

# BUNGACAST READING CLUB 2022

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## THEME I: EMERGENCY POLITICS & CONTROL

*'Stay at home, save lives'*

State responses to the pandemic have raised the spectre of new forms of social control under the pretext of public health. What role does fear play in sustaining this state of affairs – and did the War on Terror lay the ground for the current situation? Will – or should – responses to climate change also take the form of emergency politics?

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## THEME II: CYNICAL IDEOLOGY

*'They know it, but they're doing it anyway'*

Declining trust in institutions has created a combustible situation, but while we believe less and less in official narratives, we nonetheless carry on participating in society as it is. Is it because in today's world we also lack trust in each other? How can we distinguish scepticism from paranoia?

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## THEME III: TECHNO-FEUDALISM

*'You'll own nothing and be happy'*

Gaping inequality and the undoing of the working class, and now the middle class, has led to suggestions that we're moving beyond capitalism. Are new property relations really emerging – and what role will technology play in domination? How should we understand the rise of a 'precarariat' and what forms will struggle take?



# EMERGENCY POLITICS & CONTROL

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## January: Emergency Politics I

- Schmitt, Carl: *Political Theology* (1922)

## February: Emergency Politics II

- Agamben, Giorgio: *State of Exception* (2005)

## March: Fear I

- Robin, Corey: *Fear: The History of a Political Idea* (2006)

## April: Fear II

- Furedi, Frank: *How Fear Works: Culture of Fear in the Twenty First Century* (2019)

## May: Biopolitics

- Foucault, Michel: *The Birth of Biopolitics* (1979). Chs. 4-6, 9-10

## June: Climate Emergency?

- Malm, Andreas: *Climate, Corona, Chronic Emergency* (2020)
- Tooze, Adam: 'Ecological Leninism', LRB (44:22, 2021)

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## ADDITIONAL READINGS

- Chakraborty, Aditya, 'Muddled, top down, technocratic: why the green new deal should be scrapped', The Guardian, 11 Nov 2021
- Chandler, David 'Biopolitics 2.0: Reclaiming the power of life in the anthropocene' Contemporary Political Theory, vol. 19 (2020)
- Choukroune, Leila. 'When the state of exception is the norm, democracy is on a tightrope', The Conversation, 27 Aug 2020
- Foucault, Michel: *Society Must Be Defended* (1976)
- Hodgson, James & Philip Cunliffe: 'The lethal folly of humanitarian interventionism', Spiked, 24 Jul 2020
- Rachman, Gideon, 'Liberalism's most brilliant enemy is back in vogue', Financial Times, 11 Jan 2019



# CYNICAL IDEOLOGY

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## July: Cynicism

- Zizek, Slavoj: "How Marx invented the symptom", Ch.1 from *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989). [Also available as slightly edited-down version in *Mapping Ideology* (1994)]

## August: Trust

- Giddens, Anthony: *The Consequences of Modernity* (1990), Ch. 3

## September: Conspiracy Theory

- Melley, Timothy: *Empire of Conspiracy: The Culture of Paranoia in Postwar America* (2000), Preface, Introduction and Epilogue

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## ADDITIONAL READINGS

- Zizek, Slavoj: *The Indivisible Remainder*, 'Cynicism vs Irony' from Ch. 3 (1996)
- Keenan, Alan: 'The Twilight of the Political? A Contribution to the Democratic Critique of Cynicism', *Theory & Event*, 2:1 (1998)
- Fukuyama, Francis: *Trust: The Social Virtue and the Creation of Prosperity* (1995)
- Bodó, Balázs: 'The Commodification of Trust', *Blockchain & Society Policy Research Lab Research Nodes 2021/1*, Amsterdam Law School Research Paper No. 2021-22
- Walker, Jesse: *The United States of Paranoia: A Conspiracy Theory* (2013)
- Dehaven-Smith, Lance: *Conspiracy Theory in America* (2013)
- Simon, Ed: 'Not to be cynical, but...', *LA Review of Books*, 5 May 2021
- Eagleton, Terry: *Hope without Optimism* (2015)



# TECHNO-FEUDALISM

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## October: Neo-Feudalism

- Kotkin, Joel: *The Coming of Neo-Feudalism: A Warning to the Global Middle Class Neo-feudalism* (2020)
- Varoufakis, Yanis: 'Techno-Feudalism Is Taking Over', Project Syndicate, 5 Jul 2021

## November: New Technology

- Dyer-Witheford, Nick, Atle Mikkola Kjøsén and James Steinhoff: *Inhuman Power: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Capitalism* (2019)

## December: New Classes?

- Braga, Ruy: 'A return of class struggle without class? Moral economy and popular resistance in Brazil, South Africa and Portugal', *Sociologia & Antropologia*, 9:2 (2019)
- Standing, Guy: 'The Precariat: Today's Transformative Class?', Great Transition Initiative, (2018)

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## ADDITIONAL READINGS

- Dean, Jodi: 'Neofeudalism: The End of Capitalism?', LA Review of Books, 12 May 2020
- Standing, Guy: *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (2016)
- Hochuli, Alex: 'The Brazilianization of the World', *American Affairs*, 5/2 (2021)
- Wark, McKenzie: *Capital is Dead: Is This Something Worse?* (2019)
- Adkins, Lisa, Melinda Cooper & Martijn Konings: *The Asset Economy* (2020)
- Waters, Alexander: 'Will neoliberal capitalism survive the coronavirus crash or is this the beginning of technofeudalism?', *Journal of Australian Political Economy*, no.88 (2020)



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