This lecture course examines European and cosmopolitan thought from the intellectual and artistic response to Nazism to the postmodern and neo-liberal globalism of the present. Topics include: art and political commitment before and after World War II; existentialism in France; the intellectual responses to the Cold War, such as the theory of totalitarianism; the “Critical Theory” of the Frankfurt School and the rise of Marxist humanism; the student movements of 1968; the critique of technological society; structuralism and post-structuralism; contemporary feminist theory; postmodernism and post-colonial theory.

Note: This syllabus is designed to be a guide for future as well as present learning. There are consequently a lot of readings listed on the syllabus, but the course does not expect that you read every one of them in their entirety, but for you to chart a course of reading alongside the lectures that will allow you to participate in the class discussions and to write the exam essays. Please read the entire syllabus to understand the course requirements!

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

I. After the Deluge:
Seeking to Understand Fascism, Communism and War

Week 1 Introduction (Jan 20th)
  Wed.  World War II as a Watershed: The World Undone, The World Remade (and Remade)

         Umberto Eco, “Ur-Fascism”*
  Film: Leni Riefensthal, *Triumph of the Will*

Week 2 Totalitarianism as a Paradigm (Jan 25th)
  Tues.  The Frankfurt School Analysis of Fascism: The “Marriage” of Marx (Class Analysis) and Freud (Psychological Analysis)
  Thurs. Thinking Through the State: Human Rights Discourse and the Critique of Technology

  Read:  Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (1941), Chapters TBA
         Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia* (1944) ("Far from the line of fire")*

         Further: Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State* (1951)

Week 3 The Cold War, Economics, and the Reconstruction of the Past (Feb 1st)
  Tues.  Depression Economics, the Marshall Plan, the International System
  Thurs.  Conservatism, Nationalism and Liberalism redefined
Read: K. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (1944)  
J. M. Keynes, “Note on Inflation” (1919)*

Further: Karl Menger, *Morality, Decision and Social Organization*  
Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (1944)*

**Week 4 Jews and Germans Confront the Holocaust (Feb 8th)**

Tues.  Ideals of literary Engagement from the 1930s, and their Transformation  
Thurs.  Hell, Humanism, and the Text in Primo Levi’s Fiction  

Hannah Arendt, “Collective Guilt and Individual Responsibility”*  

Further: Theodor Adorno, “What does it mean to work through the Past?”*  
Primo Levi, “Carbon” from *Table of the Elements*

**II. Existentialism and the Other (1945-1960)**

**Week 5 Existentialism (Feb 15th)**

Tues.  Jean-Paul Sartre: The Desire for Being  
Thurs.  Albert Camus: The Morality of the Absurd Condition  

Read: Albert Camus, “The Myth of Sisyphus” (1942)*  
Jean-Paul Sartre, *No Exit* (1944)  

Further: Sartre, “Existentialism is a Humanism” (1946)  
Jean-Paul Sartre, “Anti-Semite and Jew” (1946)*  
Richard Wright, “There’s Always Another Café” (1953)*

**Week 6 Feminism and De-Colonization (Feb 22nd)**

Thurs.  Feminism and Racism: Beauvoir and Achebe  

Read: Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (1949)  
Luce Irigaray, *The Sex That is Not One* (1977)*  

Further: Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (1958)  
Aime Césaire, *Notes for the Return to My Native Land* (1939/51);  

Watch: *The Battle for Algiers* (1966)

**Week 7 The Origins of Phenomenology and the Linguistic Turn (Mar 1st)**

Tues.  Phenomenology, Historicism, and General Linguistics: Recovering the Philosophy of the 1930s  
Thurs.  The “Linguistic Turn:” The long shadow of the Later Wittgenstein and Heidegger  

Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception* (1946?)

III. Structuralisms, Dialectics and Rebels: Toward 1968 and After

Week 8 Reading Marx Again: Reconstructions of the Dialectic (March 8th)

Tues: New Forms of Western Marxism: Althusser, Gramsci, Kojève, Sartre
Thurs: The Frankfurt School in the German Reconstruction

Read: Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (1955); Adorno and Horkheimer, “The Concept of Enlightenment” (1945)

Further: Ralph Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society* (1959)
Louis Althusser, “Ideological State Apparatuses”

March 15-22: Spring Break, or: between *Eros and Civilization* and “The Pathological and the Normal.” Happy vacation!

Week 9 The Human Other: Normality, Non-conformity, and Science in the Cold War (March 15th)

Tues: Reasserting Normality: Raymond Aron, Karl Popper
Thurs: The Critique of Sciences of Life and the Critique of Psychoanalysis: George Canguilhem, Jacques Lacan, Ludwig Binswanger

G. Canguilhem, “The Pathological and the Normal” (1943)


Week 10 Structuralism, Decolonization and the Primitive (March 22nd)

Tues: Structuralism (I): Lévi-Strauss
Thurs: Structuralism (II): Everyday Life as the Primitive

Read: Jean-Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (1958)

Week 11 Humanism, Anti-Humanism, and the Environment from the 60s to 80s (March 29th)

Tues.  Jürgen Habermas and Hannah Arendt in the 1960s

Further:  Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1968)*;  


Week 12 Post-Structuralism, Post-Colonialism, Deconstruction (April 5th)

Tues.  Foucault’s Institutions: Overcoming Selfhood or a New Social Science?
Thurs.  Derrida, Post-Modernism, and the Postcolonial

Further:  Giorgio Agamben, “What is an Apparatus?” (2006)*  
Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History” (2000)*

Week 13 Neo-Liberalism, Civil Society, German Re-unification (April 12th)

Tues. Civil Society in Theory and Practice: Social Theory, the Collapse of the East, and the Realignment of the West
Thurs.  Habermas and the Neo-Liberalism of the 1990s

Read:  Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962)
Jürgen Habermas, “Popular Sovereignty as Procedure” (1988)*

Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the 1950s.* (1960)

Week 14 The Ongoing Revolution of the Everyday: Post-Revolutionary Models of Global Capitalism and Culture (April 19th)

Tues. What is Social Domination Today? Exploring the New Geographies of Economic Space with Jacques Rancière and David Harvey
Thurs. Culture as Paradigm: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu and The “Event” Philosophy of Alain Badiou

Read:  David Harvey, *The Postmodern Condition* (1990);  
Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Post

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**Week 15 Are we still modern? (April 26th)**

Tues. The Status of the Secularization Paradigm: An Overview
Thurs. Textuality and Memory, Hegemony and Disciplinarity in Social Theory


Further: Claude Lefort, “Permanence of the Theologico-Political?
Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (1976)

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**Reserve Readings**

**For our period:**
- Tony Judt, *Post-war: A History of Europe Since 1945*
- Dan Diner, *Cataclysms: A History of the Twentieth Century from Europe’s Edge*

**For Earlier Periods:**
- J.W. Burrow: *The Crisis of European Thought, 1848-1914*
- H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society, 1890-1930*

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**Course Structure**

This course is meant to be an introductory survey to the basic problems of intellectual history, political life, aesthetic modernism and social theory since the Second World War from a European and Cosmopolitan Perspective. Enrollment in this class can be for either 3 or 4 credits. The course includes lectures on Monday and Wednesday, with some time for questions, and an hour meeting in small groups (to be arranged) for intensive discussion of the weekly reading assignment. The discussions are a significant part of the course; even those who can only officially take three credits should attend if at all possible. All required readings are primary sources, intended to acquaint you with the thought of the period. All are either in paperbacks available for purchase in the bookstore or can be accessed through the online system (see “Thinking With History” below).

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**Course Readings**

The following books have been ordered for your purchase at the bookstore. I have included the ISBN number if you choose to purchase them elsewhere in order to help ensure that you obtain the correct edition. You will undoubtedly find it both inconvenient and disadvantageous if your pagination varies from the text we are using in class.

- Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* ISBN: 0262581086
Jean-Paul Sartre, *No Exit and Three Other Plays* ISBN: 0679725164

While the readings for the class have been outlined above, reading assignments are subject to change, and indeed, I will usually suggest pages so as to shorten the readings. This will typically be done on a week-to-week basis, with announcements being made in class and additional readings being posted on TWH.

**Course Goals:**
The goals of this course are threefold.

Our *first* goal is to develop a broadly *synthetic, empirical-chronological understanding* of the post-war period, thinking about the relation between cosmopolitan intellectual life and the world we live in, between the Second World War as a history that we have inherited, and as a good starting date for any archeology of the present.

Our *second* goal is to build our skills as historical interpreters of texts. The texts that we read in this course are difficult, but our *critical hermeneutic* task is to learn to approach these expressions of the post war world not just in terms of what they express about their experience, but also in terms of how these statements confirm, contrast with and enrich the broader synthetic historical frameworks we have developed for understanding the contemporary world.

Our *third* goal is to hone our skills in *diachronic conceptual analysis*. This means that we will think about the works and period studied in terms of the historical development of concepts. We will pay close attention to the way concepts evolve over time, and we will learn to think about how each concept we use has a history embedded within it. This task is actually made harder by the fact that we are studying more recent events. A great number of the concepts developed in the post-war period are so embedded in everyday life that their meaning can seem simultaneously self-evident and unclear. Being aware of how concepts such as totalitarianism, secularization, identity, gender and culture each have a history helps us be not only more sophisticated in their application to a changing world, but also helps us unpack the meaning of more difficult to grasp transformations in the nature of modern society, its freedoms and oppressions, enjoyments and horrors.

If you do the work and participate in the course, we believe you will agree that these goals all reinforce one another—that learning to read texts historically, expanding one’s vocabulary of social analysis, and thinking through ideal types and their application to social historical situations are all part of one enterprise. The ability to interpret texts, to analyze society, and to identify, define and analyze concepts are three of the most important skills you can gain from your education, and it is your instructor’s hope and wish that this course will thus serve you throughout your college and post-college career. If at any time you would see a way that I could
better serve these goals, please do not hesitate to ask a question or make a suggestion.

**Reading Responses**
Every week, you have the opportunity to write a short reading response to the main reading material of the week. These responses are short essays that help you chart how you are doing with the material and allow me to diagnose miscomprehensions and to run a better section suited to your individual needs. Generally, if you just do something every week you will do better in this course. These reading responses are time-sensitive, and I do not grant extension on them.

**The weekly reading responses are not required, but they are strongly recommended.** You can, if you desire, skip them altogether and I will simply adjust the weighting of the other aspects of your grade accordingly. But if you do write them, I will calculate your grade with them and without them, and only count them if they improve your final grade. Students who do them almost without exception do well in the course.

The reading responses will be due online each week by 11:55pm on the night before discussions, posted through the TWH (http://thinkingwithhistory.net) system. Please turn them in by pasting your comments into the appropriate week’s “Reading Response.”

These short assignments will be graded on a base scale from 0 to 50 points. I use the entire scale for these assignments. A weak effort may well receive as low as 5 points. I also occasionally give extra credit (up to 70 points) for particularly thoughtful and complete reflections. For the purposes of the course grade, I consider an A on this portion of the grade to be the equivalent of 550 points total.

If you do them most every week, they actually give you a substantial amount of extra credit in the course. Students doing more than nine of these reading responses to a total of 700 possible points (that is a lot of possible extra credit!). Please see first-day handout for further information, and of course come see me during office hours if you have questions about your response scores.

**Grading Basis & Essay Exams**
Grades are calculated with the following mathematical weighting in mind. Keep in mind that the reading responses are calculated off an absolute number system that allows for flexible participation, as explained above.

First Paper: 25%
Second Paper: 25%
Final Paper 35%
Participation + Reading Response Assignments: 15%

The participation grade is based on your spoken contributions to class, plus any online forum discussion to which you contribute substantially.

About ten days before the papers are due, I will distribute a list of prompts for the essays. There is no final exam; the essays are the central focus of evaluation.

**About “Thinking with History” (TWH)**
In this class we will be using the coursework system at thinkingwithhistory.net for distribution of course materials, for collection of your weekly reading response, and for your collaborative work. Weekly reading assignments and course announcements may be placed on the on-line version of the syllabus or announced in class. Please feel free to post logistical questions to the logistics forum if you are uncertain as to what you should be doing—such questions help out everyone. If I forget something, I will post it online; if you have a question that you forgot to
mention in class, please feel free to post it on the online system.

Using thinkingwithhistory.net (TWH) for the first time
Normal access to the site occurs by going to http://www.thinkingwithhistory.net. Click on “History 344/544: Modernism and Social Thought.”

In order to use the system you need to do two things. First, you need to create an account, and then you need to enroll electronically in this particular class. To create an account, please click on the button that says “Create New Account.” The system will ask you to create a username and give it a password. Don’t worry, this is a completely private system, and your email will not be distributed to anyone. Keep in mind that your username is public, so please choose something that will not embarrass you, your parents, or your offspring. Once you have filled out all the required information, check for new email at the email address that entered in the form. You should have received a message containing a link to confirm your account. Click on that to confirm your account.

Once you have an account, you should first log in by entering your username and password. Then go to the “Classes” section of the website: http://www.thinkingwithhistory.net/classes, and tell the system to “add” the HIST 344/544 course. It will ask you for an enrollment password, which is ‘___________’. [not present in online version] You should now be completely signed up.

Contacting Me / Office Hours / Online Discussions
Office Hours: M 2:30-4; W 11-1, Eliot 211; Email eoberle@artsci.wustl.edu
My office is on the second (entry-level) floor of Eliot, the concrete dungeon between the Knight Center and McMillan. Enter the door, turn left, and then left again.

If you have any questions, or simply want to talk about something, the easiest and best way of contacting me is by coming to office hours or asking me for an appointment. I always liven up when you come see me. If you can’t come during my normal hours, email me and we’ll arrange a different time.

If you are uncertain about a reading or writing assignment, please post your question to the “logistics forum” on TWH. Both the question and the response to these questions go out to everyone enrolled in the class. I give response to these questions top priority. If you have a question about anything that you believe all the other students would reasonably like to have answered as well, you have done the entire class a favor by posting it on TWH.

One last note about email—it is not for turning in your assignments except under previous arrangement. If we do end up arranging for you to send the work to me by email, you are responsible for making sure that I have received it. I will confirm receipt of any such work by email, and you should not consider it turned in until this happens.

Paper Extensions
If you need an extension on an assignment you must work it out with me before the due date. Late papers will be marked down one third of a letter grade for every day late.

Thank you for reading to the end!

This syllabus is subject to revision. Reading assignments in particular will be amended (added or shortened) during the course of the semester.