



PHL 351

Social Philosophy

S1 External 2015

Dept of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Michael Olson

michael.olson@mq.edu.au

Contact via (61 2) 9850 6895

W5C Room 723

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp or admission to GDipArts

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Continuing the inquiry commenced in PHL254, this unit explores in more depth how social transformations might both foster and hinder the realisation of our freedom and human potential. Economic growth is generally taken to be an unquestionable good but what are its costs at a social and environmental level? Modern technology is taken to be the key to the future but what impact does it have on our relationships with nature? A successful career is often accepted as essential to happiness but is contemporary work a fully rewarding experience? Are the economic inequalities generated by contemporary social and economic transformations justifiable in a democratic society? This unit addresses these questions first by examining the social philosophy tradition (the Frankfurt School of critical theory), focusing on key themes such as the economic rationalisation of society, the effects of this rationalisation on individuals and communities, and the prospects for social freedom in an economically rationalised world. The second part of the unit then turns to contemporary approaches in social philosophy (Axel Honneth) that offer critical analyses and possible alternatives to some of the most pressing issues we face, including economic and social injustice, the environmental crisis, and social pathologies arising from new work conditions and career demands.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

A good understanding of the history and significance of European social and political philosophy.

A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.

An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.

To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.

To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities during tutorials.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Online Quiz	10%	20/03/2015
Textual Exegesis	25%	14/04/2015
Philosophical Essay	40%	12/06/2014
Tutorial Participation	25%	Throughout the term

Online Quiz

Due: **20/03/2015**

Weighting: **10%**

An online quiz to be completed in Week 4. This quiz will involve writing short answers to questions based on the topics covered in the first three weeks of the course. The quiz will be available online and accessible to students for one week; once a student commences the quiz, there will be a set period (30-45 minutes) to complete the quiz.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.

Textual Exegesis

Due: **14/04/2015**

Weighting: **25%**

This assignment, which is due at the end of Week 6, will test your ability to analyse and explain the central arguments of one of the authors we have discussed. You will be asked to summarise either Max Horkheimer or Jean-François Lyotard's analysis of the breakdown of enlightenment ideals in the 20th century. In order to complete this assessment successfully, you will need to explain the arguments of the relevant texts as clearly, concisely, and cogently as possible. The aim of this assessment is to improve your writing and textual analysis.

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Philosophical Essay

Due: **12/06/2014**

Weighting: **40%**

This major assignment aims to test your ability to engage with a topic in depth. Writing an essay tests your ability to express, analyse, and organise ideas clearly and systematically, and to develop an argument or position in a sustained, coherent, and persuasive manner. In this essay, you will articulate and defend your own position on a matter of your choosing vis-a-vis one or more of the texts we have considered during the term.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.
- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.

- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.

Tutorial Participation

Due: **Throughout the term**

Weighting: **25%**

Tutorials are an important site of individual and group learning. Philosophy tutorials involve students in active discussion with the tutor and fellow students, raising and responding to questions, analysing problems, and engaging in any number of exercises with both students and tutors. In addition to contributing regularly to online discussions (these contributions will determine 80% of your tutorial participation grade, which is 20% of your total grade), students will be expected to prepare for and participate in writing and peer-reviewing exercises in Weeks 12 and 13 (these will make up the remaining 20% of your participation grade, which is 5% of your total grade). Students will be judged on the quality of their contributions rather than the sheer quantity. Nonetheless, students should expect to engage actively in online discussions and plan to contribute substantively at least 2-3 times per week.

Weekly tutorials begin in Week 2. The aim of tutorials is to raise and address questions that arise out of each week's reading and lectures. As such, students should come to tutorials with discussion questions prepared. These questions could address confusing passages or points in the reading, criticise an author's position or argument, or identify ideas or positions that require further elaboration or clarification. In addition to raising these questions each week, students are expected to lead the way in addressing these questions. The tutor will certainly participate in these discussions, but tutorials are primarily an opportunity for students to work through the material in a cooperative manner.

In Weeks 12 and 13, we will devote the tutorials to exercises intended to improve the quality of your final essays. In Week 12, we will discuss possible topics for the final essays. In Week 13, students will read and comment on drafts of each others' final essays. Further details about these activities will be provided as the time approaches.

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- To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities

during tutorials.

Delivery and Resources

Lecture and Times

There are two lectures per week:

Wednesday 10am-11am

Thursday 3pm-4pm

Students should listen to both lectures.

External students will be required to participate in online tutorials where set questions and questions raised by students will be discussed and interaction between students will be encouraged throughout the semester. I will also participate in these discussions from time to time, mainly in a facilitating role.

Readings

For those interested in purchasing the books, the following editions are recommended for this unit:

1. Étienne Balibar, *Equaliberty: Political Essays*, trans. James Ingram (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).
2. Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (London: Continuum, 2004).
3. Isaac Kramnick (ed.), *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* (New York: Penguin, 1995).
4. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).
5. James Schmidt (ed.), *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth Century Questions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

All required readings will also be made available through the library and iLearn.

Unit Schedule

Week One: Defining the Enlightenment in France

- Jean Le Rond D'Alembert, [from] "Preliminary Discourse to the *Encyclopédie*" and "Reflection on the Present State of the Republic of Letters," in *Portable Enlightenment Reader* 7-17.
- Denis Diderot, "Encyclopédie," *Encyclopédie*, eds. Diderot and D'Alembert in *Portable Enlightenment Reader* 17-21.
- César Chesneau Dumarsais, "Philosophe," *Encyclopédie*, eds. Diderot and D'Alembert,

in *Portable Enlightenment Reader* 21-22.

Week Two: Defining the Enlightenment in Prussia

- J.K.W. Möhsen, “What is to Be Done Toward the Enlightenment of the Citizenry?,” in *What is Enlightenment?*, 49-52.
- Moses Mendelssohn, “On the Question: What is Enlightenment?,” in *What is Enlightenment?*, 53-57.
- Immanuel Kant, “Answer to the Question: What is enlightenment?,” in *What is Enlightenment?*, 58-64.
- Karl Leonhard Reinhold, “Thoughts on Enlightenment,” in *What is Enlightenment?*, 65-77.

Week Three: Enlightenment Politics—Rationality and Progress

- Immanuel Kant, “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose,” in *Political Writings*, ed. H.S. Reiss, trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 41-53. [pdf]
- Marquis de Condorcet, [from] “Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind,” in *Portable Enlightenment Reader* 26-38.
- Johann Adam Bergk, “Does Enlightenment Cause Revolutions?,” in *What is Enlightenment?* 225-231.

Week Four: Instrumental Reason and the Dialectic of Enlightenment

- Max Horkheimer, “Reason Against Itself: Some Remarks on Enlightenment,” *Theory, Culture, Society*, vol. 10, no. 2 (1993) 79-88.
- Horkheimer, “Means and Ends,” in *Eclipse of Reason* (London: Continuum, 2004) 3-39.
- Horkheimer, “The Revolt of Nature,” in *Eclipse of Reason* 63-86.

Week Five: Language as a Barrier to Universality

- Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*
- Optional: Johann Georg Hamann, “Metacritique on the Purism of Reason,” in *What is Enlightenment?* 154-167.

Weeks Six: Reaffirming the Enlightenment

- Richard Rorty, “The Continuity between the Enlightenment and ‘Postmodernism,’” in *What’s Left of Enlightenment? A Postmodern Question*, eds. Keith Michael Baker and Peter Hanns Reill (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001) 19-36.
- Jürgen Habermas, “Modernity: An Unfinished Project,” in *Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity: Critical Essays on The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, eds. Maurizio Passerin d’Entrèves and Seyla Benhabib (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997) 38-54.

Week Seven: Enlightenment and Critique: Michel Foucault

- Michel Foucault, “What is Critique?,” in *What is Enlightenment?* 382-398.
- Michel Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?,” in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon, 1984) 32-50.

Week Eight: False Universality? The Enlightenment and Race

- David Hume, [from] “Of National Characters,” in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* 629.
- Immanuel Kant, [from] *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* 637-639.
- Cornel West, *Prophesy Deliverance! An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), “A Genealogy of Modern Racism.”

Week Nine: The Enlightenment and Race, continued

- Frederick Douglass, “The Meaning of the Fourth of July for the Negro.”
- Charles W. Mills, “Defending the Radical Enlightenment,” *Social Philosophy Today*, vol. 18 (2002) 9-29.

Week Ten: False Universality? The Enlightenment and Gender

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, [from] *Emile*, in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* 568-579.
- Immanuel Kant, [from] *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* 580-586.

- Robin May Schott, “The Gender of Enlightenment,” in *What is Enlightenment?* 471-487.
- Anne Phillips, “The Universal Pretensions in Political Thought,” in *Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates*, eds. Michèle Barrett and Anne Phillips (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992) 10-30.
- Optional: Nancy Fraser and Linda Nicholson, “Social Criticism without Philosophy: An Encounter Between Feminism and Postmodernism,” *Social Text*, vol. 21 (1989) 83-104.

Week Eleven: Rethinking Freedom and Equality—Étienne Balibar

- Étienne Balibar, “The Proposition of Equaliberty,” in *Equaliberty* 35-65.
- Balibar, “New Reflections on Equaliberty: Two Lessons,” in *Equaliberty* 99-131.

Week Twelve: Rethinking Autonomy—Cornelius Castoriadis

- Cornelius Castoriadis, “Power, Politics, Autonomy,” in *Power, Politics, Autonomy*, trans. David Ames Curtis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).
- Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), “Autonomy and Alienation” 101-114.
- Optional: Castoriadis, “The Greek Polis and the Creation of Democracy,” *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, vol. 9, no. 2 (Fall 1983) 79-115.

Week Thirteen: No Lectures

Students will work on peer-reviewing exercises for their final essays in tutorials this week.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special*

Consideration Policy.

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.
- To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities during tutorials.

Assessment tasks

- Philosophical Essay
- Tutorial Participation

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- A good understanding of the history and significance of European social and political philosophy.
- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.
- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Textual Exegesis
- Philosophical Essay
- Tutorial Participation

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- A good understanding of the history and significance of European social and political philosophy.
- A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.
- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.
- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.
- To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities during tutorials.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Textual Exegesis
- Philosophical Essay
- Tutorial Participation

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative

in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Textual Exegesis
- Philosophical Essay
- Tutorial Participation

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.
- To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities during tutorials.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Textual Exegesis
- Philosophical Essay
- Tutorial Participation

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- A good understanding of the history and significance of European social and political philosophy.
- A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.
- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.
- To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities during tutorials.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Textual Exegesis
- Philosophical Essay
- Tutorial Participation

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- A good understanding of the history and significance of European social and political philosophy.
- A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.
- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Textual Exegesis
- Philosophical Essay

- Tutorial Participation

Changes from Previous Offering

Since last being offered, this unit has undergone the following changes:

- revision of learning activities, outcomes, and assessment tasks;
- revision of curriculum mapping of relationship between activities, outcomes, and graduate capabilities;
- addition of new content, including new topics and weekly readings.

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
17/02/2015	I changed the order of a couple of readings and corrected a typographical error.