

Phil 3/5240 Special Topics in Philosophy:
Frantz Fanon's Philosophical Thought and Its Legacy
Professor Lewis Gordon
Time: Mondays, 3 PM to 5:40 PM
New Place: Engineering Room 310
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Office hours: Mondays 12:PM am–1:30 PM (648 Anderson Hall)

This year is the 50th anniversary of the publication of *The Wretched of the Earth* and the death of its author, Frantz Fanon, one of the most influential revolutionary thinkers of the twentieth century and a canonical figure in existential, Africana, political, and postcolonial thought. The first part of this course will consist of close readings of Fanon's writings in dialogue with some of the canonical texts that informed them, and the second part will consist of critical discussions of several recent works premised upon his thought with special focus on those in the areas of Africana philosophy, philosophy of the human sciences, social and political philosophy, and postcolonial thought.

Interested students may wish to consult the following lecture for more information on Fanon: "Fanon and Violence": <http://lutube.leeds.ac.uk/ipi0be/videos/5705>

Required texts:

- Frantz Fanon. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Constance Farrington with an introduction by Jean-Paul Sartre. New York: Grove Press. ISBN: 0802141323
- . *A Dying Colonialism*. Translated by Haakon Chevalier with an introduction by Adolfo Gilly. New York: Grove Weidenfeld. ISBN: 0802150276
- . *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Lamm Markman. New York: Grove Press. ISBN: 0802150845
- . *Toward the African Revolution*. Translated by Haakon Chevalier. New York: Grove Press. ISBN: 0802130909

Whichever versions of the English translations you could get a hold of since the instructor's discussion will be based on the original French. We will correlate the passages.

Gibson, Nigel (ed.). *Living Fanon: Global Perspectives*. New York: Palgrave. ISBN-10: 0230114970

Gordon, Lewis. *Fanon and the Crisis of European Man*. New York: Routledge. ISBN: 0415914159

Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity*. Durham: Duke UP. ISBN-10: 0822341700

Oliver, Kelley. *The Colonization of Psychic Space*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. ISBN: 0816644748.

Rabaka, Reiland. *Forms of Fanonism: Fanon's Critical Theory and the Dialectics of Decolonization*. Lanham: Lexington Books. ISBN-10: 0739140345

Sharpley-Whiting, T. Denean. *Fanon: Conflicts and Feminisms*. ISBN: 0847686396

Recommended texts:

- Fanon, Frantz. 1952. *Peau noire, masques blancs*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil.
- . 1961/1991. *Les Damnés de la terre*. Préface de Jean-Paul Sartre. Paris: François Maspero éditeur S.A.R.L./Paris: Éditions Gallimard.
- . 1975 /1968 [1959]. *Sociologie d'une révolution: l'an V de la révolution algérienne*, 2me ed. Paris : François Maspero.

Alice Cherki. *Frantz Fanon: A Portrait*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. ISBN: 080147308X

Gibson, Nigel (ed.). *Rethinking Fanon*. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books. ISBN: 1573927090

Gibson, Nigel. *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*. Oxford: Polity. ISBN: 0745622615

Gibson, Nigel. *Fanonian Practices in South Africa: From Steve Biko to Abahlali baseMjondolo*. New York: Palgrave. ISBN-10: 0230117848

Gordon, Lewis, et al. *Fanon: A Critical Reader*. Malden, MA: Blackwell. ISBN: 1557868964

Hope, Elisabeth and Tracey Nichols. *Fanon and the Decolonization of Philosophy*. Lanham: Lexington Books. ISBN-10: 0739141252.

JanMohamed. *The Death-Bound Subject: Richard Wright's Archeology of Death*. Durham, NC: Duke UP. ISBN-10: 0822334887.

"Forum: Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* 50 Years Later," *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy / Revue de la philosophie française et de langue française* XIX, no. 1 (2011): 1–89.

Sekyi-Otu, Ato. *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. ISBN: 0674294408

Renault, Mattieu. "*Frantz Fanon et les langages décoloniaux: Contribution à une généalogie de la critique postcoloniale*." Doctoral Dissertation: Université Paris VII Diderot - Università degli Studi di Bologna 2011.

Your requirements are: (1) five one-page, single-spaced papers, (2) a final term paper. The short papers will be worth 10 points each for a total of 50 percent of your grade. You have the option of devoting 2 of the short papers to an evaluation of panels or papers from the Caribbean Philosophical Association meeting, which will take place at Rutgers University in New Brunswick from September 29 to October 1, 2011. The final term paper will be 40 percent of your grade. That paper will be due on **December 12, 2011**. Attendance and class participation count for the remaining 10 percent of your grade.

Assignments*

8/29 Introduction. Fanon's biography and outline of the course

Part I: Fanon's Published Writings

- 9/12 Studying the human being under colonial and racist conditions. *Readings:* Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, introduction, chapters 1–4. *Recommended:* Rousseau, *Political Writings*—read *Discourse on Inequality* and *Discourse on the Arts & Science*; Jane Anna Gordon, "Revolutionary in Counter-revolutionary Times"; Lewis R. Gordon, "Through the Zone of Non-Being"
- 9/19 Going beyond dialectics of recognition. *Readings:* Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, rest of the text. *Recommended:* Abdul JanMohamed, *The Death-Bound Subject*
- 9/26 Therapy under colonial and racist conditions or, what are the conditions for a humanistic therapy? *Readings:* Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution*. *Recommended:* Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*; Robert Guthrie, *Even the Rat Was White*.
- Recommended*—Caribbean Philosophical Association meetings at Rutgers, 9/29 to October 2, which will feature panels on Fanon, including the Frantz Fanon Award, and will feature many Fanon scholars and discussions by Mireille Fanon-Mendes-France, Fanon's daughter:
http://www.caribbeanphilosophicalassociation.org/CPA_2011.html
- 10/3 Philosophical anthropology of social change. *Readings:* Frantz Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*
- 10/10 The logic(s) of de-colonization and neo-colonization. *Readings:* Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, first half. *Recommended:* Sekyi-Otu, *Fanon's Dialectics of Experience*

* Additional readings will be posted in the course documents section of blackboard.

- 10/17 The search for post-colonization. *Readings*: Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, second half. *Recommended*: Matthieu Renault, ““Corps à corps”: Frantz Fanon’s Erotics of National Liberation”; Lewis R. Gordon, “Phenomenology of Biko’s Black Consciousness.”
Recommended conference—*Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (SPEP) 50th anniversary meeting, which will feature discussions of Africana and postcolonial philosophy and the human sciences, will take place in Philadelphia: <http://www.spep.org/>*

Part II: Debates and Legacy

- 10/24 Africana Phenomenological and Poststructural Theories of Liberation. *Reading*: Lewis Gordon, *Fanon and the Crisis of European Man* and Sylvia Wynter, “Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, Identity, the Puzzle of Conscious Experience and What It Is Like to Be ‘Black.’” Lewis R. Gordon, “Is the Human a Teleological Suspension of Man?: A Phenomenological Exploration of Sylvia Wynter’s Fanonian and Biodecan Reflections” and “The Brotherwise Dispatch v. Lewis R. Gordon,” <http://brotherwiseinterviewsexclusives.blogspot.com/2010/12/brotherwise-dispatch-vs-lewis-r-gordon.html>
Recommended conference—*Herbert Marcuse Society meeting at the University of Pennsylvania, with Angela Y. Davis as keynote, will feature discussions of themes of this course in the context of critical theory: <http://sites.google.com/site/marcusesociety/extra-upcoming-conference>*
- 10/31 Decolonial thought. *Reading*: Nelson Maldonado-Torres, *Against War*. *Recommended*: Walter D. Mignolo, “Philosophy and the Colonial Difference.”
- 11/7 Films: Cheikh Djemai, *Frantz Fanon: His Life, His Struggle, His Work* and Isaac Julien’s *Frantz Fanon: Black Skins, White Masks*. *Recommended*: Lewis Gordon, *Her Majesty’s Other Children*, Part III
- 11/14 Recent feminist thought. *Reading*: T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting, *Fanon: Conflicts in Feminisms* and Kelley Oliver, *The Colonization of Psychic Space*
- 11/21 Africana Critical Thought. *Reading*: Reiland Rabaka, *Forms of Fanonism*
- 11/28 Contemporary political thought. *Reading*: Nigel Gibson (ed.), *Living Fanon*; *recommended*: Nigel Gibson, *Fanonian Practices*
- 12/5 Concluding discussion and papers due on 12/9

Any student who has a need for special accommodations due to disabilities should speak with me as soon as possible to discuss the specific situation and contact Disability Resources and Services, located in Ritter Annex, at 215.204.1280. Finally, the University has adopted a policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy #03.70.02) which can be accessed at http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02