



Call for Papers

1st Annual UCLA Graduate Conference in Political Theory:
Rupture and Continuity

-Date: **April 23–25, 2021**

-Abstract Submission Deadline: **January 1, 2021**

-Keynote speaker: **Bonnie Honig**

Nancy Duke Lewis Professor of Modern Culture and Media and Political Science, Brown University

-Conference will be wholly virtual and free and open for both participants and spectators

The vocabularies of rupture and continuity, often taken to be incompatible, are well-known to political theorists. Claims of crisis and catastrophe abound, whether technological, ecological, social, or political. Those attuned to these exigencies increasingly reject incremental change, advocating a forceful transformation in our modes of life, material surroundings, and relationships to each other. Outside academia, nationalist resurgences challenge the continuity of a globalized world, installing border regimes that rupture the movement of goods and persons. Airwaves and print media fill with constant complaints of polarization—fears that ideological enthusiasm could rupture time-honored political norms. However, vocabularies of rupture can belie an appreciation for the continuities of political life. Research foregrounds the continuities—whether dominating or emancipatory—of the animate and the inanimate; of past and present; of political and social; and of public and private. In the academy and on the ground, scholars, activists, and organizers respond to outcries over recent depravities by highlighting decades-long continuities in an intensifying deportation regime, inaction on police violence and systemic racism, and the persistence of colonial relations and logics. On the whole, implicit or explicit claims about discrete and stable entities and intervals have proven difficult to sustain, giving way to a new political ontology of perpetually-adjacent phenomena more different in degree rather than kind—or, indeed, rejecting the dualism implicit in that distinction.

We seek to rethink the assumed antithesis of rupture and continuity. As the questions below suggest, continuity and rupture are mutually generative in some cases, while in others, they are transposable at specific sites with a neatness that should make us question their relations. For example, distanced education in the age of COVID-19 replaces the visual continuity of the field of the classroom with a ruptured and discrete series of rigidly bounded boxes, each confining a single, isolated face. At the same time, the ruptured difference of multiple sites of work—buildings, classrooms, libraries, coffee shops—succumbs to the monotonous continuity of teaching, learning, working, and living within a single environment.

In light of not only their concurrent proliferation, but also their frequent knitted interlinkings within politics, we believe that reconsidering the pair of rupture and continuity offers an access point into our contemporary challenges. We therefore invite submissions that consider rupture and continuity, perhaps with an eye to some of the following themes:

- Themes of rupture/continuity in both canonical and extra-canonical thinkers

- Do old ruptures (self/other, mind/body, left/right, agency/structure, contingency/necessity, subject/object) still hold? Did they ever?
- How do regimes maintain their continuity while making space for rupture?
- What political possibilities emerge from rupture?
- How might we think rupture/continuity differently?
- Notions of rupture in different spheres (e.g. eschatology, revolution, crisis, etc.)
- Notions of continuity in different spheres (e.g. preservation, stability, essentialism, etc.)
- In grounded terms, how does rupture *occur*, or how is continuity *maintained*?
- Are there different types of ruptures/continuities? Can we typologize them?
- What ruptures establish continuities? What continuities require rupture?

We invite submissions on any topic touching directly or indirectly on one or more of these problematics; we encourage submissions from critical, historical, and normative perspectives, as well as from disciplines and fields adjacent to Political Theory, including but not limited to Comparative Literature, Indigeneous Studies, History, Art History, African American Studies, Sociology, Gender Studies, and individual area or language studies. Submissions may be wholly theoretical or grounded in concrete concerns within any of these fields. We also hope to see submissions of papers that do not directly address rupture and continuity but could be fruitfully put into conversation with papers that do.

Submission Instructions

The deadline is January 1, 2020. Abstracts should be no more than 250 words and can be submitted via the following Google Form: <https://forms.gle/D5eYkhTpaDv1ZwvJ9>

Accepted submitters will be notified by late February or early March. Each accepted submitter will be expected to provide a complete paper (of no more than 8000 words) to their session chair two weeks in advance and to give a brief presentation at the beginning of the session on the content of the paper.

If you have any questions or encounter any issues, please contact Josh Campbell at jwcampbell@ucla.edu. Please also contact Josh if you wish to propose and organize your own panel with 2–3 other submissions.