



Course

SPRING 2008

HUM 597 A

A Micro-Seminar with Wendy Brown:

What is Critique for Marx?

(1 Credit: C/NC)

Registration is open on a first-come first-served basis through MyUW.

April 21, 23, 24 & 25, 2008

M, W, Th, F: 2:00-3:50 pm

Communications 202

In the introduction to the *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right'*, Marx wrote: "the critique of religion is the prerequisite of every critique." What might this mean? That all critique must begin by grasping and exposing religious illusions about its object? Or that a critique of religion is the necessary first step to a critique of all human social practices and organization? Or that critique is no longer necessary once the illusions and errors of religion are exposed? Or that religion is the tablet on which the arts of critique are developed? Or even perhaps that the critique of religion reveals most of what we need to know about what "man" is, wants, and could be?

This seminar will begin with Marx's formulations of the relation between critique and religion and then move to explore more generally the several meanings and modality of critique in Marx. It will track these meanings and modalities across Marx's own shift in focus from philosophy, religion, law, and the state, to ideology, history, and political economy. It will thus consider Marx's articulations of the relation between critique and humanism, science, objectivity, religion, materialism, fetishism, and human desire.

Wendy Brown is Professor of Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Washington Distinguished Katz Lecturer for Spring 2008. She is author of several highly influential books, including *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*, *Politics Out of History*, and *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Empire and Identity*.

Course website: www.simpsoncenter.org/courses_graduate_brown_springo8.htm