

CRITICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Psy 314 Special Topics in Theory Construction 3 units
Silliman University, Second Semester November 2011-March 2012
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What this course is about.

This is not a traditional course in social psychology. It is an explorational, innovational, and I hope inspirational, investigation of new but relevant, territory. I am not an expert in the territory we will explore. We will be learning together. It might give a hint to know some of the alternative titles I have considered for us: Hermeneutics of Emancipation, Cultural Psychology, Indigenous Psychology, Critical Psychology, PostColonial Theory, and Liberation Psychology. It is interdisciplinary and subversive, that is it confronts the disciplinary approach to education because all disciplines interact with each other despite communities of scholars huddling within disciplines. It is subversive not only toward education, but to the social structures and processes that tend to oppress people. This course could be taught in any department from Anthropology to Zoology. For instance, it involves mass communication, art, literature, linguistics, religion, and so on. Or even better, it could be done without a department. When concepts get really interdisciplinary, one can call them 'philosophy'.

Procedural Matters

1. REAL AND VIRTUAL CLASSROOMS

- a. For the first half of the semester we will operate with traditional class meetings, probably supplemented by various internet communication and activities. All sessions, including face to face sessions will require laptops and net connectivity. Webcams are good but optional.
- b. The second half of the semester will be run from control central, my office in Vermont, USA. Each week I will do either a group virtual classroom for the whole class, or other forms of internet or Skype communication.

2. ASSIGNMENTS.

- a. **Weekly.** Each of us will read at least two articles or book chapters. One will be assigned for our common consideration. The other(s) will be of your own choosing either from supplied references in the syllabus or from your own resources that you can defend as relevant.

- b. **Semesteral.** Each person will do one PowerPoint (or equivalent presentation program) and one paper. This is not as difficult as it may seem, as they can be the same
- c. **Note:** Some of our reading comes from a postmodern social philosophy background, where the ideas are great, but the vocabulary can often be challenging (that is shorthand for nearly incomprehensible.) Not to fret; forewarned and being in the same barkada with the rest of us, we learn to deal with it with just an occasional 'pastilan'.

3. BROWSING & WIKIPEDIA

- a. The internet's rapid expansion of information is astounding, and the material available for intellectual topics is no exception. Obviously you are already fluent in browsing, and I just point this out so you do not solely rely on Wikipedia. If I know an author and/or article I am after and don't already know the URL, I Google.
- b. Wikipedia is often a great place to start even though you have to progress to other places from there. You can go straight to Wikipedia, or pick Wikipedia articles from your browsed list of course. It is usually good to start that way as you get a glimpse of other relevant sources.
- c. **APSWI.** Wikipedia is aware that the quality of writing in their encyclopedia is quite uneven and because their growth is so astounding, they have developed a project of recruiting volunteers for editorial help. Also, the Association for Psychological Science has developed a program to assist teachers and students in the use of Wikipedia, both for the editing and submission of articles. They have tutorials for this project. I originally planned for us to do this, but we don't have time, but anyone wanting to explore it, please feel free.

4. COURSE COMPONENTS

- a. Ultra brief introduction to three fundamental tenants of philosophy from the **Early Greek Renaissance.**
- b. Ultra quickie introduction to contemporary social philosophical **postmodern roots** of PostColonial Theory: Critical Theory, Post-structuralism, PostAnalytic, and related social critiques.
- c. **PostColonialism**
- d. **Critical Psychology.** See section 6. Below for a link to a previous preliminary course outline placed on my web site two years ago.

5. FIRST ASSIGNMENTS

- a. First, find out about the concept of emancipation by browsing.
- b. The second assignment, your first reading which will be to read an article of mine, not just to get bored, but it is submitted to a journal for publication, and

they will have some suggestions, such as ‘good for the CR, reading or some other purpose’, but I will be ready for them if you can critique and help me make it more readable. Never mind that icky math part, we can dump it or simplify it (that is, remove the graphs and equations). Its title is ***The Dynamics of Culture***.

6. RESOURCES AT MY WEB SITE [www.blueberry-brain.org]

- a. A number of related papers are located at ‘chaophilosophy’.
- b. An original outline prepared two years ago for this course can be found under Silliman/emancipation theory. It had far too much scope for a single course. You might want to cruise through some of the sections out of curiosity, and feel free to choose your own area of interest and course writing from them if you wish.
- c. The section on PostColonialism is essentially the part we used to develop this newer, better syllabus, which has been updated to include the areas we especially will concentrate on, Indigenous Psychology and Critical Psychology. Skip the references at that web site as the URLs were corrupted. The important ones are included in the bibliographies in this syllabus below. Some of the original papers from the reference list have links to them within the reference list, giving you the capability of downloading them to your computer. Many of the important articles will be also stored in an account established for the course [Psych320.su@gmail.com.], and you can edit and download from them once your email address is entered into its contact list.

7. Issues in Contextual Conflicts

- a. Personal. To what extent are your goals of personal success within a capitalistic society in conflict with your goals of contributing to an empathic democratic society of participation, opportunity, and equality for all.
- b. Educational. Can there be a synergistic relationship between socio-psychological theory and the practice of social action? [Chapter 2 of ***The Location of Culture*** by Homi Bhabha addresses this issue, although with a somewhat turgid language, check out the first few pages until you scream ‘pastilan’.]
- c. Diasporic. Can there be a synergistic relationship between diasporic activity and love of homeland, of global-local spheres of information and activity? Bhabha, McLuhan, Deibert, Zakaria, and others have emphasized this interaction.

Critical and Indigenous Psychology: A Brief Introductory Bibliography

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Readings /Outline Psy 314 SU 2011 Abraham (read yellow highlights first, then blue.)

1. Some Basic Philosophy [For Discussion at our first meeting, November 5].
 - a. Abraham *The Dynamics of Culture*.
 - b. Abraham (*Cybersexuality* pp 1-5)
 - c. Outline on Blueberry (optional, but check it out)
 - i. Section on Philosophy 2nd item
 - ii. Section on PostColonialism, up to references.
2. Critical Psychology and the Hermeneutics of Oppression
 - a. Hook (2005): *Critical Psychology/PostColonialism*
 - b. Bhabha: *Preface to The Locations of Culture, Routledge Classics*.
 - c. Choose from among: Bhabha Chapter 2; Fanon 's books, Desai, other
3. PostColonialism: Basic Concepts and Relation between Theory and Practice
 - a. Bhabha : *Introduction & Chapter 1, pp 1-8*
 - b. Wikipedia and any items mentioned in 1 a ii above or in Bhabha, etc
4. Hermeneutic Views of Psychology
 - a. Teo (2010, 2011) *Roots of Critical Psychology; Hermeneutics of Race Psychology*
 - b. Abraham (2010a,b) search for sections on Bakhtin & Lewin; Freire; Ryan; Thomas & Silllen (choose)
5. Cultural Psychology
 - a. Cole (Introduction & Chapter 1)
 - b. Cole, Shweder (2000)
6. Indigenous Psychology
 - a. Allwood (2011, *Social Epistemology*)
 - b. Allwood (2011, *Cultural Concept Reply*); Kim; (syllabus) Kim et al. ,(2006); Kamens; Sandararajan.
7. Liberation Education, Gender, Religion, Art, Theatre, & Psychology
 - a. Education: Freire
 - b. Gender: Feminism, Gay Rights, & Child Trafficking. [See Erlich & Abraham; Murphy & Abraham for other references]
 - c. Religion: King, Malcolm X, Wright/Moyers , Crossan, Bible, West, Reformation
 - d. Art: Koehler Zausner, Pfeiffer; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Espa%C3%B1a_y_Filipinas
 - e. Theatre: New Voice Company; Bread & Puppet;
<http://www.newvoicecompany.com/html/about.htm>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla_theatre;
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bread_and_Puppet_Theatre
 - f. Psychology: Levine, Lewin; Koehler, Martin Baró, Fanon
8. Global Capitalism, Modes of Communication, Ecological Issues, Philippine Issues, Intersection of local with the global: Does Critical Psychology and Social Theory Have Any Role to Play?

Exercises

1. As the Psy314 Psycharda let's take over a display case in the Exploratorium. Let's make it a description of "Critical Liberation Psychology". We can start with some redacting or rewriting the course description and ideas from Bhabha and Hook, and lets find good pictures to illustrate it that we take off the internet or with our cameras. We can make a PowerPoint out of the poster as well as a start into doing that. Let's start small and easy, and improve and expand as we go.
2. Name a few revolutions and examine to what extent they were motivated or focused by social or religious philosophies. Notice if the core leaders were diasporic. Some examples are the Russian Revolution, the American/French Revolutions (secular), the Algerian Revolution, the Philippine Revolution, and Christianity, Mohammedanism, and the Reformation (religious). What oppressions was each revolution addressing?
3. Possible research on the dynamics of oppression and resistance.

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