

11th ESSEX CONFERENCE IN CRITICAL POLITICAL THEORY

GLOBAL CHALLENGES - NEW IMAGINARIES IMAGE, VOICE, AND RADICAL DEMOCRACY

Call for Panels and Papers

Dates: 15th-17th June 2011

Location: University of Essex, Colchester, UK

Deadline for Paper, Panel, and Roundtable Proposals: 29th April 2011

Website: <http://www.essex.ac.uk/centres/Theostud/>

All Inquiries to: polcon@essex.ac.uk

Global Challenges – New Imaginaries Image, Voice and Radical Democracy

FEW doubt, today, that we face a series of connected global challenges: the dangers of climate change and environmental degradation; a crisis of international finance and global capitalism; an ever-increasing logic of minoritization, which threatens to fragment communities and societies; greater social and economic inequalities, both nationally and globally; the intensification of various forms of religious belief, including fundamentalism, alongside a growing secularization of communities and societies; securitization of society, and a palpable disillusionment with politics and politicians. There is little doubt that those who wish to go beyond the contradictions and failures of our contemporary condition find it difficult to elaborate plausible interim visions that can point us away from the current malaise. This year's theme connects these global challenges to the exploration and articulation new imaginaries for the future.

'GLOBAL CHALLENGES, NEW IMAGINARIES' takes up the challenge of rethinking different aspects of global capitalism, religion, the place of minorities, and the environment, focusing on the alternative visions being proposed, the role of new media in these processes, and related themes. The conference also seeks to problematize and explore the role of theory in the academy and in relation to the pressing issues we confront. Our invited speakers shall deliver keynote addresses to the conference that will

shape the discussions with their distinctive voices and perspectives. Each of the speakers will address one or more of the themes announced in the title.

Keynote Speakers

Thomas Dumm is a political theorist and William Hastie Professor of Political Science at Amherst College. He is author of *Michel Foucault and the Politics of Freedom* (Sage, 1996 and 2002), *A Politics of the Ordinary* (NYU Press, 1999), and *Loneliness As a Way of Life* (Harvard University Press, 2008), which inquires into the deeper forces that shape our existence as modern individuals. He is currently working on a manuscript entitled *Coming Home* for Harvard University Press (forthcoming 2011). He is also co-editor of *Rhetorical Republic: Governing Representations in American Politics* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1993) and *Performing Violence* (University of Massachusetts Press, forthcoming, 2010). He is a founding editor of *Theory & Event*, and remains on its editorial board. His research and teaching interests are in the fields of contemporary political theory, American political thought and continental philosophy.

Moya Lloyd is Professor of Political Theory at Loughborough University. She has written on the work Michel Foucault, the relation between politics, subjectivity and identity in feminism, as well as on the political thought of Judith Butler. Her monographs include *Beyond Identity Politics* (Sage, 2005), which explores the implications for feminist politics of the 'turn' to poststructuralism that marked debates in the 1980s and 1990s and *Judith Butler: from norms to politics* (Polity, 2007). She is currently working on two projects. The first, a project entitled 'Who Counts', examines the relationship between acknowledgement, cultural intelligibility and democracy by focusing on a number of cases in contemporary politics ranging from the heteronormativity of state mourning practices to 'Whiteness' and aboriginality. It draws on the work of Jacques Rancière, Judith Butler, Michel Foucault, amongst others. The second is a short book exploring how ideas about sex, gender and sexuality shape politics and policy-making.

Davide Panagia holds the [Canada Research Chair in Cultural Studies](#) at Trent University. His publications include [The Political Life of Sensation](#) (Duke UP, 2009), which posits sensation as a radical democratic moment of aesthetic judgment and contends that sensory experience interrupts our perceptual givens, creating occasions to suspend authority and reconfigure the arrangement of a political order. This first acclaimed book, [The Poetics of Political Thinking](#) (Duke UP, 2006) inquires into contemporary accounts of the nature of political argument from the perspective of modern political and aesthetic thought. He is the Co-Editor of [Theory & Event](#), and is a contributor to [The Contemporary Condition](#). He is currently working on two major research projects. The first focuses on David Hume's contribution to political and cultural theory. The second explores an ethics of appearances by addressing how individuals or groups in pluralist democratic societies attend to the emergence of political subjectivities, suggesting that the attention that we give to appearances is of critical importance to contemporary democratic life.

Closing Plenary

Beyond Negative Critique: Articulating Interim Visions

The conference also engages with the concept of critique, which enjoys wide usage in many quarters of the humanities and the social sciences today. Our talk of Critical Management Studies, Critical Legal Studies, Critical Realism and Critical Political Theory reflects a challenge to traditional models of understanding and explanation, and the promise of a more engaged and relevant mode of theoretical practice. This plenary explores persistent questions regarding the way we think about and employ the idea of critique reflecting on the unease that remains in the widespread dissemination of the qualifiers 'critique' and 'critical' about what it *means* to be critical, about *how* critical we are, and about the concrete *implications* of critique. These issues are explored in the context of the conference's engagement with the articulation of alternative visions and the need to examine them critically.

Closing Plenary Speakers

Martin Parker is Professor of Business Studies at the Warwick Business School. He has worked on a variety of topics, including social and organizational theory, market managerialism and Higher Education, culture and popular culture, utopianism, conspiracy theory, the Apollo space programme, business ethics, critical management studies, and alternative organizations. He is currently working on a book on representations of 'economic outlaws'. His publications include *Against Management* (Oxford: Polity, 2002), and two co-written volumes entitled *Space Travel and Culture* (Blackwell 2009) and *For Business Ethics* (London: Routledge, 2009). He is also Co-Editor of the journal *Organization: The Critical Journal of Organization, Theory and Society*.

Helen Sullivan is one of the UK's leading researchers on local governance and is Professor of Government and Society at the University of Birmingham. She had a lead role several national evaluations undertaken as part of the UK Government's 'Local Government Modernisation Agenda', drawing on her expertise in the use of theories of change to evaluate complex policy initiatives. She is currently a lead member of the national evaluation team researching the impact of Local Area Agreements and Local Strategic Partnerships. Her research council funded work includes a project exploring developments in public participation in local governance and one examining the democratic performance of governance networks in Europe. She is currently co-directing an ESRC seminar series entitled 'Collaborative Futures' which is exploring the new challenges for collaborative action in the public, private and third sectors. Her publications include a co-written volumes entitled *Power, Participation and Political Renewal: Case studies in public participation* (Bristol, The Policy Press, 2007) *Building capacity for health equity* (London, Routledge, 2005).

Hugh Wilmott is Research Professor in Organization Studies in the Cardiff Business School. His continuing interest lies in developing critical, questioning analyses of diverse aspects of management. The interdisciplinary nature of his research orientation allows him to span a range of areas of interest, including organization studies, industrial sociology, accounting and information systems. He has worked on funded projects examining information and communication technologies (ESRC), remote distribution of

financial services (ESRC), corporate strategy and management accounting (ICAEW), and changing organizational forms (ESRC). He has co-edited a series of books on such topical issues as gender, skill, quality management, business process reengineering, knowledge management and customer service. He is currently a consulting editor to the Palgrave Macmillan *Critical Management Studies Series* and an editorial board member of the Routledge *Culture, Economy and the Social* series. His most recent publications include the *Handbook of Critical Management Studies* ed. with M. Alvesson and T. Bridgman (Oxford University Press 2009), and *Organization Theory and Design* with R. Daft and J. Murphy (Cengage Learning, 2010).

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THE 11th CONFERENCE IN CRITICAL POLITICAL THEORY at the University of Essex provides a space to address and engage with these issues. The conference has achieved a renowned reputation for the quality of the papers presented and the large number of international participants. Previous guest speakers have included Stephen White, Romand Coles, Diana Coole, Bill Connolly, Michael Hardt, Wendy Brown, Judith Squires, Quentin Skinner, Joan Copjec, James Tully, Jane Bennett, Fred Dallmayr, Bonnie Honig, David Owen, David Campbell, Simon Critchley, Ernesto Laclau, and Chantal Mouffe, amongst others. This year the conference is hosted by the Centre for Theoretical Studies, the Department of Government at the University of Essex and IDAWorld.

THE conference provides an important opportunity to engage with the contemporary challenges and possibilities of social and political theory and to exchange views on ongoing research. We welcome proposals for papers as well as for panels from all scholars, including postdoctoral researchers, and early career scholars from a wide variety of backgrounds in the field of social and political theory. But as is customary with the Essex conference, the themes are in part shaped by the thought and writings of our invited guests, and this year is no exception.

Broad Themes Include

- * Imagination in Politics
- * Global Political Imaginaries
- * Transitional Justice
- * Rethinking Community and Citizenship
- * Identity, Security and New Technologies
- * Critical Political Economy

- * Discourse & the New Media
 - * Ecology and Capitalism
 - * Politics and Technology
 - * Latin American Politics
- * Universalism and Particularism
- * Democracy and Representation
- * Capitalism, Multiculturalism, Globalization
 - * Identity Politics and Mobilization
 - * Subjectivity and Psychoanalysis
 - * Religion, Faith and Pluralism
 - * Discourse and Affect
 - * Fundamentalisms
 - * New Ecologies
 - * Philosophies of Nature
- * Discourse, Governance & Public Policy
 - * Culture and Political Economy
- * The Politics of Space, Time and Territoriality
 - * Reworking Identity/Difference

Proposals for Papers, Panels and Roundtables

The conference organizers welcome proposals for individual papers; full panels (with papers); and roundtables (focused on discussion of a common theme rather than the formal presentation of papers). Paper, panel, and roundtable proposals (short abstracts) should be sent to polcon@essex.ac.uk **no later than 29th April 2011**. Inquiries may also be sent to that address. **Decisions on proposals will be made on a rolling basis.** Inquiries may also be sent to that address. Final papers will be posted on the conference website.

Methodology Workshops

Some of the sessions will comprise methodological workshops. These 90-minute sessions feature specialists in different aspects of critical and poststructuralist political analysis, and provide an opportunity for doctoral students and early career researchers to have their work discussed by researchers already in some standing. Experts providing feedback in the past have included David Howarth, Aletta Norval, Steve Griggs, and Jason Glynos. The workshops will be chaired by fellow early career researchers or doctoral students, helping to provide a relaxed atmosphere in which methodological issues can be freely discussed. The focus of the methodology workshops will be on questions raised by researchers, and their research will be treated as case studies to generate and engage a set of broader methodological questions. The sessions form part of the main conference programme, so are open to all conference participants.

If you would like to be considered for these workshops, please submit a proposal, including a short summary of your project, the methods used, and two or three methodological questions or problems you would like the panel to address. Proposals should be no longer than approximately 1500 words. Please mark your email clearly in the subject with "Methodology Workshop Submission." **The deadline for inquiries is 29th April 2011.** For additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact the chair of the Methodology Workshop Advisory Board (polcon@essex.ac.uk) marking your inquiry clearly for attention: Graham Walker.

Organizing Committee at the University of Essex

Jason Glynos, Department of Government, University of Essex
David Howarth, Centre for Theoretical Studies, University of Essex
Aletta J. Norval, Centre for Theoretical Studies, University of Essex
Khairil Ahmad, PhD Candidate, Department of Government, University of Essex
Graham Walker, PhD Candidate, Department of Government, University of Essex
Amr Abdelrahman, PhD Candidate, Department of Government, University of Essex

Methodology Workshops Organizer

Graham Walker, PhD Candidate, Department of Government, University of Essex

Conference Fees:

Fees for Staff: £140

Fees for Early Career Researchers: £80

Conference Site

The *University of Essex* is located in the ancient market town of Colchester and near the picturesque village of Wivenhoe in Northeast Essex. It is about 45 minutes from London by rail, 30 minutes from London's Stansted Airport by cab or about an hour by bus. The conference programme will offer opportunities to enjoy the villages and countryside in this scenic part of England. More information about accommodation, costs, and venue is available on the website.