

**SPP 519 Theory for Policy and Practice**  
**Fall 2010**  
**Room: HSD A270**  
**Class Time: Wednesday, 1:30-4:20 pm**

**Instructor:** Susan Boyd  
**Office:** HSD B-246  
**Office Hours:** Wed, 10:30 to 12:20 & 4:30-5:00  
**Office Phone:** 721-8203

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on critical and feminist theory and the construction of knowledge. Course readings include a selection of theorists from the seventeenth hundreds to the present, examination of the act of theorizing and consideration of the ways that practice can inform theory, and vice versa, as well as assumptions underlying the creation of knowledge. Assignments support students to become more familiar with engaging theory.

**Course Objectives:**

Students will be introduced to the notion of criticism and to methods of critical analysis and scholarly writing as a basis for conducting research and evaluating theory.

Students will consider critically a variety of theory (including critical and feminist analysis) and consider their implications for professional practice and scholarly research.

Students will explore the role of politics and power associated with the creation of theory.

Students will consider how theory and research are a mechanism for social change.

Students will consider ethical concerns related to the production of theory.

**Required Texts:**

1. Boyd, Susan (ed.). Coursepack. Theory: Course Readings. University of Victoria Bookstore.
2. Macey, David (2001). *Dictionary of Critical Theory*. New York: Penguin Books.
3. Articles on reserve, available from Daisy Williams in the SPP Office.

**Recommended Text:**

**Evaluation:**

Attendance and Participation	15%
Presentation	30%
Nov. 3rd contribution	5%
Theory paper: draft outline	10%
Theory Paper	40%

**Assignment One: Paper and Presentation (Paper due on day of presentation):**

Each week one student will be responsible for reviewing one of the starred \* readings available from the course. There will be three components to the assignment. The first will be a seminar presentation identifying the work's theoretical perspective, main points, and its application (if any) to health, social service, social change, and social justice. The seminar presentation should be no more than 15 minutes and preferably not read verbatim from a prepared text.

The second part of the assignment will be the preparation of questions related to the article chosen and other course readings for the week. Your questions will be presented to the class for further discussion. Each student will be responsible for leading the seminar discussion for at least 1 hour. You can be as creative as you like. Set up a panel discussion, present a video, divide the class into small groups for discussion, etc. Remember to engage the class.

The third part of the assignment consists of a written critical analysis of the article or chapter. Each student will write a formal paper (5 page, typed, double-spaced, include full references from course material) outlining the article or chapter's theoretical perspective and consider their implications for professional practice, social change and scholarly research. Students should explore the role of ethics and politics and power associated with the production and implementation of theory. Students should also hand in their list of questions with their paper.

**Your paper should include:**

- 1) A short summary of the article.
- 2) In your own words, identify the main arguments (for example, 4 main points) and theoretical perspective put forth by the author. What sort of evidence, if any, does the writer use to support the argument made? Does its logic convince you? What are the underlying assumptions (if any)? Remember that you are required to explore the context of the author's argument and the perspective it is grounded in (and not necessarily your own).
- 3) Once you understand the article, give an account of your own response to the reading (1 page).

**Some questions to address in section 3 of your paper:**

1. What are the most compelling or problematic issues(s) for me this week? Why?
2. How do the theories and issues(s) challenge my previously held notions, beliefs, position?

The assignment will be evaluated on the success of your summary of the author's argument; 2) your analysis of the author's argument that you learn about from the text; 3) the insight you gain through your reading and communicate to the class; and 4) clear presentation and attention to grammar and writing style. Students will be evaluated on their understanding of the articles/chapters and their ability to present clearly to the class the theoretical perspective of the work and to engage the class in discussion. In addition, your paper should clearly highlight the important points addressed in the weekly readings.

Papers should be typed, 12 font, double-spaced. No outside material is required. However, students are expected to reference course material and to demonstrate their knowledge of the weekly readings.

### **Assignment Two: Theory Paper: draft outline**

Write a two-page formal draft that briefly outlines what critical/feminist theory or theorist you will research for your final Theory Paper assignment below. Please reference and include a reference page (page 3 of your draft). Provide a brief summary of the researcher's (or theory) contributions and your interest in their work. Explain what you plan to discuss in your final paper.

The body of the typed paper should be two pages long, 250 words a page, and double-spaced. Font size should be 12. Papers should include a reference section on page three. Draw from course material and outside references. Use American Psychological Association (APA) style in your citations and references.

### **Assignment Three: Theory Paper:**

Write a paper on one significant critical/feminist theorist or theory that informs your research subject. Draw from the **course material and outside material**. The paper should incorporate a discussion of the theorist's (or theory) major contributions to the subject under inquiry. Students should also situate the theorists' work in the field under investigation. Thus, you need to go outside of the course curriculum.

The body of the typed paper should be 15 pages long, 250 words a page, and double-spaced. Font size should be 12. Papers should include a title page, abstract, and reference section. Use American Psychological Association (APA) style in your citations and references.

The purpose of this paper is to critically reflect on course readings, presentations, and discussions and to situate your research topic within a theoretical perspective. However, the focus of the paper is on theory rather than your research topic per se.

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All class assignments will be evaluated on your ability to complete the criteria for the assignment. Written assignments will also be evaluated on structure/format (grammar, APA style, clarity) analysis, familiarity/integration of the materials in the course and outside material and ability to understand and critically analyze theory with intellectual honesty.

See the Graduate Marking Grid in the University of Victoria Graduate Studies Calendar.

Late papers are not acceptable except for documented medical reasons. All other late papers will be penalized by 5% per day.

### **Attendance and Participation:**

Participation and attendance are required in the course. The University of Victoria Calendar states that: "Students are expected to attend all classes in which they are enrolled." Students who attend less than 80% of their classes will not qualify for the final journal assignment and will not receive a passing grade for the course. All assignments and presentations must be completed and handed in

on their due date. Late papers will be penalized by 5% each day. Presentations cannot be made-up at another date. Students who fail to present on the due date will receive a zero grade. All students are expected to read the weekly course material and to come to class prepared to discuss the articles and chapters.

**Plagiarism and Cheating:**

See the University of Victoria Calendar. Students are expected to follow the standards of scholarly integrity laid out in the calendar. Intellectual dishonesty will result in failure in the course.

### SPP 519: Required Reading

- Sept. 8 Introduction to critical thinking and theory  
Thomas King, *The truth about stories*, Chapter 1, coursepack
- Sept. 15 Kathleen Weiler, "Introduction" (1-6) (reserve)  
Elizabeth Adams St Pierre, "Coming to theory" (pp. 141-148) coursepack
- Sept 22 Linda Tuhiwai Smith, "Imperialism, history, writing and theory" (reserve)  
Mary Wollstoncraft, excerpt from the 1792 publication "A vindication of the rights of women" (reserve)
- Sept 29 \*Cynthia Kaufman, *Thinking about liberation*, Chapter 1, coursepack  
\*Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels, "The communist manifesto" (1848)  
<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/>  
Gramsci (handout, pp. 12-13)  
Recommended: Nicolas Walter, "About Anarchism" (reserve)
- Oct. 6 \*C. W. Mills, *The promise*, coursepack  
\*Jim Stanford, Introduction: Why Study Economics? (pp. 1-9); Chapter 1, the Economy and Economics, pp. 17-32, Capitalism, Chapter 2 pp. 33-39) coursepack  
\*William Carroll and Small, "Neoliberal Transformation and Antiglobalization Politics in Canada" *Int. Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 31, no. 3, Fall 2001, pp. 33-66. UVic Library.  
Recommended: Judith Goode & Jeff Maskovsky, *The New Poverty Studies*, Introduction: Not Long After the World Celebrated, coursepack  
\*Recommended: Teghtsoonian, Katherine. 2003. "W(h)ither Women's Equality: Neoliberalism, Institutional Change and Public Policy in British Columbia." *Policy, Organization & Society*, 22(1): 26-47. UVic Library
- Oct. 13 \*Edward Said, "Introduction" and "Preface" *Orientalism*, coursepack

\*Sunera Tobani, "Introduction, Of Exaltation," coursepack

Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, excerpt (pp. 109-121) (reserve)

Recommended: Paulo Freire, excerpt from: *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (reserve)

### **Assignment Two Due In Class**

Oct. 20 \*Bordo, Susan. "Introduction: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body." *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995. 1-42. (reserve)

\*Butler, Judith. "Excerpt from *Gender Trouble*." *Feminist Social Thought: A Reader*, Diana Tietjens Meyers (ed.). USA: Routledge, 1997. 112-128. (reserve)

#### **Read either Prince or Moss:**

\*Michael Prince, "Introduction: Disability, Politics, and Citizenship" reserve

\*Pamela Moss & Esabel Dyck, Women "Setting out some issues" reserve

Oct. 27 Paul Rabinow (ed.), "Introduction" coursepack

Paul Rabinow (ed.), "Docile bodies" coursepack

Karlene Faith, "Resistance: Lessons from Foucault and Feminism" coursepack

Nov. 3 Ann Petry, Chapter 1 (From "The Street") coursepack

Bud Osborn, "Hundred Block Rock" coursepack

Langston Hughes, "A dream deferred" (handout)

Gregory Scofield, "The poet takes it upon himself to speak" (handout).

**Bring in your favorite book, theory, poem, art, song... that contributes to your way of knowing theory.**

**November 10 No class: Reading Break**

Nov. 17 Nikola Rose, "Beyond medicalisation". *The Lancet*, vol. 369, February 24, 2007, pp. 700-702. UVic Library

\*Stuart Murray, "The perils of scientific obedience: Bioethics under the spectre of biofascism" (reserve)

\*Alan Hunt, "Introduction: The theory and politics of moral regulation" reserve

Nov. 24 \*Spivack, Gayatri Charavorty. (1988). "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988.

Richard Dyer, "White" coursepack

Wade Davis, "Plants of the Gods" coursepack

Dec. 1 Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre, "Coming to theory" (pp. 149-163) coursepack

Howard Becker, Terrorized by the literature, coursepack

bell hooks, "Theory as liberatory practice" coursepack

**Assignment Three: Theory Paper Due In Class**