

Carleton University  
Institute of Political Economy  
PECO 5501A/PSCI 5501A/SOCI 5504A

## **Critique of Everyday Life**

Summer 2013

Instructor: Mathew Coleman  
Email: [coleman.373@osu.edu](mailto:coleman.373@osu.edu)

---

In this seminar we will explore the geo-sociological concept of the everyday, taking our inspiration from sociologist and geographer Henri Lefebvre's (1901-1991) three volume treatise on the everyday, *Critique of Everyday Life* ([http://www.versobooks.com/books/klm/l-titles/lefebvre\\_h\\_critique\\_v1.shtml](http://www.versobooks.com/books/klm/l-titles/lefebvre_h_critique_v1.shtml)). Published roughly at the beginning, middle and end of the Cold War, this trilogy offers a rich and persuasive (and oftentimes inconsistent) account of everyday life as simultaneously a sphere of creativity and alienation – a paradoxical medium of revolution and pacification, fragmentation and continuity, repetition and difference.

Our reading of Lefebvre's work will function as a springboard into myriad other prominent “theories of the everyday”. Our goal in the seminar will be to problematize and think through what this arguably ubiquitous and yet poorly specified word – the everyday – means from various theoretical perspectives, including: Situationism, post-Marxist/feminist theories of social reproduction, autonomist Marxism, non-representational theory, actor network theory, and flat ontology. We will focus specifically on what the everyday means for thinking about the importance of race, class, sexuality, and gender to the social world.