

**PHL 405-01: Great Works: Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference***

Tuesday/Thursday, 10AM-11:50AM in Building 9, Room 325

Spring 2017

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Office Hours: Thursday, 2PM-5PM, and by appointment; Building 1, Room 329

**Course Description:** This course will consist primarily in a close reading of Iris Marion Young's *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Young argues that mainstream political (especially contemporary "liberal") thought has been excessively concerned with *distributive justice*, and the question how material goods (like money) should be distributed by the government to citizens. Young argues that this distribution-oriented framework is both out of touch with the real-world social movements that are fighting for equality, and fundamentally flawed on a conceptual level. Instead of focusing on how much stuff the government should take from the rich and give to the poor, Young argues that social justice and equality consist, first and foremost, in freedom from oppression and domination. Young also offers highly influential accounts of the various forms of oppression and the roles of group-based (identity) politics in just democratic decision-making. Along the way, she confronts issues including capitalism, welfare, affirmative action, body image, city life, and international justice.

**Course Goals**

- Understand and evaluate some of the central issues and problems regarding social justice, including distributive justice, freedom from oppression, and assimilationist vs. group-based conceptions.
- Improve your critical thinking skills, especially your skills for evaluating, developing, and defending reasoned arguments.
- Explain philosophical arguments, and develop your own, in class discussion and written papers.

**Required Readings**

Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (abbreviation: **JPD**)

- This course will also draw on a variety of other sources from the humanities, social sciences, and popular media. All additional sources will be accessible on Blackboard, the CPP Library website, or the web.
- It is OK if you obtain digital versions of these texts, but you will need to access these versions in class—and your cell phone is NOT an acceptable reading device.

**Additional Required Materials: you will need to bring a smartphone, tablet, or laptop to every class in order to take Blackboard quizzes.**

**Course Grading and Requirements**

Attendance and Participation: 20%

Quizzes: 20%

Podcast Response: 5% (due Thursday 4/13)

First Paper: 15%

Second Paper: 20%

Third Paper: 20%

## Course Grading and Requirements continued

Attendance & Participation (20%): This includes attendance, participation, and in-class assignments. **Attendance is mandatory, as is arriving on time.** Excused absences require signed documentation from a doctor or dean. **Participation and preparation are crucial.** There are a variety of ways to participate, including: actively contributing to discussions, demonstrating reflection on the readings, listening carefully to others' contributions (not dominating discussion), and showing respect toward classmates. If you are uncomfortable speaking in class, I encourage you to visit my office hours and contribute more to the Discussion Board on Blackboard. (You may want to subscribe to the Discussion Board so you receive emails when someone posts there.) There may also be in-class debates and group work. PowerPoint slides will be posted to Blackboard after class. You are expected to remain engaged in the class and take notes. I may decide to stop posting lecture slides if students are not paying sufficient attention.

Extra Credit Typo & Mistake Policy: I give extra participation credit if you identify typos and other mistakes in class handouts, assignments, and lecture slides (not emails, unless the email gets a date or time wrong, or fails to include all the relevant attachments and links).

Quizzes (20%): Most classes will begin with a 10-minute Blackboard quiz on the assigned readings. You will need an internet-connected device (phone, tablet, laptop) to take these quizzes. The quizzes tend to be very difficult, but they are graded on a generous curve. (Typically, getting around 50% of the questions right translates roughly to a B grade.) **Note:** some students find that quizzes don't represent the work they put into the assignments. If you are struggling with the quizzes—for whatever reason—come talk to me. Students who approach me may be given an alternative, supplementary option for demonstrating their engagement with the reading.

No Laptops or Phones: After the quiz is over, laptops, tablets, and cell phones cannot be used in the classroom, and must be kept off desks, unless you get my express consent. If you need to use a laptop or tablet during class, please contact me outside of class, by email or during office hours.

Papers (60%): There will be three paper assignments (600-1,000 words) and a shorter reading response to a podcast episode. Due dates to be announced.

Extra credit: A variety of extra-credit opportunities, including responses to outside readings, films, and podcasts. **Students can also get extra credit for recommending useful additional readings, podcasts, videos, etc.**

**Student Access**: I am dedicated to providing students with the support they need to succeed in the classroom. Students who need accommodations are encouraged to contact me privately or the Disability Resource Center at (909) 869-3333, building 9, room 103.

**Academic Integrity**: The University trusts each student to maintain high standards of honesty and ethical behavior. I will observe Cal Poly Policies on Honesty and Plagiarism. While teamwork is encouraged, any kind of cheating is unacceptable. **Students that fail to observe honesty and plagiarism policies will fail the course, and their cases will be reported to the Judicial Affairs Committee.** I will distribute a handout on academic integrity for each student to sign and return to me.

## Topics and Readings

**Note:** the readings and schedule are **tentative and subject to change**. I will confirm the specific upcoming readings in every class and immediately after class via email. **You are therefore responsible for checking your CPP email after every class.**

### **Week 1:** Hello!

Complete the “Tell Me About You” assignment on Blackboard

#### A Very Brief Introduction to Distributive Justice

Philosophy Bites, interview with Jonathan Wolff about John Rawls: [20m podcast](#)

John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, selections from §§3, 4, [skip 5], 11, 13, 17, pp.551-556, 559-563 of PDF

§87. Aesop: The Grasshopper and the Ants, p.224

§89. Aristotle: Equality and Inequality, pp.226-7, *Politics*

§92. Karl Marx: From Each According to His Abilities, To Each According to His Needs, pp.231-3, “Critique of the Gotha Programme”

§94. F.A. Hayek: The Impossibility of Planning, pp.238-41, *The Road to Serfdom*

### **Week 2**

Amy Allen, “Feminist Perspectives on Power,” just read: [§2. Power as Resource: Liberal Feminist Approaches](#)

JPD, Introduction and Ch.1, “Displacing the Distributive Paradigm,” pp.3-38

97. Ronald Dworkin: Equality of Resources, pp.248-254

Elizabeth Anderson, “What is the Point of Equality?”, pp.287-312 (stop at top of p.312)

96. Robert Nozick: The Entitlement Theory, pp.245-8, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*

Jim Pryor, “[Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper](#)”

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Paper Assignment Distributed**

### **Week 3**

JPD, Chapter 2, “Five Faces of Oppression,” 39-65

Marilyn Frye, “Oppression”; Sandra Lee Bartky, “On Psychological Oppression”

Listen to Hi-Phi Nation episode, “[Be a Man](#),” and write a response (minimum 1.5 pages; 5% of your final grade) about how the issues discussed in the episode relate to Young’s account of oppression. Upload to Blackboard by Thursday (4/13), 2PM.

### **Week 4**

#### Defenses of Rawls, luck egalitarianism, and the distributive paradigm

Seana Shiffrin, book review of JPD

Hennie Lötter, “Rawls, Young, and the Scope of Justice”

Mara Marin, “What Is Structural about the Basic Structure?”

Nicholas Barry, “Defending Luck Egalitarianism”

### **Week 5**

JPD Ch.3, “Insurgency and the Welfare Capitalist Society,” pp.66-95

Movement for Black Lives [Platform](#)

JPD Ch.4, “The Ideal of Impartiality and the Civic Public,” pp.96-121

Jennifer Saul, “Women’s ‘Different Voice’”

Louise Antony, "Sisters, Please I'd Rather Do It Myself: A Defense of Individualism in Feminist Epistemology"

**1<sup>st</sup> Paper Assignment Due**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Paper Assignment Distributed**

### **Week 6**

Peter Horban, "[Writing a Philosophy Paper](#)"

Simon Rippon, "[A Brief Guide to Writing the Philosophy Paper](#)"

JPD Ch.5, "The Scaling of Bodies and the Politics of Identity," pp.122-155

Robin Zheng, "Why Yellow Fever Isn't Flattering: A Case against Racial Fetishes"

JPD Ch.6, "Social Movements and the Politics of Difference," pp.156-191

*Maybe*: Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," selections; Nancy Fraser, "From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a 'Post-Socialist' Age"; Iris Marion Young, "Unruly Categories: A Critique of Nancy Fraser's Dual Systems Theory"; Fraser, "A Rejoinder to Iris Young"; Ronald Beiner, "Multiculturalism and Citizenship: A critical response to Iris Marion Young"

### **Week 7**

Antonin Scalia, "The Disease as a Cure"

JPD Ch.7, "Affirmative Action and the Myth of Merit," pp.192-225

Lisa Leslie, David Mayer, & David Kravitz, "The Stigma of Affirmative Action: A Stereotyping-Based Theory and Meta-Analytic Test of the Consequences for Performance"

*Maybe*: Rebecca Kukla, "Discursive Injustice," Elizabeth Anderson, "Understanding Affirmative Action"

**2<sup>nd</sup> Paper Assignment Due**

### **Week 8**

Malcolm X, "[Racial Separation](#)"

JPD Ch.8, "City Life and Difference," pp.226-256

"Epilogue: International Justice," pp.257-260

Amy Allen, "Power and the Politics of Difference: Oppression, Empowerment, and Transnational Justice"

*Maybe*: María Lugones, "Playfulness, 'World'-Travelling, and Loving Perception", David Owen, "Responsibilities of Justice, Reading Young on Political Responsibility and Structural Injustice"

**3<sup>rd</sup> Paper Assignment Distributed**

### **Week 9**

Elijah Chudnoff, "[A Guide to Philosophical Writing](#)"

Make-up classes and further topics TBD (partly based on student interest!)

### **Week 10**

TBD (partly based on student interest!)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Paper Due**: finals week