

Lecture Notes

Week Three: 14th of August - 20th of August

Communitarian critiques of liberalism

- Different Modes of Community
- Robert Nisbet in *The Sociological Tradition* (1966) claimed that community is one of the core ideas in the early sociological tradition
- Concern for the loss of community was central to the 19th century sociology
- In particular it was the movement from a rural-based life to an urban-industrial society (modernisation and the rise of industrial capitalism) that concerned sociologists and led to a preoccupation with and nostalgia for a lost community
- E.g. Durkheim, Marx, and Tönnies (*Gemeinschaft* - *Gesellschaft*)
- Liberal Political Theory: Four Major Tenants
- Individualism: "human beings are atomistic, rational agents whose existence and interests are ontologically prior to society" (Dietz, 379) - i.e. in nature, the person is on their own, they are their own self-contained units
- Freedom: "society should ensure the freedom of all its members to realize their capabilities" (379)
- Equality: all are born equal → Negative liberty: "entails the freedom of the individual to choose their values or ends without interference from others and consistent with a similar liberty for others" (380)
- Rights: each individual is the "bearer of formal rights designed to protect them from the infringement or interference of others and to guarantee him the same opportunities or 'equal access' as others" (380)
- Origins of Liberal Philosophy
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Locke (predecessor), Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill are all founders of particular strain of liberalism – the strain we as a Western representative democracy have inherited and which founds our politico-legal system
- Human beings are naturally free, equal and independent. Insisted upon separation of Church and State
- Individuals born into 'state of nature' – i) a state of perfect freedom, ii) state of equality iii) bound by Law of Nature Individual is sovereign, with 'natural rights' and 'natural' liberties
- No person has right to subordinate any other (Anti-feudal)
- Rights to equality, liberty, security and property = political emancipation at level of individual self

- Rousseau
- Author of Origins of Inequality - natural vs. social inequality
- Romantic view of pre-civilized society - share with toehr enlightenment thinkers, state of nature argument - predecessor of Hobbes who believed life without instrumental regulation was savage, brutish and short
- Civilization was the origin of inequality among men - require a social contract for the common good, generated by the general will
- Fundamental question of the social contract was: how can we be free and live together?
- Recognition that individual is sovereign with natural rights and natural liberties - these rights and liberties require protection and thus instrumentalization - enshrines them in democratic political governance and in the rule of law

Tutorial Notes

Week Five: 28th of August - 3rd of September

- Sarah Ahmed - Recognizing Strangers 2000
- The neighbourhood is not just a physical, bounded space but a social community and demarcated space of belonging for people who live nearby to each other
- The community is considered as an organic, purified space
- Construction and enforcing of the boundaries of the neighbourhood relies on the production of the: wandering stranger, the good neighbour
- Neighbourhood is created through the production of the safe space, expelling strangers which are already recognised - they prevent the failure of community through neighbourhood watch, crime protection etc.
- The good citizen: heroic subject, protect the boundaries of the imagined neighborhood space, demarcated from the wandering strangers
- Stranger danger: the fear of strangers, fear is projected onto strangers, the fear of strangers becomes a fear of crime itself, the subject must always be suspicious, their suspicion is grounded in discourses of difference
- As a result, the delegitimize domestic violence as the home is imagined as a safe and pure space, creates lines of belonging and not belonging
- Young
- Young uses the examples of city life to embody difference in contrary to assertions of community

- City life strives for the togetherness of strangers where being together and living in close proximity creates a sense of community
- There is a possibility to become well acquainted with new diverse people
- Community is to live within a coherent open space where a new community of difference is created
- Why is interpellation for Ahmed not only about what happens in the present time i.e. the police officer hailing someone with "hey you"?

intersubjective encounters in public life constantly interpolate
Signification is a dual process

- What does Ahmed mean by "subjects become differentiated at the very same moment they are constituted as such"?

You become the stranger when someone is calling you a stranger, the input/output of signification i.e. how your identity becomes congruent happens simultaneously

- What overall effect does the marking out of a "strangers" have on the stranger and on the "subject" (or the sense of "we")?

Reading Notes

Week One: 31st of July - 6th of August

Miranda Joseph, 'Community', *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, New York: New York University Press, 2007 (revised 2014).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 'Book I', *On The Social Contract*, Indianapolis, Hackett, 1987, 16-29.

Week Two: 7th of August - 13th of August

Carole Pateman, 'The Fraternal Social Contract', *The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Feminism and Political Theory*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1989, 33-57.

- "But for feminists explicit recourse to liberal or socialist fraternal bonds merely exposes the patriarchal character of ostensibly universal categories and calls attention to the fundamental problem of whether and how women could be fully incorporated into a patriarchal civil world" p. 35
- "Jean Elshtain's references to patriarchal theory merely reiterate the standard view in political theory that patriarchalism had suffered a fatal defeat by the end of the seventeenth century. This is far from the case, and an understanding of the exact sense in

which, and the limits within which, the contract theorists emerged victorious over the patriarchalists is central to an appreciation of how a specifically modern form of patriarchy was brought into being" p. 36

- "The contract theorists rejected paternal right, but they absorbed and simultaneously transformed conjugal, masculine patriarchal right" p. 37
- "Instead, the social contract story hides original political right by proclaiming sexual or conjugal right as natural" p. 39
- "The separation of 'paternal' from political rule, or the family from the public sphere, is also the separation of women from men though the subjection of women to men" p. 43
- "In short, the contract constitutes patriarchal civil society and the modern, ascriptive rule of men over women" p. 43
- "Civil individuals have a fraternal bond because, as men, they share a common interest in upholding the contract which legitimizes their masculine patriarchal right and allows them to gain material and psychological benefit from women's subjection" p. 43