

Political Science 335, spring 2017

Michael J. Shapiro

Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:30 – 2:45 in Saunders 624

**Catalogue description:** “Theories, approaches, concepts, and issues developed or raised in history of political philosophy and thought. Pre: any 100- or 200-level POLS course, or consent.” This version of Political Science 335 will emphasize cinematic and other visual culture approaches to political thought and philosophy. While focusing on the thinking of three political theorists from the western political theory canon – Thomas Hobbes, a contract theorist and David Hume and Adam Smith, sentiment theorists - the emphasis in our reading will be on the cinematic and/or visual aspects of their thinking as well as the difference between their perspectives on the social formation. We will also focus on the ways in which a variety of other, more recent philosophical orientations help us extract political thinking from films. And, finally, we will look at relationships between various aspects of the visual culture–political activism relationship.

Books to acquire for the course:

Thomas Hobbes *Leviathan* (Penguin Classics edition (99 cents for the ebook paperback available as well on Amazon).

Eugene F. Miller ed. *Essays Moral, Political and Literary by David Hume* (ebook and paperback available on amazon).

James Phillips ed. *Cinematic Thinking: Philosophical Approaches to the New Cinema* (Stanford University Press, paperback edition available on Amazon)

Meg McLagan and Yates McKee ed. *Sensible Politics* (Zone books, hard cover but many used on Amazon)

Reading assignments that are not in the above texts will be posted in the course’s Lulima site.

**Grading:** Everyone in the course begins with an A grade and keeps it as long as they remain present to the course (where “presence” includes showing up for class, posting reflections on the reading for each class – at least 200 words – in the Lulima site (in the class discussion section), and doing the mid term and final “exam”/papers (details to be provided).

### **Reading/viewing/discussion schedule**

**January:**

10<sup>th</sup> Walter Benjamin “The work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reconstruction” On the web at: <https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm> (no reflection papers are due for this class – or for Thursdays).

12<sup>th</sup> Shapiro, “Hiroshima Temporalities” and a selection from Victor Burgin, *The Remembered Film* – posted in our Laulima site. Plus film viewing TBA

17<sup>th</sup> Shapiro, “Preface” to *Reading Adam Smith* - posted in Laulima

19<sup>th</sup> Shapiro, “Sovereignty and Exchange in the Orders of Modernity” (Chapter 1 from *Reading Adam Smith* – posted in Laulima.

24<sup>th</sup> Shapiro, “The Social Bond” (Chapter 3 in *Reading Adam Smith*). We will watch part of Ridley Scott’s film *Blade Runner*

26<sup>th</sup> A viewing of the rest of *Blade Runner* Write your reflections on the part of *Blade Runner* we watched on Tuesday.

31<sup>st</sup> Tamas Dobozy, “The Beautician” in his collection *Siege 13* and Daniel Alarcon, “City of Clowns” in his collection *War by Candlelight*- posted in Laulima

## **February:**

2<sup>nd</sup> Shapiro, “Hungarian Masks” – posted in Laulima plus a viewing of part of Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck’s film *The Lives of Others*.

7<sup>th</sup> A viewing of the rest of *The Lives of Others*. Write your reflections on the part of *The Lives of Others* we watched last Thursday.

9<sup>th</sup> *Leviathan* McPherson’s Introduction thru Hobbes’ p 84.

14<sup>th</sup> Agamben, a section from *Stasis* – posted in Laulima and *Leviathan* Chapter 28.

16<sup>th</sup> Shapiro, “The Light of Reason: Reading *Leviathan* with *The Werckmeister Harmonies*. – posted in Laulima. We will watch part of Bela Tarr’s film *The Werckmeister Harmonies*.

21<sup>st</sup> We’ll watch the rest of *Werckmeister Harmonies*. Write your reflections on the part of the film we saw last Thursday.

23<sup>rd</sup> Read all the sections in *Leviathan* quoted in Shapiro’s “The Light of Reason”

28<sup>th</sup> David Hume, “Of the Original Contract” (in Miller ed. *Essays...*) and Michel Foucault (selections from his writings) – posted in Laulima

## March:

2<sup>nd</sup> Panagia *Impressions of Hume*, Chapter 2 and Hume, “On the Standard of Taste” (in Miller ed. *Essays...*).

7<sup>th</sup> Jean Baudrillard, “Sign Function and Class Logic,” from *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*. – posted in Laulima.

9<sup>th</sup> Shapiro, “The New Violent Cartography” from *Cinematic Geopolitics* –posted in Laulima, and a viewing of part of Michael Winterbottom’s *The Road to Guantanamo*.

14<sup>th</sup> We will watch the rest of *The Road to Guantanamo*. Write your reflection papers on the part of the film you’ve already seen.

16<sup>th</sup> Mid Term “exam” sent (due the 21<sup>st</sup>. Kelly Oliver, “Alfred Hitchcock: Fowl Play and the Domestication of Horror,” in Phillips ed. And a selection from David Thomson, *The Moment of Psycho*.

21<sup>st</sup> Shapiro, “Toward a Politics of Now Time” thru UH library at: <http://muse.jhu.edu.eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/article/32511> plus film viewing - segments from Stanley Kubrick’s *Barry Lyndon*. No reflection papers due.

23<sup>rd</sup> (No reflection papers due) A viewing of parts of *Hoop Dreams*.

## April

4<sup>th</sup> Davide Panagia, “Show Don’t Tell,” – posted in Laulima and Shapiro, “Robert Altman: The West as Counter Memory,” in Phillips ed.

6<sup>th</sup> Jeff Malpas, Wim Wenders, The Role of Memory,” in Phillips ed.

11<sup>th</sup> Alison Ross, “Michelangelo Antonioni: The Aestheticization of Time and Experience in *The Passenger*. Plus a viewing of scenes from the film.

13<sup>th</sup> *Sensible Politics* “Introduction” pp 9-26. Plus a viewing TBA

18<sup>th</sup> Negar Azimi, “Iran in Pictures...” in *Sensible Politics* plus film viewing TBA

20<sup>th</sup> Select a chapter from *Sensible Politics* and react to it.

25<sup>th</sup> On video activism, a selection from Rune Saugmann Andersen, *Remediating Security*.

27<sup>th</sup> no reflection papers due: videos from Andersen’s *Remediating Security*.

## May

2<sup>nd</sup> discussion of final “exam”/papers.