



PHL 254

Freedom and Domination

S1 Day 2016

Dept of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor

Dr Andrew Dunstall

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Contact via Email

To be advised

To be advised

Dr Michael Olson

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Credit points

3

Prerequisites

12cp or admission to GDipArts

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

The term 'freedom' is frequently used today, but what does the concept of freedom really mean? Is there more freedom in modern liberal societies than in other forms of society? If so, does this make them better? Is it always a good thing to increase individual freedom? Or does the pursuit of freedom in the modern world have individual and social costs that outweigh the benefits? In a world that often deploys the concept of 'freedom' for various political or ideological ends, should we rethink the meaning of the value of freedom? This unit explores these questions by investigating the modern conception of freedom and its 'dark' or other side, the experience of alienation. We begin by examining the emergence of the Enlightenment conception of freedom as moral and individual autonomy (Kant), exploring important criticisms of individualist notions of autonomy and analyses of the social and political conditions of freedom (Hegel). We then examine various radical critiques of modern society that challenge the claim that modern individuals are genuinely free, focussing on the problem of alienation in modern social, economic, and political life (Marx). Finally, we explore the crisis of meaning in modern culture, asking whether modernity can provide adequate forms of social and cultural meaning in response to the crises afflicting the value of freedom (Nietzsche).

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:

By the end of this unit, you will possess a well-developed understanding of philosophical problems of *freedom* and its opposite, *domination* (or "alienation"). This understanding will be integrated with broader social, cultural and political debates.

In completing this unit, you will have obtained advanced skills in the analysis, evaluation and reconstruction of arguments and theories, particularly those that concern *social-political* and *moral* life.

By the end of this unit, you will also have honed and developed your *interpersonal skills* of clear communication, collaboration with peers, time-management, and making and receiving constructive feedback. These skills will approach a professional level of expectation.

Assessment Tasks

| Name | Weighting | Due |
|--|-----------|----------------------|
| What do you already know? | 10% | Weeks 3 and 4 |
| Weekly Learning Activities | 30% | Weeks 5-12 |
| Final Research Report | 35% | Tuesday June 14, 9am |
| Learning Community | 25% | Throughout semester |

What do you already know?

Due: **Weeks 3 and 4**

Weighting: **10%**

In the first two weeks, we will evaluate what you already know about freedom, domination, and other related ideas. We will connect your existing knowledge to our topic of freedom through two short reports concerned with the concepts and arguments that have been introduced following the first two tutorials. You will receive feedback within a few days on each report.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- By the end of this unit, you will also have honed and developed your *interpersonal skills* of clear communication, collaboration with peers, time-management, and making and receiving constructive feedback. These skills will approach a professional level of expectation.

Weekly Learning Activities

Due: **Weeks 5-12**

Weighting: **30%**

Each week for weeks 5-12, small activities on the key concepts, theories, and texts concerning freedom will be set. Lectures and tutorials will be designed around preparing for each of these activities in a collaborative environment, providing you with a chance to road-test your ideas and learn from each other, as well as mastering the reading material and arguments being presented.

Types of activities may include: blog posts, argument outlines, conceptual definitions, essay plans, library reports and more. **Feedback** will be given weekly on every completed activity. **Lecture and tutorial engagement** are expected as a part of your preparation. **External students** will complete the same activities, with the preparation activity adjusted to suit the demands of engaging with learning online.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- By the end of this unit, you will possess a well-developed understanding of philosophical problems of *freedom* and it's opposite, *domination* (or "alienation"). This understanding will be integrated with broader social, cultural and political debates.
- In completing this unit, you will have obtained advanced skills in the analysis, evaluation and reconstruction of arguments and theories, particularly those that concern *social-political* and *moral* life.

Final Research Report

Due: **Tuesday June 14, 9am**

Weighting: **35%**

The final report measures what you've learned through the course. It will test your abilities to research and reconstruct social-political theories with clarity, to analyse their arguments, and to evaluate their significance in light of contemporary scholarship and events. You will be provided with a report format to follow, and a choice of what to investigate. The weekly activities will lead up to and train you in how to write this report.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- By the end of this unit, you will possess a well-developed understanding of philosophical problems of *freedom* and it's opposite, *domination* (or "alienation"). This understanding will be integrated with broader social, cultural and political debates.
- In completing this unit, you will have obtained advanced skills in the analysis, evaluation and reconstruction of arguments and theories, particularly those that concern *social-political* and *moral* life.

Learning Community

Due: **Throughout semester**

Weighting: **25%**

One quarter of your grade will be obtained through your communicative engagement with your peers throughout the course. You will be assessed on how you contribute to the community of the unit via your discussion, questions, collaboration with peers, and overall contribute to the learning environment. This includes online contributions as well as face to face, and lectures (which are interactive) as well as tutorials.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- By the end of this unit, you will also have honed and developed your *interpersonal skills* of clear communication, collaboration with peers, time-management, and making and receiving constructive feedback. These skills will approach a professional level of expectation.

Delivery and Resources

Technology Used and Required

PHL254 will be delivered using a combination of interactive lectures and tutorial/seminar discussion groups.

This unit uses an ilearn website and Echo360 lecture recordings (<https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/login/MQ/>). The website contains links to lecture notes, ilecture recordings, and other learning materials you might require for the course.

Students will therefore require access to a computer and a good internet connection in order to participate in the unit effectively.

Lecture and Tutorial Times

There are two lectures per week:

Monday 12.00pm - 1.00pm E4B 308

Thursday 10.00am - 11.00am E5A 160

There are two tutorial class scheduled, both on Monday afternoon:

Monday 1.00pm - 2.00pm W5C 234

Monday 2.00pm - 3.00pm W5C 234

Studying Externally

External students will be required to participate in online tutorials and complete activities, and

engage in discussion between students.

Information about ilearn and other resources:

Very useful information and resources for using ilearn can be found at this website:

<http://www.mq.edu.au/iLearn/>

The web page for this unit can also be found at the mq ilearn website:

<https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/login/MQ/>

Changes since the last offering of this unit:

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

Revision of learning activities, outcomes, and assessment tasks.

Required and Recommended Texts and/or Materials

PHL254 Freedom and Domination will use a Unit Reader, available through the Co-op Bookshop at the start of semester. Readings will also be available electronically via the library - but using a hard-copy of the Reader is encouraged.

If you would like to purchase the main texts to be focused on they are:

Recommended websites, articles, and video clips will also be made available via the PHL254 website. A guide to further reading/recommended bibliography will also be posted for students.

Unit Schedule

Week 1: Introduction: Freedom and Domination (Start Feb 29)

The definition of freedom as autonomy. The notion of alienation. The idea of philosophy as emancipatory critique.

Suggested Reading: Charles Taylor, "Nature as Source," *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Self*, pp. 356-367.

Film extract: Peter Weir, *The Truman Show* (1998).

Weeks 2-3: Freedom as autonomy: Kant's philosophy of history and politics (March 7 & March 14)

Kant's core definition of freedom as autonomy. The categorical imperative; the 'kingdom of ends' as transition from morality to history and politics. Kant's philosophy of history and the idea of a rationally constituted free community. Kant's legacy (Rawls and Habermas).

Essential Readings:

- Immanuel Kant, "Transition From a Metaphysics of Morals to a Critique of Pure Practical Reason," *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, pp. 49-63.
- Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose," *Political Writings*, pp. 41-53.

Secondary Readings:

- Christine Korsgaard, "Morality as Freedom," *Creating the Kingdom of Ends*, pp. 159-185.
E-book: <http://ebooks.cambridge.org/chapter.jsf?bid=CBO9781139174503&cid=CBO9781139174503A013>
- Jürgen Habermas, "On the Internal Relation Between Rule of Law and Democracy," *The Inclusion of the Other*, pp. 253-264.
- John Rawls, "The Law of Peoples," *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 20, no. 1 (Autumn 1993): 36-68.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343947?seq=1>

Week 4: Hegel's critique of Kantian morality: the Notion of "Ethicality" (March 21)

Hegel's critique of Kant's moral philosophy. The critique of the categorical imperative: tautology, abstraction, subjectivism. Ethics versus morality. The social conditions of moral autonomy.

Readings:

- G.W.F. Hegel, "The Good and conscience" in his *Philosophy of Right*, § 129-140.
- T. O'Hagan, "On Hegel's critique of Kant's moral and political philosophy", in *Hegel's Critique of Kant*, chap.7, p.135-160.

Week 5: Hegel's Theory of Civil Society and the State (March 28)

Hegel's model of autonomy: individual freedom as *social* freedom. The political determination of social freedom. Social alienation and the State. Contemporary relevance of Hegel's critique of individualistic conceptions of autonomy.

Readings:

- G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, Introductions to *Ethicality* and *State* sections, §§. 142-157 and 257-271.
- David Kolb, *The Critique of Pure Modernity. Hegel, Heidegger, and after*, p.20-37.
- Axel Honneth, *Suffering from Indeterminacy*, p.52-60.

Week 6: The End of History? Hegel's critical interpretation of modernity (April 4)

Historical dimensions of freedom and alienation: the idea of moral progress. The idea of an "end

of history". Current debates about the "end of history": the meaning of neoliberalism.

Readings:

- G.W.F. Hegel, "The realisation of Spirit in history" in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, p.47-67, 93-97.
- Adriaan Peperzak, *Modern Freedom. Hegel's Legal, Moral and Political Philosophy*, p.575-584.
- Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, pp.199-210.
- Francis Fukuyama, *America at the Crossroads. Democracy, Power and the Neoconservative Legacy*, Yale University Press, 2006, pp. 47-65.

~ Mid-Semester Break : April 11 - Monday April 25 (Anzac Day) ~

Weeks 7-8: Marx's critique of Hegel: alienated labour (NB. Week begins Tuesday April 6; May 2)

Marx' early critique of the Hegelian state and Hegel's political philosophy; the relationship between philosophy and social life; freedom through labour and activity; alienation as alienated activity; losing oneself in alienated labour; the alienated society. The description and critique of modern alienation; the program of liberation; history as emancipation of alienated labour.

Essential Readings:

- Karl Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," *The Portable Karl Marx*, pp. 115-124.
- Karl Marx, *Economico-Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, in: *The Portable Karl Marx*, pp. 131-152.

Secondary Readings:

- Gyorgy Márkus, "Human Essence and History," *Marxism and Anthropology*, pp. 36-50.

Week 9: Marx's critique of capitalism: prescient or prehistoric? (May 9)

The description and critique of modern alienation. The programme of a liberation of mankind. Contemporary debates on the relevance of Marx' critique.

Readings:

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, part 1, pp. 54-75.
- Agnes Heller, "Labour and human needs in a society of associated producers" in *Modern Interpretations of Marx*, p.188-201.
- C. Leys and L. Panitch, "The political legacy of the Manifesto", in *Socialist Register 1998*.

Weeks 10-11: Nietzsche on nihilism and the death of God (May 16; May 23)

Nietzsche's challenge to modern conceptions of freedom. Nietzsche's diagnosis of nihilism and the (moral, social, cultural) meaning of the 'death of God'. Philosophical and cultural responses to nihilism.

Readings:

- Friedrich Nietzsche. *The Will to Power*, Book I, "European Nihilism", New York, Vintage Books, 1968, pp. 7-19, 34-39.
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, ## 357-377, trans. J. Nauckhoff, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Secondary Readings:

- Simon Critchley, "Travels in Nihilon", from *Very Little ... Almost Nothing. Death, Philosophy, Literature*, London, Routledge, 1997.

Week 12: Nietzsche's Critique of Modernity: freedom as alienation (May 30)

Nietzsche's radical critique of Western society, culture, and politics. The problem with liberal and social democracy. Nietzsche as aristocratic radical or conservative revolutionary? The contemporary legacy of Nietzsche's critique of modernity.

Readings:

- Friedrich Nietzsche, "A Glance at the State" in *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, ## 37-43, trans. R. Polt, Hackett Publishing Company, 1997, pp. 72-78.
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, ##257-263, trans. J. Norman, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 151-162.

Secondary Reading:

- Robert B. Pippin, "Nietzsche's Alleged Farewell: The premodern, modern, and postmodern Nietzsche," in *The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*, Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Stanley Rosen, "Nietzsche's Revolution" from his *The Ancients and the Moderns. Rethinking Modernity*, Yale University Press, 1989.

Week 13: Reading Week

No scheduled lectures: tutorials will be devoted to essay writing workshops.

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

New Assessment Policy in effect from Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html. For more information visit http://students.mq.edu.au/events/2016/07/19/new_assessment_policy_in_place_from_session_2/

Assessment Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

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

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.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://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

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

Graduate Capabilities

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- By the end of this unit, you will also have honed and developed your *interpersonal skills* of clear communication, collaboration with peers, time-management, and making and receiving constructive feedback. These skills will approach a professional level of expectation.

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 outcome

- By the end of this unit, you will possess a well-developed understanding of philosophical problems of *freedom* and its opposite, *domination* (or "alienation"). This understanding will be integrated with broader social, cultural and political debates.

Assessment task

- Weekly Learning Activities

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 outcome

- In completing this unit, you will have obtained advanced skills in the analysis, evaluation and reconstruction of arguments and theories, particularly those that concern *social-political* and *moral* life.

Assessment tasks

- What do you already know?
- Weekly Learning Activities
- Final Research Report

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

- In completing this unit, you will have obtained advanced skills in the analysis, evaluation and reconstruction of arguments and theories, particularly those that concern *social-political* and *moral* life.

Assessment task

- Final Research Report

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 outcome

- By the end of this unit, you will also have honed and developed your *interpersonal skills* of clear communication, collaboration with peers, time-management, and making and receiving constructive feedback. These skills will approach a professional level of expectation.

Assessment tasks

- Final Research Report
- Learning Community

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:

Assessment task

- Learning Community