

# CALL FOR PAPERS

## Politics and the Unconscious

Special Issue of *Subjectivity*  
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### Guest Editors

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The special issue aims to explore the unconscious dimension in politics, whether in the context of political practice or political theory. Of particular interest is the question of how to conceptualise the relationship between the unconscious and political subjectivity.

It is often remarked that in politics much of importance takes place below the radar. 'Dog whistle politics', 'tacit knowledge', 'complicity', and 'surmise' are just some of the terms used to capture such silent or unofficial processes which, however, are central to our understanding of official political practices, as well as the lack of active political engagement.

The concept of the 'unconscious' registers this dimension of politics and there are many ways it can be understood, theorised, and operationalised for purposes of empirical analysis.

The special issue will include an extended interview with Professor Ernesto Laclau, whose aim is to probe the role that Lacanian psychoanalysis plays in his recent work in political theory. But we strongly encourage the submission of papers which explore the unconscious dimension of politics from alternative psychoanalytic perspectives, as well as social-psychological and other perspectives.

Possible themes include:

- the unconscious and its relation to political subjectivity
- the role the unconscious and cognate concepts can or should play in political theory and analysis
- reflection on the historical and/or contemporary use of psychoanalysis in the study of politics
- the unconscious in critical social and political psychology
- the role of stereotypes in relation to the unconscious
- ideological critique
- hegemony and post-hegemony
- theories of freedom and emancipation
- theories of justice and principles of distribution
- the political economy
- processes of policy formulation and implementation
- economic policy, wealth, and happiness

- utopian thought
- theories of democracy and post-democracy
- the politics of consumption
- general methodological and epistemological issues concerning the use of the unconscious (or cognate terms) to political studies, eg., what can or should qualify as evidence of the unconscious in social and political life
- the unconscious at the intersection of media and politics
- the tenability and significance of drawing a distinction between the individual and collective unconscious
- different perspectives on the unconscious and their comparative/contrastive significance for understanding political processes
- the differential implications for political theory and analysis of subscribing to different psychoanalytic frameworks
- the character and modalities of political discourse
- discourse and affect in processes of identification
- fantasy and political subjectivity
- the political constitution of groups and institutions
- social and political identification in organizations

We encourage papers which explore any of these or other politically-inflected themes from the point of view of the unconscious or related concepts. Theoretically-informed empirical studies are particularly welcome.

Send expressions of interest with short proposal for possible contributions to [yanstavr@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:yanstavr@yahoo.co.uk) by 16 March 2009. Once a proposal is accepted authors will be asked to submit full papers by 20 July 2009. Full papers will then go through the standard peer-review process. Author guidelines can be found at [http://www.palgrave-journals.com/sub/author\\_instructions.html](http://www.palgrave-journals.com/sub/author_instructions.html).