

Editors' Comments

Problematique is a journal organized and operated by graduate students in the Political Science Department at York University, dedicated to promoting and circulating graduate work through publication. It is in this light that we decided, for the first time, to publish Problematique as an on-line journal and continue as an on-line publication from this issue forward. It is our hope that this will allow broader access to the work of our authors and expand our readership. We look forward to Problematique continuing to provide a venue for what we consider to be a crucial aspect of scholarly development—peer feedback, constructive criticism, and the open sharing of ideas.

The articles in this 2006 – 2007 edition of Problematique reflect the diversity of research interests found in our graduate programme and in the field of politics. Centered on the theme of acquiescence, these articles respond to broadly-defined theoretical and practical concepts that cover timely political issues.

In “Adorno on ‘The Donald’: Reality Television as Culture Industry,” Graham Potts deals with the theme of the culture industry as developed by Theodor Adorno and others in the Frankfurt School. He finds the culture industry a useful analytical tool for critical readings of mass culture, and looks specifically at the contemporary phenomenon of reality television which he refers to as “the mimic quality of modern individualism” as demonstrated in *The Apprentice*, where a supposed honest and unscripted ‘reality’ permeates and what he calls “the pinnacle of its newest attempt to divorce cultural production from objective material conditions and social criticism.”

Colleen Bell, in “Spooked by the Demos: Aristotle’s Conception of the Good Citizenry Against the Mob” argues that Aristotle’s exclusion of a majority of the population in his argument “hinges upon Aristotle’s conception of the relationship between the good man and the good citizen.” The image of the mob, she writes, materializes in Aristotle’s consideration of what constitutes secure and attractive state forms. “Thus,” she argues, “Aristotle advocates for a carefully governed collectivity that guides rational citizens towards orderly conduct, while minimizing the influence of those who may be swayed by the instigators of political change.”

Devin Penner’s “The Paradox of Spontaneity: Representation, Revolution and Violence in Twentieth Century Radical Theory” addresses theories about spontaneity and violence from theorists such as Georges Sorel, Frantz Fanon, and Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. Penner argues that “traditional forms of resistance appear to be outmoded in a capitalist system that is increasingly based on the production and global dissemination of immaterial goods like knowledge and information, which can be transmitted through borders with near impunity.” Bearing in mind the merit of emphasizing spontaneous events as the solution for dilemmas of representation, Penner finds that spontaneity ultimately neglects the crucial elements of consensus and organization required to produce the revolutionary end these thinkers advocate.

We would like to extend our thanks to the York Political Science Department and the Graduate Programme in Political Science, whose support made the publication of this journal possible. We are also indebted to our critical reviewers and the time they put into providing feedback on the papers we received this year and carefully selecting articles appropriate for this issue. Special thanks to Fatemeh Moeinedin for her technical support in producing our new on-line publication.

The Collective at Problematique
Spring 2007