

Joshua Schuster

What Is a Critical Theorist? Methods and Skills

This course is designed for incoming MA and PhD students, although anyone is welcome to take it. The aim of the course is to study some examples of what it is to be a critical theorist. We will seek to develop more robust definitions of the following: theory, critique, troubling, staying with the trouble, criticism (literary and cultural), problems with critique. We will not cover all possible examples of how one becomes a critical theorist; instead, we focus on some select themes and case studies. careers in and out of academia.

The course will also feature several visits from core and associate faculty who will discuss their work and insights into how Theory students can make the most of the program. Students will also have the opportunity to meet visiting speakers for a more informal session to discuss the academic experiences of working as a theorist. Students will be required to attend a designated number of talks during the semester at the Theory Centre.

Sample schedule:

Week 1

Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lies in a Non-Moral Sense," excerpts from *Twilight of the Idols*

Week 2

Plato, *The Sophist*
Workshop on grants

Week 3

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, Introduction, Ch 12, 14, Conclusion
Workshop on TA duties

Week 4

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Introduction; "What Is Enlightenment?"
Foucault, "What Is Enlightenment?" "What Is Critique?"
Visit from guest faculty

Week 5

