* to constitute particular types of dissociation that, depending on the materials used, produce certain instabilities in identity that can subvert specific power arrangements. I believe the three types of genealogical materials that are essential to the *dispositif* are, first, indexical materials such as names, traces, identity markers, including biological and discursive markers; second, technologies of inscription, or the technical and technological materials and mechanisms that are used to inscribe the indexical and that can thus be used to remove or shift indexicality. These technologies of inscription include the infrastructural platforms that incentivize specific interactions between people, such as fields to account for names, which tend to be culturally specific and often deny or refuse to accommodate different naming traditions. And, third, relational materials, which are the contingent logics of interaction and intersubjectivity that complete the processes of mediation between the anonymous individual and others. Relational materials also include the hermeneutic modalities that we use to interpret anonymous actions in particular contexts, and thus bridge the field of anonymity and other social, political, cultural, and ethical fields. The materials matter, but so does the genealogical as a particular engagement with these materials because anonymity always seems to sit at the intersection between knowledge concerns and power arrangements.

November 12, 2018

ENVIRONMENT

A DISASTROUS HISTORY OF OUR HYDROCARBON PRESENT

David Bond

My lecture draws together historical and anthropological research to advance two propositions: 1) most of what we know of the environment comes from messing it up; and 2) fossil fuels have played an outsized role in messing things up.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the environment shifted from an erudite shorthand for the influence of context to the premier diagnostic of a troubling new world of induced precarity. The environment became an official field devoted to understanding contaminated life and taking responsibility for it. Pointing out the shortcomings of the Nature/Culture dualism long before such a thing was fashionable, the resulting constitution of the environment pulled earthly mediums into national governance, foregrounded survival over nostalgia, and moved beyond a politics of purity. If the environment previewed these contemporary themes, it also carries a warning: the growing recognition of the crisis of life paradoxically narrowed the grounds of effective critique within it. Here, I trace two techniques that instantiated the environment in the United States: toxic thresholds and impact assessments. In different ways, each function by turning the toxic reach of pollution into a kind of field laboratory for the standardized measurement and management of endangered life. That is, each produces the environment. Quietly orienting the state's forceful considerations as well as its averted gazes, thresholds and impact assessments became both a vital object of contemporary politics and a technical limit to democratic practice.

That is to say, my project draws attention not only to *what* we know of the environment but also *how* we have come to know the environment. To a striking degree, the specific crisis the environment realizes, the forms of understanding and responsibility it authorizes, and the horizons of action and anticipation it routinizes all bear the imprint of hydrocarbon afterlives. Toxic thresholds and impacts assessments, for example, first took shape in response to the negative materiality of fossil fuels and continue to be refined around hydrocarbon installations. Yet the resulting definition of the defensible environment, wedged in between hydrocarbon pollution and public outrage, has often been effective to the extent it sidesteps the underlying petro-problems and focuses attention instead on stabilizing the mediums of exposure – like clean air and clean water, and perhaps now a stable climate. This has serious consequence, for not only does the environment divorce measures of harm from measures of gain but the category has found its most forceful definition through moralizing and managing an ahistorical, moderately contaminated, and exceedingly technical understanding of normal life. Today, as the disruptions of fossil fuels snap back into focus around rising planetary concerns like global warming, ocean acidification, and the Anthropocene, hydrocarbons can appear as an unprecedented crisis bearing down on the present. My work documents the wider history of disasters that have long accompanied fossil fuels and the manner in which our solutions have often been less about confronting the cause than managing the effects. It also describes this dynamic at work in contemporary sites ranging from the BP Oil Spill to the tar sands of Alberta to petrochemical contamination of drinking water in New England. This history of our present is significant not only for its previous neglect in critical scholarship but also for scientific constraints it places on democratic practice in this moment of rising ecological instability.

November 19, 2018

DEMOCRACY AND THE DIVISION OF LABOR A BLIND SPOT IN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Axel Honneth

To survey the contemporary world of work in western capitalist societies, is to be confronted with a series of alarming tendencies. On the one hand, the heyday of permanent employment and the welfare state seems to have come to an end several decades ago; the policies of deregulation that began to be implemented towards the start the 1980s led to the erosion of the security afforded by work contracts, to the loosening of conditions of dismissal, and to the creation of ever more informal, precarious and poorly remunerated employment relations. On the other hand, the looming prospect of automation threatens to result in a great wave of layoffs, as the increase in digitalized control processes would seem to imply the redundancy of a multiplicity of jobs based on registration, supervision, monitoring activities etc.. In light of both of these phenomena, it is surely reasonable to speak of a growing crisis of labor in the capitalist countries of the west. The most succinct encapsulation of this development is simply that, today, work is unable to sustain and assure the livelihoods of workers and their families.

Given the significance of these developmental tendencies for democratic societies, it is more than a little surprising that the topics they throw up hardly get a hearing in political philosophy today. My suspicion is that political philosophy betrays a tendency to neglect the significance of work and employment because it has almost totally lost sight of how democracies are rooted in the economic relations of a given society. To support the thesis that the quality of democratic decision-making depends decisively on the nature of a society's division of labor, I first demonstrate its general significance for the integration of modern societies (I). Having sketched the nature of the causal dependency involved, a few remarks are necessary to criticize the traditional concepts of the division of labor (Smith, Marx, Durkheim); for, as I attempt to show, these prove limited and one-sided in restricting labor to wage-labor, excluding unpaid work, and so need to be corrected before we can begin to determine what might be the normative requirements on a division of labor more conducive to democratic societies (II). Finally, on the basis of this improved conception of the division of labor, I develop certain normative perspectives that ought to be borne in mind if we want to strive for greater inclusiveness in the process of democratic decision-making: rendering work more meaningful and cooperative, re-drawing the boundaries between different occupations in order to make them more complex and mindful, supporting organizational alternatives to the capitalist firm like employee-run, self-governing collectives, or mandatory public service (III).

November 26, 2018

CRISIS, CRITIQUE AND SOCIAL CHANGE TOWARDS A NORMATIVE-MATERIALISTIC CONCEPTION

Rahel Jaeggi

The word "crisis" is back on stage. 2007 was defined by the "Financial Crisis", in June 2015 the whole of Germany spoke of a "Refugee Crisis". We are discussing the crisis of the welfare state, we are concerned about the crisis of democracy and about the ecological crisis. This is just a selection of countless, bigger and smaller, real or imagined crises that concern us today. The overall level of crisis awareness, so it seems, has increased.

But what are we talking about when we conceptualize events and social processes in terms of crisis? Crisis is an interpretative scheme, a concept for analyzing, understanding and criticizing the social world, it is an analytical as well as a normative term. The reference to crisis refers to a theoretical framework that implies presuppositions concerning the persistence, the erosion and the transformation of social institutions and practices and, on a larger scale, on how to imagine the normative dynamics of social formations or forms of life. It is, in other words, not just a name but a social-philosophical concept, one that implies a social theory. Now, it is not obvious whether we want to buy into this framework and whether we can reconstruct its socio-theoretical and normative implications in a promising way.

The aim of my project is thus to specify the concept of *crisis* and connect it to a concept of *social change*. In the next step I want to spell out the possible *connection between crisis and critique* - which boils down to investigating the specific way in which description and evaluation are connected here. Finally I aim at defending a comparatively narrow concept of crisis that takes serious the fact that a social formation that is in crisis is one that is not only (normatively) *wrong* but also *dysfunctional*. This connection, then, will lead me to a version of what I call *normative materialism*.

A rough approximation to a concept of crisis then is the following: A crisis is a state of disorder that is characterized by dysfunctionality. It has to be distinguished from "neighboring" terms like conflict, social struggle, collapse or breakdown. It should be understood as a deciding point, a rupture that has systematical and structural causes and threatens the reproduction of the (social) system in question. It is on the basis of these assumptions that we can solve the three paradoxes of crisis:

- 1) Crises are simultaneously given and made, they are a matter of fact as well as a matter of interpretation.
- 2) Crises are simultaneously normative and functional.
- 3) Crises can be latent; at the same time they need to become actualized at some point in order to be a crisis.

December 3, 2018

UNCERTAINTY, CRISIS AND NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Eva Illouz

This paper engages in philosophical sociology which consists in examining social facts within the horizon of philosophical tradition and philosophical concepts with empirical facts. This paper asks the question that has been put on the table of liberalism for the last 200 years: what is the fault line between freedom and a-moral chaos? In the context of sexual and romantic relationships, this fault line is to be found in the notion of uncertainty. The paper develops the notion of "negative relationships" elaborated from the phenomenology.

The first part of the paper draws the contours of the ideal-type of bourgeois courtship which emerged in Western Europe from the 17th to the 19th century. Courtship contained mechanisms of interaction which reduced uncertainty. Courtship is thus a ritual of interaction which provided procedures to organize interiority around known rules. I offer six forms of uncertainty-reducing mechanisms: normative, existential, informational, ontological, procedural and emotional. As a social form, traditional courtship produced certainty not in the sense that it guaranteed the outcome (although it did help secure it) but in the double sense that, on the one hand, it did not make the future into a problem (because its purpose was known and accepted by all parties) and in that, on the other hand, it relied on a clear set of rules which organized emotions and interactions into known cultural pathways. This moral and cultural frame became contested and transformed in the aftermath of the vast cultural and social changes after the late 1960s', what is commonly referred to as the sexual revolution.

Throughout the 20th century, sexuality underwent four major transformations: the immanence of the sexual body recuperated by the consumer market and by internet technology, the formation of a category of experience based on the accumulation of sexual experiences, the splintering of the heterosexual encounter in possible different paths, and the shift to a procedural ethics based on consent constitute the new terrain for the formation of heterosexual relations. All these transformations have made sexual relationships into a social realm saturated with uncertainty, what I call negative sociality.

December 10, 2018

DEMOCRATIZING DISOBEDIENCE
OUTLINE OF A CRITICAL THEORY OF PROTEST

Robin Celikates

In recent years, migrant and refugee groups have marched, occupied buildings, and engaged in other forms of disobedience although what they do is usually not categorized as civil disobedience. More recently, massive forms of direct disobedience at the border and to the border regime – crossing without authorization, scaling fences, marching in large numbers along highways – have become a prominent feature of border struggles. Acknowledging that these struggles prominently articulate political claims using a repertoire of contestation that invokes and updates classical forms of civil disobedience poses a fundamental challenge to the most influential accounts of civil disobedience. These accounts are ill-equipped to even consider political actions of migrants as acts of civil disobedience as they continue to understand the latter in terms of formally recognized citizens appealing to their fellow citizens and their governments within nationally integrated public spheres. A critical theory of protest has to move beyond this methodological nationalism.

The more encompassing project on which my talk draws argues that disobedience is an essential part of struggles for democratization ('from below') and that theorizing disobedience in a critical vein has to be democratized both methodologically and substantially in order to adequately grasp the democratizing potential of disobedience. Proposing a new – normatively austere, democracy-based and transformative – account of the definition, justification and role of disobedience, I take the radical and radically democratic potential of resistance and protest by irregularized migrants as a powerful example of the transformative dynamic unexpected forms of civil disobedience can unleash. By invoking repressed historical continuities, unmasking hidden forms of economic, social and political domination, and politicizing phenomena that are naturalized or removed from politicization, such as the boundaries of the political community (both the external territorial borders of the state's domain as well as of the internal boundaries of membership), these practices of disobedience themselves take on an eminently epistemological and critical function that critical theory needs to acknowledge and can build on.

January 28, 2019

ISLAM: THREE GENEALOGIES

Murad Idris

A crisis of language frames how “Islam” becomes a political concept, as it is subjectified, stretched and narrowed, in both popular and philosophical discourse. This crisis is visible in the work performed when Islam becomes an agent or container, as in, for example, discussions of peace *in* Islam, peace *for* Islam, and other short-hands that repackage a perspective, set of demands and actions, lacks and excesses, groups and histories, or archives and concepts into Islam—and through which Islam is packaged out of history. Contemporary discourses are marked by the prevalence of claims such as “Islam is peace,” “Islam needs a Luther,” and “In Islam, jihad means personal struggle”; as well as by the popular and scholarly impulse to find the origin of the word *islām* and its cognates, in what might be described as a political theology of words. Histories and genealogies of power lurk inside these remarkably simple, anti-historical, and unresolvable declarations.

This lecture offers an overview of my current project, *Islam Out of History*. It gives the genealogies of these three ideas—Islam the word, Luther and reformations, jihad and personal struggle. They form a depoliticized Islam: it is conceptualized as either peaceful or violent; and if it is peaceful, then it must have had a reformation along the lines of a Muslim Luther; and Islam’s ostensible “reformation(s)” requires that “jihad” will have been understood as an inner struggle to improve oneself and not as militant violence.

Recently, scholars have theorized Islam in three modes: the unmasker, the historicizer, and the conceptualizer. These orientations tend to remain separate, but in bringing them to bear on one another, *Islam Out of History* offers a politically-situated reconceptualization of Islam. Thus, first, the translation-cum-definition of Islam as “submission,” and its association with *salām* and peace, took on new life under liberalism. Second, calls for a Muslim Luther elide both Luther’s writings on the Turk and its political theology of war and conversion, and the colonial situatedness of the innumerable “Muslim Luthers” labeled “Luther of Islam” in relation to this structure of war. Finally, when John Rawls invents a Muslim society—which he calls “Kazanistan”—that interprets jihad in a “spiritual manner,” he taps into a broader set of liberal anxieties; his personal papers show that Kazanistan and its jihad bracket geopolitical structures of empire and elide the racialization of “holy war” in American history and “struggle” in Black thought. Using these genealogies to shift our referents, I extract three alternative conceptualizations of Islam: from *islām*, *an ethic of giving oneself*; from Luther, *the will to globalize one’s place*; and from Kazanistan, *the authority to seek justice on earth*.

February 4, 2019

IN FACE OF CRISIS, RESPONSIBILITY OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

A DETOUR BY WAY OF THE 18TH CENTURY AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Sophie Wahnich

Our present has become a promise of inhumanity. Dark times. These dark times co-exist with very high quality knowledge. But what knowledge reveals does not seem to have any real influence. To cite Walter Benjamin, the train is launched at high speed but no one activates the fire alarm that could stop it, because activating it requires not just knowing, but also acting. Yet, action is not the goal for many social scientists who have internalized the modesty of knowledge that can describe but not lead to action. Yet, as an historian of the French Revolution, I can observe that for revolutionary philosophers, or political thinkers such as Sieyès, or Saint-Just, it was just the opposite. Concern for the present and for social change pushed them in the revolutionary crisis to find tools to correct what was wrong in their way of thinking, doing, and even hoping.

For Saint-Just, it is not enough to know what direction to give to the revolutionary movement, but to understand what hinders it socially: in the thickness of the gestures of each individual. Old habits are obstacles to change. And while Saint-Just may, like Billaud-Varenne, fear that consent to a new voluntary servitude may take the form of adherence to a great man, he believes the question of this possible return to political servitude, is linked to a set of social relationships. To address these problems, education is not enough. Like Sieyès, he distinguished between the social organism and social organization. The social organism was the social entity outside the laws, in short it consisted of “customs”, “manners” and “morals”. The legislator must observe them, understand how they constitute social life as such. For Sieyès and Saint-Just society existed as a form, and was not reducible to individual agency.

Social organizations are the products of voluntary, legal, civil and civic human activity. But for social organization to act on morals, it is necessary to find ways of connecting them: social art. To be a social artist requires not only combining different knowledges, and describing what is, but also knowing how to propose what must be and therefore finding ways to break with the manners and morals of the present, while building on them. Men and women today are afraid to act because tragedy might arise from the best of their intentions. But by renouncing plans for freedom, they will not stop tragedy. The French Revolution is tragic, but it allows us to think about how political action is deployed in a complex way. It allows us to think of history as against conspiratorial ways of thinking, against the too big leaders, but also that each gesture, every action makes us historical beings, that is to say we are responsible for becoming them.

The scientific debate between Sartre and the so-called structuralists depoliticized the production of knowledge in the name of a true science close to the sciences of nature. The issue is important because if the human sciences are like the natural sciences we just have to listen and observe, but if they are fundamentally different we also have to speculate, propose, and act. I think then, we need to get back to a dialectical understanding of the relationship between critical knowledge and political praxis. It is not a question of choosing theoretical options but of knowing how theoretical options have affected the world, and what theoretical alternatives would allow us to play our human condition in such a way that would not be that of a great absence in order to avoid the tragic.

February 11, 2019

CAPITALISM AND CRISIS
ON THE ORIGINS AND RATIONALITY OF AUSTERITY

Clara Elisabetta Mattei

Austerity, (normally understood as consisting of cuts of public expenditure, increases in regressive taxation, privatizations and labor flexibility) has been applied extensively throughout the world for more than thirty years with the devastating social effects that are widely documented. Yet the question: Why austerity? Why is it so resilient? is very rarely explored. What is missing is a political economy of austerity: capable of relating austerity to the reproduction of capitalism and to the central question of the conflict between capital and wages. Two steps are needed in this direction. The first, is the adoption of a long run historical analysis that is systematic in its approach and looks at both the sphere of production and of exchange. The second is not to reduce austerity to an economic policy but rather understand it as a complex ensemble of beliefs that find concrete realization into economic theory, policies and institutions that reproduce these same beliefs. Austerity rationality embodies both economic theory and practice. Through this approach one realizes that austerity is not the exception of neoliberal phase of capitalism but rather the norm within the long run history of capitalism.

My book studies the epoch of the most acute crisis in the history of capitalism that occurred after World War One in order to explore the intimate relationship between conditions of crisis and economic theory embodied in institutions and policies that forcefully resolve such crisis. Two main themes are explored. First, the simultaneous mutual and indispensable relation between austerity rationality, technocracy and the historical endurance of capitalism. Secondly the thoroughly repressive nature of austerity, which consequently illuminates the repressiveness of technocracy as well as capitalism.

Regarding the first, historically we see that capitalism cannot survive without austerity. By capitalism I understand a historically specific form of production based on wage labor where both the exploited and the exploiters are dependent on the market for their reproduction. As opposed to all other forms of production in which the surplus is extracted by extra economic means, in capitalism, surplus extraction occurs in an economic realm that separates the political from itself. The continued existence of capitalism is dependent on capital accumulation, which displays a turbulent and crisis prone dynamic. Once such crises emerge, the functioning of the system breaks down, rendering explicit the political nature of capitalist surplus extraction: the relations of domination are revealed as they can no longer hide behind an economic rationality. Austerity rationality is the indispensable means to prevent the system from collapse. Why? Austerity secures the rule of money and private property, the two institutions that are the basis for accumulation of capital. How? Fundamentally by paving the way for the renewed accumulation of capital and by positing the crucial divide between the economic and the political, which allows for the relations of domination to hide behind economic rationality. Economists counteract the potential politicization of economic relations, and thus the collapse of consensus to capitalism is shunned.

February 25, 2019

IMPLICATED
WORLD-MAKING AND BORDER POLITICS

Anne McNevin

This project begins from the premise that a world already exists in which rigid border lines are not the exclusive ordering principle. The world I am invoking here is not the same as a world in which borders are open. Rather, it is a world in which the options for relating to space politically exceed the assumptions of sovereign territorial state space, whether open or closed. This is a world that is brought into being partly by the very regulatory systems purportedly designed to defend territorial borders themselves, and partly by those who move through borders and those who receive them and who generate spatial imaginaries and subjectivities through those encounters. It is a world – or perhaps more accurately, fragments and moments of a world – for which we do not have a ready or widely resonant conceptual vocabulary. It is not necessarily a world without states, but it is a world in which questions of human mobility do not begin automatically from premises associated with borders, citizens and migrants, all of which take their meaning from a particular idea of the state.

This project attempts to amplify that world in which political relations do not rest exclusively or at all on the spatial and temporal assumptions that shape geopolitical norms: sovereign territorial state space and progressive linear time. It presents a case for other kinds of political relations as thinkable, recognizable and possible. I look for this world at the intersection of contemporary arenas of social struggle around borders, race and indigeneity. I take up examples where activists, critics and social movements make connections across these struggles in ways that are suggestive of other worlds in which state space (sovereign territoriality), state time (progressive and developmental) and associated subjectivities (citizen and alien) are not central organizing frames. Three specific sites are the focus of my inquiry: (1) the anti-colonial critique of refugees imprisoned on Manus Island under Australia's offshore detention regime; (2) abolitionist experiments in transformative justice in the United States that respond to violence without engaging state policing institutions; and (3) Indigenous gestures of solidarity with migrants and refugees. Each of these examples is premised on notions of co-implication in enduring forms of violence that manifest in contemporary border security, racialized policing, and the global transfer of carceral technologies. Each of these examples cross the citizen/alien divide in ways that disrupt prevailing assumptions about who belongs where, who polices whom, and whose trajectories are linked in non-obvious ways.

I use these examples as entry points for a series of questions: in what ways do these arenas of struggle animate incipient political forms (imaginaries, practices, subjectivities, horizons) that resist the givenness of state space and state time? How can these forms be theorized? How might they offer avenues for cross-movement solidarities that resist violent practices of displacement, border security and hierarchies of the human, in which a certain idea of the state retains a powerful legitimizing function? What new lines of difference and cleavage emerge in this context? What worlds become possible when we rethink border politics from the starting point of being implicated?

March 4, 2019

AESTHETICS, POLITICS, AND REVOLUTION IN EGYPT

Jessica Winegar

What drew so many Egyptians to protest the government in 2011, and to keep protesting despite the state's attacks? What led so many to then support a coup of a democratically elected president and then cheer on a new military strongman and the re-entrenched regime? The answers to these questions are critical to our understanding of the worldwide rise of both grassroots protest and reactionary movements in the 21st century—not just in the Middle East, but also in parts of Europe, South America, India, and the U.S. Many scholars and journalists rightly focus on causes such as economic inequalities, migration and xenophobia, and the violence of the security state. Yet one critical component is vastly underexplored: the alluring aesthetics of protest culture and of authoritarianism. Focusing on Egypt, this research explores how, in tumultuous times such as these, different groups of people form their sense of what is politically desirable and possible through aesthetic expression and judgment of one another. It hones in on emotions as a critical part of the social sensory apparatus through which people create political collectivities and exercise political judgment. This research is based on 20 months of field research in Egypt from 2009-2019, allowing a long-term view of the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary process.

Just prior to the 2011 uprising and in subsequent years, love and disgust were two of the primary emotions through which struggles for sovereignty were articulated—whether it be popular struggles for sovereignty over one's own body, social relations, and space, the authoritarian regime's attempts to assert its sovereign power over the population, or the space in between. Love and disgust were embodied, material, and discursive, and expressed in similar ways across the political spectrum to legitimize and cultivate one's political positions and delegitimize those of others. These ranged from embodied love for co-citizens expressed through acts of care in Tahrir Square, nationalist discourses of love in protest chants, songs, and signs, Muslim Brotherhood and regime supporters' discourses and snorts of disgust at the behavior and bodily aesthetics of protestors with whom they did not agree, President Sisi's repetitive insistence on his love Egypt, and citizens' expressions of love for Sisi in the media, songs, and commodity culture.

This research proposes that attention to love and disgust, as two emotions that are particularly linked to aesthetico-moral judgment, sensory alliances, and collective acts of boundary-making, can help us more fully understand what motivates, sustains, and suppresses sovereignty struggles in times of social upheaval. These are liminal times when the sovereign power of the state is unstable, and when people experience heightened emotions. Thus, studying the aesthetic politics of emotions is critical to our understanding of the contemporary resurgence of authoritarianism, right wing populism, and radical protest movements worldwide.

March 11, 2019

VIRAL POPULISM
ANTI-SEMITISM, ISLAMOPHOBIA, AND THE REFUGEE CRISIS

Dorian Bell

Jews like George Soros have been tarred with fomenting the migratory “crisis” of Islam in the West. The accusation invites us to reconsider the triadic populism (John Judis) that understands twinned enemies—elites at the top, out groups at the bottom—to be working symbiotically against “the people.” Theorists note the tendency of triadic populism to designate the out groups below (immigrants, Muslims, etc.) as racially foreign. Sometimes they note a similar, anti-Semitic tendency of populism to racialize elites as “Jews.” But missing from the debate is the possibility that triadic populism’s conspiratorial assumption about elites in cahoots with an underclass might in part derive *from* the two racializations.

On this thinking, the idea of a “Jewish” elite pitting another, more impoverished category of racial others against the people does not just represent one flavor of triadic populism among others. Rather, it points to that populism’s deeper historical origins. Those origins index longstanding fears in the West about Jewish-sponsored immigration, and shed light on the evolving interrelation between anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. Taking up these questions, my paper considers them within the context of what I call “viral populism”: an intensification of triadic populism that, fueled by anti-Semitism and Islamophobia’s global reach, is further catalyzed in its spread by an online ecosystem intrinsically susceptible to narratives about Jewish media control.

March 18, 2019

GIVING SOCIETY A FORM

AUTHORITARIAN TRACES, NEOLIBERAL THREADS AND THE WORK OF CONCEPTS

Rodrigo Cordero

In the social sciences, we tend to conceive of concepts as abstract entities, products of the human intellect which help us represent, classify and order empirical objects in a generalized manner. In this presentation, I wish to move beyond this restrictive view and argue that concepts play a central role in the making of social worlds. This is so not just because concepts have a social existence, but, crucially, because society itself takes *form* through multiple struggles over its legitimate definition. Methodologically, the challenge consists in using concepts as concrete devices to explore the workings and contradictions of society. In other words, it is about observing the political work of concepts in specific historical sites.

Based on this framework, I seek to bring new empirical attention to the many ways in which “conceptions of society” are called upon, interpreted, and transformed in moments of crisis. My main contention is that society documents and reveals, but also encodes and conceals, the conditions of its own political formation in the mode of concepts. I elaborate and further discuss this claim by exploring two interrelated episodes of Chile’s recent political history: (i) the massive 2011 student movement for free public education, which articulated a powerful critique of the authoritarian logic of a market-centered society; and (ii) the process of the drafting of the 1980 Constitution during Pinochet’s dictatorship, which set the ideological and institutional conditions for the unfolding of a whole philosophy of society grounded in the principle of individual freedom. Despite the great temporal distance, both episodes seem to be connected by the same thread: the desire to give society a new form. Following this thread, I use these episodes to investigate the process by which society’s *mode of being* turns into a primal object of critique and intervention. The analysis focuses on understanding the political work of concepts in struggles over the definition of society.

As a result of this inquiry, I outline three main logics through which the work of concepts is enacted in these historical episodes: as archives of meanings, as practices of attachment, and as fields of forces. What emerges from the analysis of these logics is not the identification of unequivocal definitions but a number of epistemological and political anxieties over the very definition of what society is, how it works, and how it should be. These anxieties matter not so much because of the concrete institutional effects they may trigger but rather because of the ways in which they mold the space of political possibilities.

March 25, 2019

“LOOK AT THE STONES”
TOWARDS A MODERN HISTORY OF THE PALESTINIANS

Beshara Doumani

The Palestinians are a household word and the Palestinian condition is routinely invoked as emblematic of the dark side of the modern world: settler colonial violence, racialization and statelessness, disenfranchisement and incarceration, inequality and over-exposure to the disasters of climate change. Palestinian resistance, by the same token, is seen as inspirational for its multi-generational persistence in the face of asymmetrical power relations and ongoing Israeli policies of territorial appropriation and demographic displacement. It is precisely because of this over-determined binary that we still do not have a historical narrative that exceeds the colonial frame and brings into view the rich archive of everyday struggles by ordinary Palestinians that has long obscured by the shadows of political narratives.

This project explores the social and political lives of stone as an organizing device to write the modern history of the Palestinians from the 18th century to the present. Rich in symbolic capital (authenticity and agency), central to material culture (relationship to land and the built environment), and key to political economy (class and capital in the extraction, construction and export sectors), stone constitutes a connective analytical tissue that inhabits the terrain between the messiness of the quotidian and the awesome homogenizing power of colonial violence, territorial partition, and forced displacement.

Stone testifies to the extraordinary range of social conditions, lived experiences, and worldviews of those who now call themselves Palestinians before and after the colonial encounter. As such, it broadens our understanding of what constitutes the political and the social in ways that are not beholden to nationalist constructions of the past, nor fully captured by the structural grip of a settler-colonial paradigm.

Laying bare the rock face of the Palestinian condition, so to speak, raises difficult ethical and moral questions about pervasiveness and efficacy of human and international rights discourses and the identity/territory/sovereignty matrix that are common to most anti-colonial struggles. After all, with agency comes responsibility and with social complexity comes counter-intuitive historical ironies such as the pervasive tension between the concepts of Palestine and the Palestinian, as if one could only exist at the expense of the other. Drawing on a wide range of locally-generated archival, oral, and literary sources, as well as ethnographic research, the project ultimately asks: How does one tell the history of a modern native society still actively being colonized during the age of decolonization while, at the same time, calling into question the notions of indigeneity and self-determination that are central to the political imaginary of that society?

April 1, 2019

FOLLOW THE CARBON
CLIMATE CHANGE AND INEQUALITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Daniel Aldana Cohen

Why have low-carbon efforts stagnated so much? What has success looked like? How does improving carbon accounting methods change this story?

Cities are central to climate politics for three reasons. First, cities are landscapes of consumption. The less energy they consume, the more quickly societies can decarbonize. Second, since the early 1990s, there has been a widespread view that decarbonizing cities could be achieved with win-win policies that would lower emissions and improve the quality of everyday life, through intelligent densification. If that's true, we'd want to know. Third, the biggest, wealthiest cities with the most journalists and academics are where stories about climate politics get told. It's important to get the story right.

My study of low-carbon policy efforts in São Paulo from 2000 to 2018, echoed by analogous findings in New York covering developments up to 2019, finds that pro-density policies *can* reduce urban emissions in helpful ways. The pivot is political coalitions assembling around distinct urban climate policy logics, in which the housing movement's role is central. I distinguish between *luxury ecology* regimes, whose climate policies largely benefit professionals and the upper middle class; and, *democratic ecology regimes*, whose climate policies would attack inequality and reduce emissions at the same time, bringing immediate benefit to poor and working-class residents. Each regime will pursue distinctive versions of low-carbon density.

I establish three points. 1) Widespread climate policy stagnation results from the estrangement of housing-oriented movements and green policy elites, when a) luxury ecology regimes do not expend political capital on pro-poor policies or intervene in land markets; and b) housing-oriented movements and their allies slow or stop luxury ecology policies. 2) Democratic ecology regimes, by attacking inequality right away, can build broader coalitions between housing-oriented movements and green policy elites. But such regimes may camouflage ecological benefits in social justice rhetoric, undermining decarbonization and can be too moderate in intervening in the market, undermining long-term progress. 3) Housing movements are low-carbon protagonists of considerable power, especially when acting in coalitions.

I complement this story through consumption-based carbon emissions accounting. This accounting method reveals the normally hidden carbon costs of residentially dense affluence, strengthening the case that affordable housing and a more even distribution of income are the premises of low-carbon urbanism. More broadly, I show that under a critical social science framework, following the carbon is a method for helping to reconcile social and environmental analysis. Just as Stuart Hall showed that race is the modality through which class is lived, I argue that colonialism and racial capitalism are the modalities through which climate crisis is lived.

There's increasing interest at the highest levels of climate science in bringing in social science to help them understand how political choices, and different ways of living, could shape climate futures. It would be ideal if *critical* social science joined that conversation. At the global peak of carbon emissions, the method of following the carbon has a lot to teach us about the potential relationships between abstraction, critique, and politics.

April 8, 2019

CHINA SINCE TIANANMEN HISTORY, MEMORY, AND NATIONALISM

Rowena He

The 1989 Tiananmen Movement, known in Chinese as “June Fourth” (Liu Si), was a nationwide nonviolent citizens’ movement calling for reforms in China. Sparked by the April 15, 1989, death of Hu Yaobang, the former general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) whose reformist views distinguished him from the hardliners in the leadership, Chinese intellectuals and students in cities throughout the country, soon joined by other citizens, began a series of peaceful petitions, demonstrations, and hunger strikes. The movement ended on June 4 when the Chinese government deployed over 200,000 soldiers, equipped with tanks and machine guns, to crack down on what the regime called a “counterrevolutionary riot.” The general secretary of the CCP at that time, Zhao Ziyang, who refused to order the crackdown, was dismissed and lived under house arrest until his death in 2005. General Xu Qinxian, commander of the 38th Army of the People’s Liberation Army, who refused to participate in the crackdown, was court martialed, imprisoned for five years, and expelled from the CCP.

Tiananmen remains one of the most sensitive and taboo subjects in China today, banned from both academic and popular realms. Even the actual number of deaths from the military crackdown remains unknown. Every year on the anniversary of June 4, the government intensifies its control, and citizens who commemorate the events are put under various forms of surveillance. The Tiananmen Mothers are prohibited from openly mourning family members who died in the massacre, and exiles are prohibited from returning home, even for a parent’s funeral. Many older supporters of the movement, leading liberal intellectuals in the 1980s, died in exile.

The post-Tiananmen regime has constructed a narrative that portrays the Tiananmen Movement as a Western conspiracy to weaken and divide China, hence justifying its military crackdown as necessary for stability and prosperity and paving the way for China’s rise. Because public opinion pertaining to nationalism and democratization is inseparable from a collective memory of the nation’s most immediate past—be it truthful, selective, or manipulated—the memory of Tiananmen has become highly contested. The official suppression of history makes teaching and researching the Tiananmen Movement challenging. Many Chinese students have been inoculated with a version of the 1989 events that is inconsistent with the historical truth. This is not a matter of varying interpretations that are normal to unfettered historical inquiry but rather due to state-sponsored manipulation. While memory can be manipulated or erased by those in power, the repression of both memory and history is accompanied by political, social, and psychological distortions. Indeed, it is not possible to understand today’s China and its relationship with the world without understanding the spring of 1989.

April 15, 2019

HELPING REFUGEES

THE MORAL ECONOMY OF VOLUNTEERS IN RURAL GERMANY

Greta Wagner

The majority of the 1.3 million people who were seeking asylum in Germany over the last four years arrived between July 2015 and March 2016. Their arrival unleashed a widespread wish to help them. This help was not in itself a critical or resistant practice. Chancellor Angela Merkel had called citizens to contribute to the successful integration of the new arrivals. Her dictum “wir schaffen das” (“we can manage it”) asked everyone to take part in that nationwide project of integrating refugees.

Based on my study of volunteers supporting refugees in rural Germany, I argue that even though a feeling of compassion had initiated much of the volunteering, what made volunteers in villages continue to help refugees were three forms of identification. First, volunteers identify with *caritas* and care. Especially among the female volunteers helping others and caring for children in particular is an important part of their identities. Combined with their Christian upbringing and their belief in the idea of *caritas* they identify with their role as charitable helpers. Second, they identify with refugees. Many of the older volunteers have experienced war and flight in their own families. The media reports about refugee families made memories of their own biographies reappear, that helped them identify with refugees and their hardship. Third, they identify with the social integration of their own villages and feel responsible for the cohesion of their communities. Volunteering for refugees’ social integration in their view is an important service to one’s own community.

Is this help a form of charity or of solidarity? While charity can benefit everyone, including those who attract the benevolence of the giver, solidarity is based on a *we-feeling*, and therefore particular. The development of a *we-feeling* can hardly be found between volunteers and refugees and so volunteers’ helping must be understood as charitable. Nonetheless, it is simultaneously part of a relationship of solidarity, for help to refugees is often given as a contribution to the village’s social cohesion. The object of help is thus not just the refugees, but the volunteers’ own community, with which they share solidaristic reciprocal bonds. Such a use of the word solidarity reveals a limitation of helping others. If helping does not discriminate and is given to anyone in need, it forms charitable relations that are unequal by nature. If help is given in a solidaristic way instead, only those who share a common goal will benefit from it.

April 22, 2019

CONFRONTING CARCERAL STATE-MAKING UNDOCUMENTED LIFE IN THE ERA OF MASS DEPORTATION

Denise Brennan

Whether living along the border, or deep within the U.S. interior, undocumented people know that their lives could be upended by a simple traffic stop. The border may not be everywhere, but its policing is. In light of the criminalization of immigration and the militarization of the border, this project asks how undocumented individuals, their families, and members of their larger communities live with the everyday threat of deportation as well as live through the experience of deportation. It explores the subjective experience of being "wanted" while highlighting the role of community organizing to counter racialized surveillance and criminalization.

This presentation draws from four years of ethnographic field research in southern and northern border communities inside the "100-mile border zone" (an enhanced immigration enforcement zone), as well as from field research in migrant communities far from either border. The larger book project calls attention to the simultaneous invisibility and obvious presence of undocumented persons in the United States. Careful to avoid law enforcement's attention, undocumented individuals are far from hiding. Under assault, they try both to live *apart* from the nation's security state while they live full, joyful lives as *part* of vibrant communities.

What is happening "in the shadows" is the dirty work of the U.S. immigration carceral state – stake outs, entrapment, arrests, detention and deportation. When state agents racially profile and pull over people who are simply driving to work, they put the levers of the deportation machinery into motion. For example, Border Patrol agents regularly park their trucks at the only entrance and exit of particular neighborhoods making it impossible for those without authorization to access or to leave their homes. Physical impingement of entire neighborhoods prisonizes places where undocumented individuals live, work, and socialize. This presentation examines both sides of the immigration carceral ledger: the enforcement decisions and actions that state agents make and the ways undocumented individuals and mixed status families confront their surveillance and policing.

Through a frame of resilience and resistance, this project showcases how undocumented individuals confront daily forms of carceral power with forms of repudiation, contestation, strategy, and improvisation. Their criminalization has given rise to powerful movement-building (often led by young people lumped together as "Dreamers"), and community care-taking that include small private acts of generosity. These acts challenge the fusion of border policy with the imperatives of the carceral state and demonstrate a rich participatory and democratic commitment to rights work.

April 29, 2019

THE LIFE OF WAR
ECOLOGIES OF RESISTANCE AND SURVIVAL

Munira Khayyat

This talk is about life in a space of protracted war. It looks at life in the frontline villages along the southern border of Lebanon with Israel, where war in its diverse manifestations has entwined with life-world and landscape for generations now. Life in these parts, for the most part, revolves around tobacco farming for the Lebanese state-owned monopoly, olive cropping, goat herding and subsistence farming. These agricultural practices generate subsistence and income and make possible an ongoing presence in place. Life in South Lebanon is heavily dependent on the land, which is also the place of ongoing military activity and recurrent eruptions of violence.

What are the resistant life-worlds that survive and thrive across seasons of violence? I take Isabelle Stengers' call for an ecology of practices seriously by "thinking *par le milieu*" (2005; 187) that is, both from the middle of things and with surroundings, habitats. Hence the ecologies of resistance and survival at the heart of my inquiry embody both a methodological commitment to generating new conceptual landscapes able to address life, being, and becoming in conditions of sustained militarized violence, and a sensual attunement to a situated materiality that is carefully documented. I argue for the possibility of proliferating life under the cruelties of war, capitalist extraction, impending climactic collapse and the ruined worlds these have created and within which we must continue to somehow live. I examine modes of survival and mold concepts to more robustly recognize the survivalist collaborations and collectives that emerge in these ravaged worlds. The life-world I ethnographically explore in the borderland and battlefield of South Lebanon is perennially wracked by the violence of nation-states, militaries, wars, agri-business and humans, and yet it continues to live and to breathe through the cycles of war and the seasons. In this seasonally violent world, I peer past the dramatic topography and hardened analytical categories to explore more prosaic, continuous, long-term and vital alliances that form across the heterogeneous beings and elements that are thrown together within these violent formations – alliances that enable, optimize and sustain resilient, resistant life-worlds that give shape to the living landscape as it is ethnographically encountered. My research is a fresh take on studies of violence, for instead of looking solely at rupture, destruction and devastation, I examine resilient, resistant worlds that are created and thrive within the often-inescapable harsh realities imposed by such violent conditions on life. What I hope to show through my work on ecologies of survival in a landscape of war is that (resistant) life itself is often premised on violent structures or processes that seek to extinguish it.

May 6, 2019

AN INTELLECTUAL AND POLITICAL HISTORY OF URBAN POVERTY IN URUGUAY (1943-2010)
A GLOBAL HISTORY FROM A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

Aldo Marchesi

My research focuses on the way in which the series of economic crises changed intellectual and political views on inequality and poverty, as well as the expectations of upward social mobility in Uruguay during the second half of the twentieth century. Each crisis created an opportunity for new debates and conceptualizations on the subject of inequality, with the issue of poverty taking an increasingly central role.

To study those views I examine the government and civil society institutions that developed social programs, the intellectuals, scholars, and specialists who worked with these issues, and the international bodies that participated in those programs (ECLAC, OAS, IADB, IMF, and the World Bank).

Throughout three crises (1955, 1982, 2002) we can see an evolution in the way inequality was perceived and in the approaches taken to reduce it, and these changes were reflected in the various ways of conceptualizing the issue of poverty and the solutions attempted.

Poverty thus went from being a concept used in social discourse to a category applied by specialists. This process occurred as social upward mobility was halted and inequality increased. Moreover, the idea of poverty was dissociated from issues connected with the world of labor. The development of a poverty knowledge by a community of specialists paradoxically expanded as it appeared more and more that poverty would be a permanent feature of society. This transition entailed a more unpoliticized reflection on the phenomenon of poverty, in which structural aspects were relativized in contrast to the individual capacity of popular sectors to lift themselves out of poverty.

This narrative that I have presented is an initial hypothesis that will enable me to articulate an argument and outline a research strategy. However, it will need to be contrasted with sources from the period studied, as well as with similar research on other countries.

May 13, 2019

II

Theme Seminar

Crisis and Critique

Although it could be argued that each epoch in the modern era is regarded by its contemporary as a time of crisis, the present moment seems to offer in this respect certain particular traits in terms of the quality, intensity and spread of its crisis. Among its various dimensions, two seem distinctively salient: one is moral, the other cognitive. On the one hand, unlike either a purely economic or political crisis, the moral crisis is characterized by the fact that the moral beliefs and convictions of the population differ to such a degree that the consent necessary for action and reform is no longer given. On the other hand, unlike in the normal development of knowledge and science, which depends on critical thinking, critique is itself challenged and destabilized both externally by the contestation of its legitimacy and internally as it cannot rely any more on some shared norms and cannot claim an impartial standpoint from which it could be constructed. In sum, both trust and truth are at stake, as has been revealed by a series of recent events and controversies that have occurred internationally. Reversing the title of Reinhart Koselleck's famous inquiry into "the pathogenesis of modern society", we thus want to address the multiple aspects of the complex relationships between crisis and critique, their roots, their current tensions, their potential openings.

Such an exploration should bring together the various disciplines of the social sciences and humanities, including history, sociology, anthropology, law, economics, psychology, philosophy, political science, and literary studies. It supposes to examine the issues raised within diverse national contexts and from diverse intellectual perspectives, and therefore to convene scholars from different regions and traditions at a global level. It needs to be attentive to public debates and social movements which question the present crisis and attempt to invent new forms of critical practice. It implies a fruitful dialogue between empirical studies, based notably on ethnographic, archival and statistical work, and theoretical approaches, whether normative or interpretive, so as to comprehend the current social constellation, analyze its special conditions and rethink the potentialities of critique. The seminar benefited from the support of the Nomis foundation as part of the "Crisis" research program.

Introduction I – September 26, 2018

Curated by Didier Fassin and Axel Honneth

Readings:

- Didier Fassin “Crisis and Critique: A Discourse on the Method,” (Draft)

Archive:

- Didier Fassin, “The endurance of critique,” pp. 4-29, *Anthropological Theory*, Vol. 17(1), 2017, pp. 4-29

Introduction II – October 10, 2018

Curated by Didier Fassin

Readings:

- Rodrigo Cordero, “Introduction,” pp. 1-12, in *Crisis and Critique: On the Fragile Foundations of Social Life*, (New York: Routledge, 2017)
- Rodrigo Cordero, “The Fragile World In-Between: Total Destruction and the Modesty of Critical Thinking- Hannah Arendt,” pp. 103-127, in *Crisis and Critique: On the Fragile Foundations of Social Life*, (New York: Routledge, 2017)
- Rodrigo Cordero, “Making Things More Fragile,” pp. 128-152, in *Crisis and Critique: On the Fragile Foundations of Social Life*, (New York: Routledge, 2017)

Archive:

- Rodrigo Cordero, *Crisis and critique: On the Fragile Foundations of Social Life*, (New York: Routledge, 2017)

Colonial Crisis and Anti-Colonial Critique – October 24, 2018

Curated by Hector Amaya and Beshara Doumani

Readings:

- Glen Sean Coulthard, “Introduction,” pp. 1-24, in *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014)
- Glen Sean Coulthard, “The Politics of Recognition in Colonial Contexts,” pp. 25-49, in *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014)
- Aníbal Quijano, “Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America,” *International Sociology*, Vol. 15(2), 2000, pp. 215-232
- Patrick Wolfe, “Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8(4), 2006, pp. 387-409

Archive:

- Glen Sean Coulthard, “Subjects of Empire: Indigenous Peoples and the ‘Politics of Recognition’ in Canada,” *Contemporary Political Theory*, Vol. 6(4), 2007, pp. 437-460

Political Crises and Street Politics as Critique – November 7, 2018

Curated by Robin Celikates and Jessica Winegar

Readings:

- Achille Mbembe, “The Republic and Its Beast: On the Riots in the French Banlieues,” pp. 47-54, in Charles Tshimanga, Didier Gondola, and Peter J. Bloom (eds.), *Frenchness and the African Diaspora: Identity and Uprising in Contemporary France*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009)
- Ta-Nehisi Coates, “Nonviolence as Compliance,” *The Atlantic*, April 27, 2015
- Hanan Sabea, “I Dreamed of Being a People’: Egypt’s Revolution, the People and Critical Imagination,” pp. 67-92, in Pnina Werbner, Martin Webb, and Kathryn Spellman-Poots (eds.), *The Political Aesthetics of Global Protest: The Arab Spring and Beyond*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014)

Archive:

- Étienne Balibar, “Uprisings in the *Banlieues*,” *Constellations*, Vol. 14(1), 2007, pp. 47-71
- Jessica Winegar, “The privilege of revolution: Gender class, space, and affect in Egypt,” *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 39(1), 2012, pp. 67-70
- Robin Celikates, “Learning from the Streets: Civil Disobedience in Theory,” pp. 65-72, in Peter Weibel (ed.), *Global Activism: Art and Conflict in the 21st Century*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015)

The Environmental Crisis – November 20, 2018

Curated by David Bond and Daniel Aldana Cohen

Readings:

- Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, “Preface,” pp. 11-13, in David Fernbach (trans.), *The Shock of the Anthropocene: The Earth, History and Us*, (London and New York: Verso, 2017)
- Laura Pulido, “Flint, Environmental Racism, and Racial Capitalism,” *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, Vol. 27(3), 2016, pp. 1-16
- Mike Davis, “Who Will Build the Ark,” *New Left Review*, Vol. 61(Jan-Feb), 2010, pp. 29-46
- Johan Rockström, Owen Gaffney, Joeri Rogelj, Malte Meinshausen, Nebojsa Nakicenovic, and Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, “A roadmap for rapid decarbonization: Emissions inevitably approach zero with a ‘carbon law’,” *Science*, Vol. 355(6331), 2017, pp. 1269-1271
- Zadie Smith, “Elegy for a Country’s Seasons,” *The New York Review of Books*, April 3, 2014

Archive:

- David Bond, “Oil in the Caribbean: Refineries, Mangroves, and the Negative Ecologies of Crude Oil,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 59(3), 2017, pp. 600-628
- Daniel Aldana Cohen, “Apocalyptic Climate Reporting Completely Misses the Point,” *The Nation*, November 3, 2018
- Daniel Aldana Cohen, “Stop Eco-Apartheid: The Left’s Challenge in Bolsonaro’s Brazil,” *Dissent*, November 14, 2018
- Daniel Aldana Cohen, “The Big Picture: Working-Class Environmentalism,” *Public Books*, November 16, 2017
- Daniel Aldana Cohen, “It Gets Wetter,” *Dissent*, Summer 2017
- Daniel Aldana Cohen, “Petro Gotham, People’s Gotham,” pp. 47-54, in Rebecca Solnit, and Joshua Jelly-Schapiro (eds.), *Nonstop Metropolis: A New York City Atlas*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016)
- Daniel Aldana Cohen, “Seize the Hamptons,” *Jacobin*, October 3, 2014
- Daniel Aldana Cohen, “Is Climate Change Big or Small,” *Dissent*, November 13, 2014

Hospitality – December 5, 2018

Curated by Anne McNevin, Greta Wagner, and Sophie Wahnich

Readings:

- Katerina Rozakou, “Socialities of solidarity: revisiting the gift,” *Social Anthropology*, Vol. 24(2), 2016, pp. 185-199
- Sophie Wahnich, “1790: Declaring Peace on Earth,” (Draft)
- Sophie Hinger, “Transformative Trajectories – The shifting Mediterranean Border Regime and the Challenges of Critical Knowledge Production: An Interview with Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani,” *movements*, Vol. 4(1), 2018, pp. 193-208

Archive:

- Anne McNevin, “Hospitality as a Horizon of Aspiration (or, What the International Refugee Regime Can Learn from Acehnese Fishermen),” *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 31(3), 2018, pp. 292-313
- Greta Wagner, “Solidarity, Charity, and Reciprocity: The Case of Helping Refugees in Rural Germany,” (Draft)
- Sophie Wahnich, “L’Asile comme institution civile pendant la periode revolutionnaire 1789-1795,” (Draft)

Two Views on Social Criticism – January 23, 2019

Curated by Eva Illouz, Rahel Jaeggi and Dieter Thomä

Readings:

- Axel Honneth, “Reconstructive Social Criticism with a Genealogical Proviso: On the Idea of ‘Critique’ in the Frankfurt School,” pp. 43-53, in James Ingram and others (trans.), *Pathologies of Reason: On the Legacy of Critical Theory*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009)
- Axel Honneth, “Appendix Idiosyncrasy As a Tool of Knowledge: Social Criticism in the Age of the Normalized Intellectual,” pp. 179-192, in James Ingram and others (trans.), *Pathologies of Reason: On the Legacy of Critical Theory*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009)
- Michael Walzer, “Social Criticism and Social Theory,” (Draft)

Legitimation Crisis – February 6, 2019

Curated by Axel Honneth

Readings:

- Jürgen Habermas, “System and Life-World,” pp. 1-8, in Thomas McCarthy (trans.), *Legitimation Crisis*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988)
- Jürgen Habermas, “Some Constituents of Social Systems,” pp. 8-17, in Thomas McCarthy (trans.), *Legitimation Crisis*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988)
- Jürgen Habermas, “Illustration of Social Principles of Organization,” pp. 17-24, in Thomas McCarthy (trans.), *Legitimation Crisis*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988)
- Jürgen Habermas, “System Crisis Elucidated Through the Example of the Liberal-Capitalist Crisis Cycle,” pp. 24-31, in Thomas McCarthy (trans.), *Legitimation Crisis*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988)
- Jürgen Habermas, “A Classification of Possible Crisis Tendencies,” pp. 45-50, in Thomas McCarthy (trans.), *Legitimation Crisis*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988)
- Jürgen Habermas, “A Backward Glance,” pp. 92-94, in Thomas McCarthy (trans.), *Legitimation Crisis*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988)

Archive:

- Wendy Brown, “With Reason on Our Side...,” *Theory and Event*, Vol. 11(4), 2008, muse.jhu.edu/article/257573
- Nancy Fraser, “Legitimation Crisis? On the Political Contradictions of Financialized Capitalism,” *Critical Historical Studies*, Vol. 2(2), 2015, pp. 157-189
- Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988)

Collective Volume – February 27, 2019
Curated by Didier Fassin and Axel Honneth

Preparation of the collective volume tentatively titled:

Crisis under Critique
edited by Didier Fassin and Axel Honneth

Discussion of the general problematic

Moral Economy – March 6, 2019

Curated by Didier Fassin

Readings:

- E.P. Thompson, “The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century,” *Past & Present*, (50), 1971, pp. 76-136

Archive:

- E.P. Thompson, “The Moral Economy Reviewed,” pp. 259-351, in *Customs in Common* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993)
- Didier Fassin, “Moral Economies Revisited,” *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, Vol. 64th Year(6), 2009, pp. 1237-1266

Black Radicalism – March 20, 2019

Curated by Hae Yeon Choo, Murad Idris, and Anne McNevin

Readings:

- Patricia Hill Collins, “Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought,” *Social Problems*, Vol. 33(6), 1986, pp. S14-S32
- Moon-Kie Jung, “Symbolic Perversity and the Mass Suffering of Blacks,” pp. 141-167, in *Beneath the Surface of White Supremacy: Denaturalizing U.S. Racisms Past and Present*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015)

Archive:

- Patricia Hill Collins, “The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought,” *Signs*, Vol. 14(4), 1989, pp. 745-773
- bell hooks, “Theory as Liberatory Practice,” *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism*, Vol. 4(1), 1991, pp. 1-12
- bell hooks, “Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness,” *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, (36), 1989, pp. 15-23
- José Medina, “Imposed Silences and Shared Hermeneutical Responsibilities,” pp. 90-118, in *The Epistemology of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and the Social Imagination*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013)
- José Medina, “Meta-Lucidity, ‘Epistemic Heroes,’ and the Everyday Struggle Toward Epistemic Justice,” pp. 186-249, in *The Epistemology of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and the Social Imagination*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013)

Special Guest – April 9, 2019

Lecture by Charles Mills, City University of New York

Readings:

- Charles W. Mills, “Black Radical Kantianism,” *Res Philosophica*, Vol. 95(1), 2018, pp. 1-33

Archive:

- Charles W. Mills, “Alternative Epistemologies,” *Social Theory and Practice*, Vol. 14(3), 1988, pp. 237-263
- Charles W. Mills, “White Ignorance,” pp. 49-71, in *Black Rights/White Wrongs: The Critique of Racial Liberalism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017)

Collective Volume – May 15, 2019
Curated by Didier Fassin and Axel Honneth

Preparation of the collective volume tentatively titled:

Crisis under Critique
edited by Didier Fassin and Axel Honneth

One day event with presentations of drafts of papers

Crisis and Critique Film Series

In parallel with the seminar, and in collaboration with Librarian Marcia Tucker and the School of Historical Studies, we organized a Film Series, screening fictional films and documentaries from around the world to continue our discussion with a broader public through cinema.

October 9, 2018

Inside Job, directed by Charles Ferguson

* Post-screening discussion led by Assistant Professor Clara Mattei, The New School for Social Research

November 7, 2018

Clash, directed by Khaled Diab

* Post-screening discussion led by Professor Jessica Winegar, Northwestern University, and Assistant Professor Munira Khayyat, The American University in Cairo

December 5, 2018

A Touch of Sin, directed by Jia Zhang-ke

* Post-screening discussion led by Assistant Professor Rowena Xiaoqing He, Saint Michael's College, and Professor Ji Li, Rutgers Law School

February 5, 2019

Snowpiercer, directed by Bong Joon Ho

* Post-screening discussion led by David Bond, Associate Director of the Center for the Advancement of Public Action, Bennington College, and Assistant Professor Daniel Aldana Cohen, University of Pennsylvania

March 6, 2019

Fire at Sea, directed by Gianfranco Rosi

* Post-screening discussion led by Associate Professor Anne McNevin, New School for Social Research, and Research Associate Greta Wagner, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt

April 3, 2019

Timbuktu, directed by Abderrahmane Sissako

* Post-screening discussion led by Professor Andreas Eckert, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin



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