CAPONEU - The Cartography of the Political Novel in Europe

Thinking the 'Political'

This collection explores the role of political theory, literature and practice in transforming our understanding of ‘politics’ and ‘the political’ in the contemporary world. In recent years, dominant definitions of ‘politics’ have increasingly been questioned. Featuring work from a range of disciplines, including philosophy, literary studies and political theory, the collection explores the following questions: What is ‘the political’? Which aspects of life, and kinds of activity, count as ‘political’ today? How do new and diverse modes of political contestation challenge established ways of defining and doing politics? In short, what does it mean to ‘think the political’ today?

Audience: Scholars • Teachers and educators • Students • Activists and civil society workers • Writers, translators, publishers, literary critics

Organization

Academic institution • Caponeu Consortium Member

University of Brighton

Curated by

Caponeu Team Member

Craig Jordan-Baker

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Joanna Kellond

Workshop: Thinking the Political

This two-day workshop held at the University of Brighton in May 2023 brought together academics from a variety of disciplines to address questions of how we think the political across a variety of contexts, and how those contexts relate to one another.

Caponeu event

Workshop: Thinking the Political

Rethinking the Political: Narrative, Protest and Fiction in the 21st Century

The first decades of the 21st century have witnessed a fundamental rethinking of politics and of the political. Rather than begin with universal theories of the polis in the abstract, contemporary theorists focus on how dominant notions of the political depended upon racist and gender based violence, the destruction of the planet and of those lives that do not conform the proper bounds of the polis. For many decolonial and black pessimist theorists any common ontology of the political fails to recognise the coloniality of Being (Wynter 2015) constitutive of life in the polis, and the human. Likewise, for queer critics of identity politics, bodies and selves are ‘fragmented, unfinished, broken beyond-repair forms’ (Halberstam 2018) that resist any common ontology. Despite their radically different starting points these accounts all view politics as a contested and contingent space that concerns both the drawing of borders, and the contestation of the borders drawn. They point to the moments of rhetorical and sometimes violent excess that betray the contingency, and the inequalities, of political orders. At this conference we aim to think the political from a starting point outside the long history of ‘the polis’ and its various declensions. Instead we think politics in terms of care, practice, and the enactment of an equality that is never finally realised.

Caponeu event

Rethinking the Political: Narrative, Protest and Fiction in the 21st Century

Special Collection: Thinking the Political

This special collection for the Open Library of Humanities Journal explores the role of political theory, literature and practice in transforming our understanding of ‘politics’ and ‘the political’ in the contemporary world.

Special collection

Thinking the Political: Theory, Literature, Practice

By: Craig Jordan-Baker, Joanna Kellond

Reparative Democracy: Testing the Borders of the Political. Interview with Wendy Brown

In this interview with Mark Devenney, Wendy Brown reflects on the current sociopolitical context in relation to her proposal of a “reparative democracy” which allows to face the increasing threat of right-wing ideologies and ecosystemic collapse.

Article

Reparative Democracy: Testing the Borders of the Political. Interview with Wendy Brown

Thinking the Political Workshop: The Politics of Bordering

This workshop invited contributions that critically rethink the concept of borders in light of recent developments in the politics of bordering, including border enforcement and migration, the limits of the state and body politic, and changing conceptions of margins and centres.

Caponeu event

Thinking the Political Workshop: The Politics of Bordering

Thinking the Political Workshop: Fictions of the Family

Insisting on the political importance of fictional texts and the fictional character of politics, this workshop centred, in all their forms, political fictions of, and against, the family, as well as those for different kinds of family, that seek to radically reconceive it.

Caponeu event

Fictions of the Family Workshop