

studies in

social & political thought

Volume 28 Winter 2018

Special Issue Conference Edition

Critical Theory and the Concept of Social Pathology

Centre for Social and Political Thought at the University of Sussex Sept 2017

Introduced by *James Gordon Finlayson*

Conference papers

On the ontology of social pathologies

Onni Hirvonen

Characterising social pathologies: an analytic grid

Fabian Freyenhagen

Analyzing Conceptions of Social Pathology: Eight Questions

Arto Laitinen and Arvi Särkelä,

Articles

The A-theoretical core of political realism

Zoltán Gábor Szűcs

Walter Benjamin's Zur Kritik der Gewalt: reception, relevance, and a mis-diagnosis?

Valerie Whittington

Books reviewed

Protest, Property and the Commons: Performances of Law and Resistance

by *Lucy Finchett-Maddock*

Hegel and Spinoza: Substance and Negativity by *Gregor Moder*

Liberal Moments: Reading Liberal Texts Edited by *Ewa Atanassow and Alan S. Kahan*

How to be a Marxist in Philosophy by *Louis Althusser*

Edited and translated by *G.M Goshgarian*

Editors' introduction to SSPT Volume 28

Studies in Social and Political Thought is the house journal of the Centre for Social and Political Thought at the University of Sussex. It was founded in 1999 by faculty members Andrew Chitty in Philosophy, William Othwaite in Sociology, and a group of post-graduate students in SPT. It has been almost entirely run by Sussex graduate students since that date.

In 2010 it was re-launched with a prestigious International Advisory Board all of whom have been very supportive of the journal. It has published peer-reviewed articles by graduate students from Sussex and from Universities all over the world, alongside peer-reviewed articles by internationally renowned academics working in the broad area of Social and Political Thought.

In 2016 the journal moved to an on-line Gold Open Access format with a special issue (Volume 25) on Pathologies of Recognition co-edited by Chris Ferguson, Arto Laitinen, Arvi Särkelä and Heikki Ikäheimo. Volume 26 followed with a retrospective issue celebrating some of the best articles to appear in the Journal over its history. Technical issues associated with the move to an online only format have held up the publication dates of recent volumes. Volume 28 was originally intended as a Summer 2018 issue however it was held back and is now released as the Winter 2018 Issue. With the publication of Volume 28 the technical issues we encountered have been largely resolved. We are looking forward to producing a Summer 2019 Issue in the coming year.

Volume 28 contains a selection of summary papers from the 2017 University of Sussex Centre for Social and Political Thought Conference, Critical Theory and the Concept of Social Pathology, by Fabian Freyenhagen, Onni Hirvonen, and a joint summary by Arti Laitinen and Arvi Särkelä. The conference papers are given a special introduction by James Gordon Finlayson. There are also two articles. Zoltán Gábor Szűcs writing on political realism discusses Bernard Williams' critiques of morality and sets out a Williamsian distinction between realist political theory and its a-theoretical realist core. He argues that realist theory should be seen as a set of recurring themes rather than a coherent set of principles and considers the challenges for realist theorists in establishing the parameters of realist theory. Valerie Whittington's article considers the continuing relevance of Walter Benjamin's 'Zur Kritik der Gewalt' with a reading that claims there is a discernible ethical content in the political realm Benjamin imagines in this contested and important essay. We are very pleased to present in this issue book reviews by Darrow Schecter, Robb Dunphy, Thomas Godfrey and Neal Harris. The editors wish to thank all the reviewers and contributors to this delayed edition for their patience.

Valerie Whittington and James Stockman

Editors