

Call for Papers:

Challenging Ideas?

Theory and Empirical Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities

Two day conference at Aalborg University, April 29-30 2013

Keynote speakers:

Patrick Joyce, PhD, Professor Emeritus of Modern History,
University of Manchester, UK

Berber Bevernage, PhD, Post-doc in Theory of History,
University of Ghent, Belgium

Theories of power and its relation to language, knowledge and the material have proliferated in the social sciences and humanities over the past sixty years. However, there still seems to be a gap between these theories and empirical research. For example, Foucault's theories of power are used paradigmatically by a large number of disciplines, whereas his actual historical research and methodological considerations often are neglected. Similarly, the critiques of ontology and time carried out by philosophers such as Derrida are used without reflecting on the implications for empirical analysis. In radical political philosophy the ethical implications of the way in which democratic governments exercise control over their subjects have come into focus. Philosophers and critical theorists such as Rancière, Žižek, Agamben, Negri and Butler have challenged the notion of politics as consensus and self-presence, questioned the 1990's neo-liberal triumphalism or pointed to the problematic concept of sovereignty in political constitutions; yet, it has often been hard to pay more than lip-service to them. A similar problem has unfolded in the study of colonialism where the problems raised by thinkers such as Spivak, Bhabha and Said have left the field in a deadlock.

Often it seems as if the circulation of theoretical, philosophical and political concepts is a matter of researchers needing to situate themselves in relation to different "schools," rather than acting upon the challenges these schools pose to "traditional" ways of conducting research. This seminar seeks to address this issue and explore the various ways in which political philosophy and critical theory might be engaged in empirical research in the social sciences and humanities. Topics could include, but are not confined to:

- Building the state
- Anachronism and memory
- Materiality and agency
- Governmentality and sovereignty
- Immigration, biopolitics and homo sacer
- Chaos and conflict in society

- Media, politics and the political
- Postcoloniality and global governance
- Political communities before and outside the nation state
- Femininity, masculinity and the body

We strongly encourage new and experimental ideas and want to give as much room as possible for participants to try out even those ideas they think are too crazy for an academic forum. We encourage submissions from all fields and believe that the most fruitful discussion and development of ideas happen between old and new researchers from a variety of disciplines.

Convenors:

Associate Professor Poul Duedahl

Associate Professor Marianne Rostgaard

Phd Fellow Johan Heinsen

Phd Fellow Martin Ottovay Jørgensen

Phd Fellow Maren Lytje

Phd Fellow Henrik Gjøde Nielsen

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Deadlines:

Abstracts - 25th of January 2013

Papers 24th of March 2013

Please send abstracts (300 words) to:

lytje@cgs.aau.dk entitled "abstract, Challenging Ideas"

For more information visit:

www.challengingideas.cgs.aau.dk (accessible from medio September)

For PhD-students we award 3 ECTS-points for participation with a paper and 1 ECTS-point for participation without a paper.