

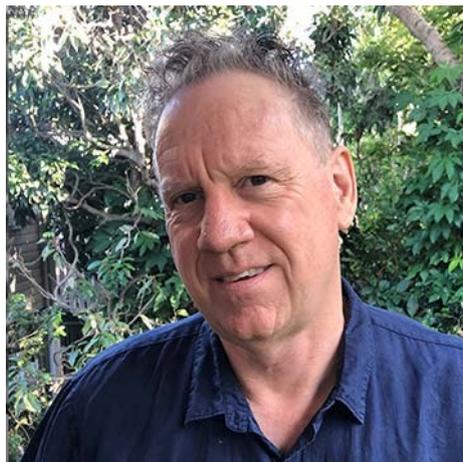
**Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences
Research Seminar Program 2021**

Tuesday 6th July (12-1pm)

To be held via Teams Meeting

Professor Peter Holbrook

Peter Holbrook is Professor of Literature at the Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne. From 1996-2020 he taught at the University of Queensland, where he was also for a time Professor and Director of the UQ Node of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions (Europe 1100-1800). His books include *Shakespeare's Individualism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) and *English Renaissance Tragedy: Ideas of Freedom* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015). Other recent publications are "The Idea of Communism in Shakespeare" in *The Arden Research Handbook of Shakespeare and Social Justice* (London: Bloomsbury/Arden Shakespeare, 2021), and "Passionate Shakespeare" in *Shakespeare and Emotion*, ed. Katharine A. Craik (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020). He is currently working on a book about the politics of nature in English literature.



D.H. Lawrence and Twenty-First Century Socialism

Lawrence was a writer of genius, but also a deeply problematic, in many ways troubling, one. This paper attempts to tease out what is valuable in his work, in so far as that bears upon questions of politics, society, and culture, from those parts of it we may want to reject (while also acknowledging the extreme difficulty of such a disentangling operation). It investigates Lawrence's meditations on the self, consciousness, the ego and the will, and considers the implications of his thought on these matters for socialist politics. In the paper I draw on some of the writings of the brilliant left cultural theorist Mark Fisher (1968-2017), whose preoccupation with the cultural conditioning of consciousness under capitalism, and hostility to liberal conceptions of the self, seems to me in some respects shared by Lawrence. Lawrence looked with dismay on the emergence of what he saw as a dead, artificial, mechanical, inhuman world. This paper comes out of the suspicion that, right now, Lawrence's forebodings about certain seemingly unstoppable tendencies in modern culture are more telling than ever.