Theoretical Overview 9.16

* Website
  + Email [alexeitaylor@gmail.com](mailto:alexeitaylor@gmail.com) with any website issues
  + Blog Posts
    - Use Chicago Style in Post
    - Upcoming blog post: Be sure to include an inline citation and image
    - Instructions:
      * Function: to understand the readings
      * Discuss all the assigned authors and their basic arguments
      * Be honest if you had trouble with something in the writing
      * Don’t use the posts to talk about something else
        + Talk about the **readings**
        + The essay in October is for expressing critical capacity in writing
      * If there is room, talk about how it is relevant to final project
      * Read Kristen’s post for Week 1 as a good example:
        + Honest, takes pieces from everything but around one topic, sees a way forward in the subject
* Balibar
  + Not really promoting the views he speaks of, he is mapping out major ways political conversations have taken place. All of them have these strategies around them, and can fall prey to their own convictions.
    - Talks about what they *can* do and where they fall short
  + The naming of the concepts he gives are “fungible”
    - We can find our own names for these concepts, and use this to compare systems that others propose
  + Model 1: Emancipation
    - Aligned with liberty, equality, struggle
    - Universality is the core
    - These different aspirations are unconditional
      * Everyone has rights in this model
    - “Demos” : body of citizens, with rights, constitutes itself by the rights
      * Emancipation becomes a goal and aspiration, but the precondition is that we are all equal
        + Begs the question of how we define “equal” and who actually (realistically) given those rights.
    - Problems with this model:
      * In order to have politics, there needs to be an “us and them”
      * The power of the “Us” is predicated on the exclusion of the “them”
      * Thus, the paradox is that this is a condition for the creation of this system but also impossible to create a truly equal emancipation system
        + This contestation of the exclusivity of the “haves” that creates the reality of the “have-nots” struggle creates politics
        + Who can confer and create rights continues to be a point of contemporary debate.
      * Not about claiming rights we don’t have, but in this paradigm you claim rights you *should* have but but have to struggle to maintain.
  + Model 2: Transformation
    - Politics of Conditions
      * No history except in determinate conditions (what citizens need)
    - Reference to Foucault:
      * Foucault explicates structures, but power is running through our bodies all the time
      * Can’t isolate into blocks, it is fluid and manifests through many actions and realities
    - Marx’s Theorems
      * Determinate practice is crucial.
      * Social relations are economic relations.
      * Conditions or relations have histories.
    - Politics as change within change:
      * Always changing but within history.
    - Political subject is always in process of struggle
      * Never ending, just evolves into new forms of struggle
    - Society is a complex of actions that transform each other
      * Always in the vocabulary of change and adaption.
    - Political Action is always plural, there is an anticipation for control of adversity
    - Problems with this Model:
      * Limits
        + Uncertainty of where limits lie, so people are policing themselves and each other on limits.
        + If these limits are uncertain, items become “contingent”.

AKA: opportunistic ideals, pushing at the edges shows the cracks to keep it going, constantly polarizing itself

* + - * + Everytime we hit the limit, especially looking at violence, then we go past that
  + Civility
    - We are forcing past the the self/other is now gone, we need to completely erase the other from the human
      * This is the “idealism of hatred” and the seeds of fascism
    - Viciousness of the contemporary that we haven’t seen: there is a need not only to control the other, but to reappropriate the self
      * Take everything from you until you are less than nothing
      * Politics that takes the violence of identities
    - Throw away people of society
      * People who are worth absolutely nothing
    - Everyone having a right to political action is laughable
    - So, we should treat each other with civility, as a solution.
      * Creates a place for politics
      * Adversaries, not enemies
    - Problems with this Model:
      * Civility from above: distrustful of populations and affects
        + Seen as threatening
        + When you have the behave yourself all the time, what is being threatened? If anything will be threatening, then you police yourself and put yourself at risk.
        + Thus, the State can’t be the agent otherwise they become fascist
    - 3 Theses of Identity
      * Trans individual: not purely individual or purely communal
      * Looks mostly at identifications, because identity is fluid
        + Everyone has multiple identities at different points in life
        + One use of fascist ideology is to FIX identity and destroy their complex identities to a single one
    - To become Anti-fascist, we (men) must become-minoritarian.
      * Not becoming minorities, but must become minoritarian
      * But what does that mean? What does it look like?
        + But how do you learn from the becoming and act from this place?
      * Still tied to Identification/Disidentification model
        + State can’t give civility, and if it comes from below, then it becomes impossible since you start the becoming-fascists of the group
        + Can disidentification, as opposed to identification, allow us to not identify with the seductive elements of fascism?
* Mouffe:
  + Conditional and Unconditional -Similar to Balibar
  + Class Discussion:
    - Art as a mode of connection
      * Art mobilizes communities for social justice
    - Art Space built by Alfredo Jaar
      * Asked the community to build a space out of paper when they didn’t have one, and then he burned it down
      * He did it because it wasn’t his place to impose the space on the people but they should build their own
      * Similar to Mouffe’s conception of frontier
    - Alfredo Jaar
      * Makes visible parts of community that you may not be able to see, acts of transformation
    - Contingency as a mode
      * Ability to highlight new articulations
    - Moves past de-identification
    - Transformation of the political as a mode of producing new possibilities
    - The political is a field of antagonism, adversaries
      * Either it can become murderous and terrible (Like Balibar says)
      * Or, we have a notion of civility to moderate
    - Respect, civility, democracy are assumed to be common ground that all understand
      * What are the limits of this civility?
* Ranciere:
  + Distribution of the Sensible:
    - Distinguishes something that is shared and is exclusive, the visibility of how items and powers are distributed in the world
    - Creates the common and the exclusion
  + Diana’s Opinion: we are overworking people so that they are unable to participate in the political
    - Not exclusive to the artisan, as Plato talks of, it is the way society uses and consumes our time
      * How do people resolve this? TV, social media, etc.
      * AKA: how do they participate in the political if they are being barred from the stereotypical “political”
  + Why are some of the presidents people who have been trained on television?
    - They are trained to consume all their time and space of the sensible.
  + Plato:
    - Role of the Artist in Soceity he prescribed as putting forward the aims of the state
      * Fascinated with the Stage, because it is ambivalent
        + It is a place of illusion and fantasy, but also
    - 3 Forms of sensible
      * Fiction, fantasy in public space
      * Mute signs, paintings
      * Bodily movement, choreographic
    - For Ranciere, these forms define involvement in politics
      * Making visible is necessarily in these facets as well
  + Aristotle and the Form of Mimesis
    - He thinks of Mimesis by definition representational
    - Thinking representational politics in contrast with participatory politics
      * Think of Mexico, they claim participatory politics
      * Depends how you participate and what it means
      * Representational politics require less work on citizen behalf
    - Realizes as Mimesis and representation (later in the book) as something to get away with
  + We’re not looking for art to do something that it doesn’t already do
    - Think of the aestheticization of Nazism: the marching of similar bodies
      * But in a protest it does this to good ends for visibility
      * Art is ALREADY doing these things
* Ghosting through the readings:
  + Less of a direct conversation of affect
  + Important to look at passion, feeling, unruly, irrational, etc.
* Final Project – What is important to take away from this week?
* Key Concept Tracking
  + Passion (Affect) Function in Politics and Art : Activating people, moving people,
  + Us/Them creating:
    - Drama with antagonism between actors and spectators
    - Politics in creation of structures
  + Art, Activism, and Resistance
    - Cluster, maybe this belongs with Spectator conceptions?
  + Civility
    - Relating to respect and assumed spaces of knowledges
    - Making possible for a political discussion
    - Perhaps tie this to political correctness?
  + Fictions and Lies
    - Fictions we tell, and lies that we tell