

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 6150 - Winter 2011

Contemporary European Philosophy 2: Adorno

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Office hours: Wed 9-10 and 11-12 McKinnon 355 x53220

Or by Skype Friday 9-10 am (my Skype name: jaylampert)

This course concentrates on the philosophy of Theodor Adorno. A major figure in critical theory (Frankfurt School), Adorno was a brilliant original philosopher whose work does not fit easily into any category. We will focus on four of his major contributions: his political philosophy, tied to critical theory's loose appropriation of Marxism; his critique of popular culture and the culture industry; his conceptualization and defense of new classical music (from Schoenberg to Stockhausen); and his powerful interpretation and negative twists on Hegel's dialectic. Adorno's writing style is oddly organized, fragmented but carefully interwoven, and his thinking and writing is dialectical down to the structure of individual sentences. Part of our goal in this course is to learn to think and write dialectically in Adorno's fashion, and to assess how to make use of his version of critical theory as resources for our own philosophizing about politics, culture, and art.

Texts:

Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*

Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*

Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*

Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory" (on reserve at the Library)

Read your choice of ONE of these four essays on music by Adorno:

"Berg's Discoveries in Compositional Technique"

"The Natural History of the Theatre"

"The Radio Symphony"

"On Jazz"

These four essays on music are on reserve in the Library, in either *Essays on Music* or *Quasi una Fantasia*

Grading Scheme:

Micropresentations:	10%
Short explication paper (4 pages), Feb 8:	20%
Contribution to Duquesne-Guelph workshop, Mar 15?:	10%
Final paper presentation, Apr 5:	10%
Final paper, due end of classes:	50%

Readings:

- Jan 11 Introduction to the course
- Jan 18 *Negative Dialectics* pp. 3-96 (omit 47-51, 83-89)
- Jan 25 *Neg Dial* 89-148
- Feb 1 *Neg Dial* 148-207
- Feb 8 *Dialectic of Enlightenment* pp. 1-62
- Feb 15 *Neg Dial* 211-265 (omit 246-52, 260-61)
- [Spring Break]
- Mar 1 *Neg Dial* 265-99 (omit 270-76, 287-92); AND *Dial of Enl* 94-136
- Mar 8 *Neg Dial* 300-360 (omit 312-13, 323-31, 334-38, 349-53)
- Mar 15* Workshop Duquesne-Guelph: Read Habermas, "The Entwinement of Myth and Enlightenment: Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno" in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*
- Mar 22 *Neg Dial* 361-408 (omit 373-top of 379, 381-bottom of 386, bottom of 388-middle of 395)
--and ONE of the essays on music (see "Texts" above)
- Mar 29 *Philosophy of New Music*, 7-102
- Apr 5 Presentations of final papers

* Duquesne University in Pittsburgh is running a course in Critical Theory this semester (focusing on Habermas). Our plan is that the professor (James Swindal) and the students in that course will come up to Guelph for a workshop/discussion with our class on or around March 15. The exact dates, texts to work on, and format of the discussion, are still being worked out.

SEVEN STANDARD STATEMENTS – WINTER '11

E-mail Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> email account regularly: email is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement...

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact.

Drop Date

For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Graduate Calendar:

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and enjoins all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:
<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer.