

**PSCI 5306 F
North American Political Traditions**

2009 Topic:

George Grant: His Politics, Intellectual Sources, Commentators, and Critics

Thursdays 11:25am-2:25pm

Please confirm location Carleton Central

Instructor: Professor Peter Emberley

Office: Loeb D685

Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30 – 12:30; Thursdays 2:30 - 3:30

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Course Description:

This seminar is focused on the political philosophy of George Grant. As Canada's great nationalist writer, he is renowned for his book *Lament for a Nation* - which warned of Canada's demise as an independent nation-state under the pressure of America's imperial ambitions, advanced by technology and an ethos of pragmatism. Grant combined astute political analysis with a wide-ranging commentary on the intellectual and spiritual sources which he argued could contribute to the preservation of Canada's "autochthonous" roots. Drawn into dialogue with the thought of Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, Charles Cochrane, Simone Weil, Philippe Sherrard, Celine, Heidegger, among others, Grant offered multi-pronged analyses of contemporary life, including technology, education, politics, literature, history, music, and philosophy, the ensemble of which, as one commentator aptly construed, constituted "subversions of modernity."

REQUIRED TEXTS:

The George Grant Reader, edited by William Christian and Sheila Grant

Coursepack: Available at Carleton University Bookstore

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Presentation	30%
Seminar Summary (Dec 1)	30%
Term Paper (Dec 3)	40%

1. Class Presentations and Weekly Participation in Discussion: 30%

Seminar participants will be expected to contribute weekly to the discussion, exhibiting evidence of reflection on the assigned materials. Each participant

will be expected to give two 10-15 minute seminar presentations on assigned sets of passages, each of which will constitute 20% of the seminar grade; the other 20% of the participation grade will be based on weekly contributions to the discussion.)

2. Seminar Summaries: Worth 30%

(Seminar participants will be expected at the beginning of each class to submit a 2-3 page summary/commentary on the salient issues discussed in the previous seminar)

Due: December 1

Seminar Summaries will be graded and returned weekly.

3. Term Paper 40% (Topics to be distributed in second week of class. In discussion with the instructor, you may also develop your own topic.)

Due: December 3

CLASS SCHEDULE: (GGR denotes **The George Grant Reader**; "*" denotes on reserve)

- September 10 **Introduction to the Thought of George Grant:** David Cayley, "The Ideas of George Grant," CBC Ideas, November 1995
- September 17 **Lament for a Nation**, and other political writings
GGR 43-153
"The Years of Lament 1960-70," in *George Grant, Selected Letters*
James Doull, "Naturalistic Individualism: Quebec Independence and an Independent Canada" (coursepack)
Barry Cooper, "*A imperio usque ad imperium: The Political Thought Of George Grant*"*
John Muggeridge, "George Grant's Anguished Conservatism" *
A. James Reimer, "George Grant: Liberal, Socialist or Conservative"*
- September 24 **Philosophy, Education, The Multiversity**
GGR ,157-203
"Faith and the Multiversity," in *Technology and Justice* (coursepack)
- October 1 **The History of Political Philosophy**
207-236, 279-317, 321-368
George Grant "Five Lectures on Christianity"
Neil Robertson, "Freedom and the Tradition: George Grant,
James Doull and the Character of Modernity (Coursepack)
Barry Cooper, "George Grant and the Revival of Political Philosophy
Ian Angus, "Athens and Jerusalem? A Critique of the Relationship
Between Philosophy and Religion in George Grant's Thought"*
- October 8 **Leo Strauss, and Alexandre Kojève**
GGR 266-279; George Grant, "Leo Strauss and Political Philosophy"

Peter Emberley, Review Article of Daniel Tanguay, *Leo Strauss: An Intellectual Biography*
 Clark A. Merrill, "Leo Strauss' Indictment of Christian Philosophy"*
 Wayne Whiller, "George Grant and Leo Strauss: A Parting of the Way"
 (Coursepack)
 H.D. Forbes, "George Grant and Leo Strauss" (coursepack)
 Grant Havers, "George Grant and Leo Strauss: Modernist and Postmodernist Conservatisms"
 Alexander Duff, "Response to the Strauss-Kojeve Debate: Grant's Turn from Hegel to Christian Platonism"
 Gregory Butler, "Leo Strauss, George Grant, and Historicism"*

October 15

Thinking about Technology

GGR 394-444

"Thinking about Technology" in *Technology and Justice* (coursepack)

Re-read: "Faith and the Multiversity," in *Technology and Justice* (coursepack)

October 22

Questions of Justice

GGR 387-395

Samuel Ajzenstat, "Abortion in George Grant's Thought" (coursepack)

Leah Bradshaw, "Love and Will in the Miracle of Birth: An Arendtian Critique of George Grant on Abortion" (coursepack)

October 29

The Writings of, and Commentary on, Simone Weil

GGR 238-265

Hand-out from *Gravity and Grace* and *Waiting on God*

November 5

The Theology of the Cross, and Philippe Sherrard

GGR 447-482

Wayne Whillier, ed. *Two Theological Languages* (coursepack)

Harris Athanasiadas, "The Theology of the Cross: Its Origins Meaning, and Significance" (coursepack)

Sheila Grant, "George Grant and the Theology of the Cross"

Hand-out from *The Latin West and the Greek East*

November 12

The Attraction to Celine

GGR 369-383

George Grant, "Celine's Trilogy" transcribed by Sheila Grant (coursepack)

Ed Andrew, "Grant's Celine" (coursepack)

Excerpt from Celine's *Journey to the End of the Night*

November 19

Interpretations and Critical Commentaries I

Zdravko Planinc, "Paradox and Polyphony in Grant's

Critique of Modernity”(coursepack)
“Ronald Beiner, “Grant, Nietzsche, and Post-Christian Theism”
Ian Angus, “Athens and Jerusalem: A Critique of the Relationship
Between Philosophy and Religion in George Grant’s Thought”

November 26

Concluding Discussion and Review

December 3

Conclusion Discussion and Review

NOTE:

- **All components of the course (essay, weekly seminar participation, 12 seminar summaries) must be completed in order to receive a passing grade.**
- **Essays must be submitted on the day specified. Late papers will be docked one grade per weekday (from B+ to B, etc.). Late assignments not submitted directly to the instructor must be date-stamped in the Political Science Office, Loeb B640, during working hours. Essays placed in the drop box after working hours are date-stamped the following day. Essays cannot be submitted to the Department by fax.**

Academic Accommodations

For students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre (613-520-6608) every term to ensure that the instructor receives your request for accommodation. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs **at least two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations**. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by **November 16, 2009 for December examinations** and **March 12, 2010 for April examinations**.

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism: The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

Oral Examination: At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Course Requirements: Failure to write the final exam will result in a grade of ABS. FND (Failure No Deferred) is assigned when a student's performance is so poor during the term that they cannot pass the course even with 100% on the final examination. In such cases, instructors may use this notation on the Final Grade Report to indicate that a student has already failed the course due to inadequate term work and should not be permitted access to a deferral of the examination. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

Connect Email Accounts: All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via Connect. Important course and University information is also distributed via the Connect email system. It is the student’s responsibility to monitor their Connect account.

Carleton Political Science Society: The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students in the after-hours academic life at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, please email carletonpss@gmail.com, visit our website at poliscisociety.com,

or come to our office in Loeb D688.

Official Course Outline: The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.