

Abstract Neal Harris

‘Adorno and Social Pathology’

The notion of ‘social pathology’ remains an integral, yet fiercely debated aspect of contemporary Critical Theory. In my brief round-table contribution, I will discuss how an engagement with Adorno’s scholarship might help further such debates in productive and underexplored directions. My intervention is to suggest that a close reading of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and *Minima Moralia* draws out a hierarchy of social pathologies: an idea yet to be explored in the wider critical scholarship. I submit that across both texts one can read a foundational, meta-social pathology of deficient rationality, and various secondary social pathologies which are symptomatic of the aforementioned antecedent distortion of socially manifest reason. This account hopes to be productive in that it offers a new way of reading Adorno’s texts, and more broadly, it moves towards reconnecting left-Hegelian philosophy with the Critical Theoretical desire to engage in meaningful, philosophically undergirded, social-research.