

Power and Resistance in the 21st Century
CSPT 500/600, Poli 533/633
TEF 170 (Thursday 1-4:00pm)

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Office Hours: Wed: 1-2:30pm or by appointment

Power and Resistance in the 21st century is an interdisciplinary CSPT/Political Science graduate seminar focused on postcolonial politics, critical race theory and new social movements.

While regimes of power today are increasingly organized within the grid of national security and technological capitalism, new forms of resistance are rapidly proliferating, from the street politics of anti-austerity protests and indigenous resurgence to militant counter-ideologies, including the rise of “Eurasian ideology” in Putin’s Russia and the declaration of a new Islamic caliphate taking the form of ISIS.

In this epoch of expanding power *and* ever more fundamentalist counter-ideologies, there remains a persistent pattern of postcolonial domination as well as the increasing division of the world’s population either into the privileged bunkers of empire and its compliant client-states or into an increasingly disavowed, prohibited and increasingly excluded world of surplus bodies, forgotten refugees and effectively disappeared seekers of asylum.

As a way of theorizing power and resistance in the 21st century, the seminar will bring two important theoretical discourses into conversation: the first, *postcolonial theory* (Franz Fanon, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha,) focused on the genealogy of contemporary patterns of racial, class and sexual domination and, the second, *premonitory critical perspectives* (Albert Camus, Glen Coulthard, Avery Gordon) that explore the phantasms and hauntologies of power and domination in contemporary times. Here, postcolonial narratives of critical race theory critically engage with ghostly intimations of posthuman violence in a compellingly prophetic vision of theory and events.

Texts:

Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, New York: Grove Press, 1967.

The Wretched of the Earth: New York: Grove Press, 2004.

Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage Books, 2003.

Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London and New York: Routledge, 1994.

Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014.

Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.

Reference:

Albert Camus, *The Rebel*, New York: Vintage Books, 1991.

Requirements & Grading:

As a graduate seminar, *Power and Resistance in the 21st Century* focuses on intense and engaged classroom discussions of the assigned readings with formal commentaries as well as the presentation of research essays. Research essays (70%) should be in the range of 25 pages and topics should be discussed with the instructor. Since this is a multidisciplinary graduate seminar, students are encouraged to develop research papers within the general topic area of “Power and Resistance” which blend seminar readings with their own research interests. Participation in the seminar, presentation of commentaries on readings, and presentation of research papers will be valued at 30% of the final grade.

Research papers (print copy) are due Nov. 19th, with seminar presentations of individual essays to follow.

Seminar Schedule

Sept. 10th: Introduction: Power and Resistance in the 21st Century

-Critical Race Theory & Hegemonic Power

-Re-Reading Franz Fanon, Edward Said & Homi Bhabba

-Re-Theorizing through the lens of Albert Camus (Terrorism of Absolute Power, Violence of Absolute Justice) Glen Coulthard (Politics of Indigenous Resurgence) & Avery Gordon (Hauntologies of the Disappeared)

Reference: Albert Camus, *The Rebel*

Three Theses: Critical Race Theory & Trajectories of Power

Sept. 17th: Thesis 1: When Power Wears the Skin of Racialization

Readings:

Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (Introduction, Chapters 1, 4, 5,6)

Sept. 24th: Theorizing Race: Fanon’s Ambiguity

Readings:

Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (Chapters 7,8)

Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks* (Introduction, Chapters 1, 7)

Oct. 1: Thesis 2: Surplus-Bodies: Race, Class & the Power to Disappear, to Vanish, to Abuse

Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Preface, Violence, Spontaneity, pp.1-147)

Oct. 8: From Fanon: Exploring Contemporary Politics Through the Lens of *The Wretched of the Earth*

Readings:

Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* ("The Pitfalls of National Consciousness," "Colonial War and Mental Disorder," "Conclusion") (pp.148-205 & 249-316)

Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, Chapters 1, 4 & Conclusion)

References:

Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

(<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/read-the-truth-and-reconciliation-commission-reports-1.3097491>)

Practices of Border Cruelties: "Migrant Detention in Canada Sparks Mental Health Crises" (<http://theyee.ca/News/2015/06/18/Canadian-Migrant-Mental-Health/>)

Oct. 15th & 22nd:

Thesis 3: Trajectories of Orientalism: Phantasms, Politics & Violence

Readings: Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Preface, Chapters 1,2,3)

Background Political Themes: Orientalism and the 'War on Terror,' Orientalism & the Specter of ISIS, State Orientalism and Immigration Bans on the Dispossessed

Strategies of Resistance

Oct. 29:

The Imagined Communities of Post-Coloniality

Readings: Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* ("Preface", "Introduction," Chapter 2, "Interrogating Identity: Franz Fanon and the Postcolonial Prerogative," Chp. 3, "The Other Question: Stereotype, discrimination and the discourse of colonialism")

Nov.5: Contingency, Hybridity & Mimicry

Readings: Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (Chp. 4, "Of Mimicry and man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse," Chp.8, "Dissemination: Time, narrative and the margins of the modern nation," Chp.9 "The Postcolonial and the Postmodern: The Question of Agency," Chp.12, "Race, Time and the Revision of Modernity.")

Nov. 12th:

"How do we reckon with what modern history has rendered ghostly?"

Readings: Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters* (Introduction, Chp.1, "her shape and his hand," Chp.3, "the other door, it's floods of tears with consolations enclosed," Chp.4, "not only footprints but the water too and what is down there")

Research Essay Presentations: Nov. 19, 28, Dec. 3d

