Instructor: Elke Grenzer  
Office Phone: 519-884-8111 X 28201  
Office Hours: T 12:00-2:00, or by appointment  

Class Time: T 2:30-5:20  
Class Room: STJ 2009  
Office: P2  

Please feel free to make an appointment during or, outside of office hours to discuss any particular concerns, thoughts, or questions related to the course.

Email: egrenzer@uwaterloo.ca  

All course materials, including Power Point Presentations and announcements are available through ACE. Since the ACE email system is imperfect, please email me directly.

Due to space constraints, all group meetings for debates will be held in the Atrium, (located in the basement of St. Jerome's). These group meetings will be held on Tuesdays @ 5:30pm, one week prior to your scheduled debate unless someone has a scheduled lecture or tutorial, in which case we will arrange another time to meet.

Course Description: In this course we are going to locate the topic of power and parenting within a broader concern of the problem of the human condition. We will begin developing this problem by using Hannah Arendt’s work in this area. The focus throughout the course will be on the problem of the tension between human finiteness and the requirements of acting in the world. Acting well (e.g. parenting) requires both knowledge and power but, as finite beings, humans are neither all knowing nor omnipotent. There is a fundamental and ineradicable tension between the condition of being human (finiteness) and the requirements of action (knowledge and power).

The course will spend the first few weeks developing how Hannah Arendt understands our modern predicament, particularly with regard to the problem of action and individuality. Then we will show that this predicament requires rethinking the meaning of power and action.

We will then proceed to address the case of parenting in order to understand what this problem means for modern times. We will address different versions of parenting and different relations to parenting in terms of an interest in developing a strong relation to this tension between action and its requirements. In the process, the Aristotelian position of the interrelation of action, theory and ethics, will be developed. Because we are dealing with a universal problem, we will also use examples of bourgeois life, technology, cultural change, etc., and along the way we will draw on relevant social theorists. For the most part, parenting will be the case to which we will continue to return as we seek to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the solutions that this problem collects. It will be argued that the activity of parenting and the activity of theorizing are best understood as ethical enterprises.
Overall, the class will have two different but related ways of proceeding. The first will (through a lecture/discussion format) develop the problem and various responses to this problem by addressing the usages mentioned above. The second will be more discussion oriented. Students will be responsible for a debate series that will run throughout the duration of the course.

The dialectical hermeneutic procedure of moving from the specific (e.g., an example of a parenting practice) to the universal (e.g., historical and contemporary conceptions of power), back to the specific and again to the universal, will be experienced throughout the course. The fundamental intellectual interest concerns the issue of how we collectively understand and change ourselves. In particular, we will be concerned with the problem of speaking well and acting well, both with regard to the question of parenting and with our own talk and action in class.

Students that miss classes and fall behind with the readings and assignments, tend to see their grades plummet. Since our meetings are weekly, attendance is mandatory.

**Learning Objectives:** The purpose of this course is to expose students to the sociological complexity of being a parent and being parented. Students are expected to develop a comprehension of the course texts, as well as identify key arguments and debates by engaging with the various voices that attempt to represent a view of parenting. You will become familiar with the hermeneutic method as a branch of sociology and will be able to apply it reflexively to the phenomenon of parenting. The collective task is to think about what it means to parent, (even if you are not one), and to conceptualize power in light of the human condition.

The overall work load for each student consists of the following: Reading, comprehending and discussing texts in social theory and applying them to life-world problems. You will be responsible for:

- **1 Debate Presentation** involves public speaking and working with a group.
- **1 Debate Write-up** requires a formal 5-6 page, written essay with full bibliography.
- **5 short summaries** (1 typed page of Discussion Starters due at the end of each debate) require conceptual thinking and grammatically correct prose.
- **1 Mid-term Exam**, matching definitions with concept, short and long written answer.
- **1 Final Take-Home: Students are expected to craft thoughtful responses to questions that are prepared outside of a formal exam setting. Essay Format with full bibliography.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Exam</td>
<td>Oct. 26</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Home Essay Questions</td>
<td>Dec. 13</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate Presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td>20% (10% Oral Pres.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Portions (5-7 pages)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10% (written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation/Writing Exercises</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Required Texts:**


*Autism the Musical*. Dir. Tricia Regan. DVD. HBO, 2007. *(On Reserve for 355 J students at the St. Jerome’s Library).*
All students are expected to purchase course books, however copies of each will be kept on 3 hour reserve at the front desk of the ST. Jerome's Library in case of emergencies.

Course Outline:

**Part 1. Introduction to Radical Interpretive Inquiry**
1. Sept. 14 - Introduction/Course Outline/Course Focus
   The Hermeneutic Approach.

**Part II. The Human Condition and our Modern Predicament**
2. Sept. 21 - The Active Life
   Reading: *The Human Condition*, 1 – 21.
   The Public and the Private Realm
   Reading: *The Human Condition* 22 – 37.

Finalize Debate Schedule and Discussion of Expectations
Meet With Students Conducting Debate 1

   **Debate 1:** “That a polis life is superior to a household life.”

4. Oct. 5 - The Public and the Private: Ancient and Modern
   Reading: *The Human Condition*, 49–78.
   **Debate 2:** “That the social sciences contribute to the invisibility of the social realm.”

**Part III. An Analysis of Contemporary Parenting in Light of our Modern Predicament**

5. Oct. 12 – Modern Parenting from an Action Perspective
   Reading Available on Ace – Lesson 5
   Excerpt from *Stigma, Victimage and Blindness* by A. Blum and R. Michalko
   **Film Screening:** *Autism the Musical*

   Reading: *Power and Parenting*, 1-16.
   The Modern Age, the Problem of Power and the Power of a Problem
   Reading: *Power and Parenting*, 16-23.
   **Debate 3:** “That the dilemma of contemporary parenting is one of power.”

Oct. 26 - In-Class Exam

7. Nov. 2 - Parental Power and the Human Condition
   Reading: *Power and Parenting*, 24 – 47.

8. Nov. 9 - Living with the Consequences of Action
   Action, Aristotle’s *Phronesis* and the Concept of Power
   Reading: *Power and Parenting*, 47 – 57.
Debate 4: “That the exercise of power and suffering are intertwined.”
Hand out Final Take-Home Exam/Essay

Part IV. Modern Concepts of Power
Reading: Power and Parenting, 58 – 82.
Debate 5: “Accumulating resources v s. becoming wise is the best way to become powerful.”

10. Nov. 23 - Foucault and Bourgeois Power: The Rise of Method
Reading: Power and Parenting, 83 – 100.
Debate 6: We should act to have the resources vs. be ethical to take care of the future?

11. Nov. 30 - Phronesis, Parenting Effectiveness Training and Authority
Reading: Power and Parenting, 101 – 117.
Debate 7: “That the strong exercise of parental authority is bad vs. good parenting.”

Dec. 14th, 2009 - Final Take-Home Due

Debates:
Each group prepares a side of the argument independently of one another.
Part 1: Presentation of the Argument: where each group presents their side of the argument.
Group A: 10 Minutes
Group B: 10 Minutes
Part 2: Rebuttal using an example
Group A: 5 Minutes
Group B: 5 Minutes
Part 3: Question period: Students not presenting ask questions of either side. Debate team members will take notes of questions during this period. Team members will then respond to the questions by 1.
Summarize the main issues 2. Choose and respond to specific questions raised.
Part 4: Collecting the talk

Debate Essay - 4-5 pages double-spaced typed (10%)
Due one week after presentation independent paper written in essay format. Not a summary of the debate per se, rather a reflection piece that addresses the entire debate. This requires a thesis statement.

Discussion Starters - A total of five due during the semester handed in at the end of lecture must be typed. Participation Grade assigned (5%)
1. Email is not conducive to discussion and not an alternative way to receive class material. Discussion of assignments, class material or sociological questions is welcome at class, during office hours or by appointment. Appointments should be made during office hours or in class for another time. **This course is registered on UW ACE. Please activate your UW email account.**

2. The reading requirement is not so much voluminous as it is complex. It is, therefore, advisable to do the assigned reading before class, reread after class and then before an assignment. Each reading will make the issues clearer and on the third time, the fog will have lifted.

3. Participation will be graded on attendance, constructive participation, in-class discussion, your intellectual development in the course, on preparation for the presentations, and on discussion starters to be handed in for each debate – except your own debate (5 in total). Keep a backup copy of what you hand in to the instructor.

4. Each student will participate in a debate in class. The purpose of the debate is to be able to examine and integrate particular issues in relation to the theory, method, and substance of the course. **The debate presentation will be written up and handed in no later than one week after the discussion.** The oral portion will be evaluated on the criteria of oral skills, stimulating class discussion, originality, and reasonability of your argument and the depth of your understanding of the course material. The written part will be evaluated according to standard essay criteria.

5. Assignments must be completed by specified due date unless prior arrangements are made with the professor.

6. Your intellectual development in the course matters, and will be taken into account in determining final grades.

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo and its Federated University and Affiliated Colleges are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

**Discipline:** All students registered in courses at St. Jerome’s University are expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed following St. Jerome’s University Academic Discipline Procedure and UW Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm).

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. In such a case, contact the St. Jerome’s University Grievance Officer. Read St. Jerome’s University Handbook, Section 4, item 8, [www.sju.ca/faculty/SJU_handbook/grievance_policy.html](http://www.sju.ca/faculty/SJU_handbook/grievance_policy.html).

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under St. Jerome’s University Academic Discipline Procedure or Grievance Policy if a ground for an appeal can be established. In such a case, contact the St. Jerome’s University Appeals Officer. Read St. Jerome’s University Handbook, Section 6.4, [www.sju.ca/faculty/SJU_handbook/examinations_grades_standings_and_appeals.html](http://www.sju.ca/faculty/SJU_handbook/examinations_grades_standings_and_appeals.html).

**Academic Integrity website (Arts):** [http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

**Academic Integrity Office (UW):** [http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)

**Note for students with disabilities:** The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

**8. Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic
departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

**How to Format your Bibliography: MLA 2009**

**Sample Entries** From the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (7th edition). Each entry highlights changes in the new edition.


**Scholarly Publication (Journal):** Regardless of pagination, all scholarly publication citations include both volume and issue numbers. End citations with the medium of publication, *Print.* Aldrich, Frederick A. and Margueritte L. Marks. “Wyman Reed Green, American Biologist” *Bios* 23.1 (1952): 26-35. Print.


**Online Database Scholarly Journal Article:** Cite online journal articles from an online database as you would a print one. Provide the database name in italics. Library information is no longer required. List the medium of publication as *Web* and end with the date of access. Berger, James D. and Helmut J. Schmidt. “Regulation of acronuclear DNA Content in Paramecium Tetraurelia.” *The Journal of Cell Biology* 76.1 (1978): 116-126. *JSTOR.* Web. 20 Nov. 2008.

