

MODERN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY (2015 – 16)

Location: Ciutadella Campus, 40.041 (Week One) and 40.39 (Week Two)

Time: Friday, 15.00 – 18.00 Week One; Tuesday, 15.00 – 18.00 from Week Two

Tutor: Andrew Williams (andrew.williams@upf.edu/40.OE28)

This course examines the continuing relevance of some of the greatest or most influential figures in the history of modern political philosophy. To do so, it examines the answers their work suggests to various central questions that arise in reflecting on political life.

More specifically, we shall consider some of the main ideas of the following five historical authors: Thomas Hobbes; John Locke; Jean-Jacques Rousseau; Karl Marx; and John Stuart Mill. We shall also examine work by some contemporary Anglo-American philosophers that is inspired by, or related to, these historical precursors.

The questions we shall address will include the following.

- (1) Do we need a state, and, if so, why?
- (2) Under which conditions, if any, do we have a moral duty to obey a government's commands,
- (3) Under which conditions, if any, do we have a moral right to overthrow an illegitimate government?
- (4) Do individuals possess rights that the state has a moral duty to respect and protect?
- (5) How, if at all, can toleration be justified?
- (6) What's wrong with paternalism?
- (7) What's so good about democracy?
- (8) Can private property be justified? If so, how should it be distributed? If not, why not?
- (9) How do capitalism, socialism, and communism differ? Are there good reasons to favour one system over another?

Primary Texts

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (ed. Richard Tuck)

John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (ed. Peter Laslett)

Jon Elster (ed.), *Karl Marx: A Reader*

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty and Other Essays* (ed. John Gray)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract* (ed. Roger Masters)

Other versions of many of these texts are available at many internet sites.

Jonathan Bennett, a distinguished scholar working on early modern philosophy, has also produced less archaic versions of several texts, which are available at this site:

<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/index.html>.

I will place various items, including some seminar readings, here:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/o17f11x71eo7jax/AAAOppqwDK_9H6pq9-64RxC4a?dl=0

The course will be taught via three hour long classes, involving an interactive lectures followed (from Week Two) by a seminar-style discussion, in which students ask questions about some pre-assigned paper.

All students should read in advance the weekly primary reading mentioned below and to come prepared to make a comment or pose a question about the historical text under consideration. They are also strongly recommended to read the contemporary text the seminar discussion will focus on.

For assessment, students will write an assessed essay of no more than 2,000 words, and so below there are some secondary readings and essay questions.

Program

Week One: Hobbes on Conflict in the State of Nature

Primary Reading

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Chapters 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, and "Review and Conclusion"

Introductory Reading for Course

G. A. Cohen, 'How to Do Political Philosophy', G. A. Cohen, *The Currency of Egalitarian Justice and Other Essays* (ed. Michael Otsuka)

Secondary Reading

John Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Political Philosophy*, Lectures on Hobbes, I, II, and III

S. A. Lloyd, *Morality in the Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes*
Joshua Cohen, 'Getting Past Hobbes', S. A. Lloyd (ed.), *Hobbes Today*
Jean Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition*, Chapters 1, 2, and 3
Gregory Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Richard Tuck, 'Hobbes' Moral Philosophy, in T. Sorell (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes*
Tom Sorell, 'Hobbes's Moral Philosophy', in P. Springborg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan*
David Gauthier, 'Why Contractarianism?', in P. Vallentyne (ed.), *Contractarianism and Rational Choice*

Week Two: Hobbes on Legitimate Political Authority

Primary Reading

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, especially Chapters 16 - 21 but see also 31, 35, 38, 42, and 43.

Seminar Reading

Joseph Raz, 'Authority and Justification', *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (1985)

Secondary Reading

John Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Political Philosophy*, Lectures on Hobbes, I, II, and III
Jean Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition*, Chapters 4, 5, and 6
Gregory Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, Chapters 8, 9 and 10
Quentin Skinner, "Hobbes on Persons, Authors and Representatives", in Patricia Springborg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan*
Kinch Hoekstra, "Hobbes and the Foole", *Political Theory* (1997)
Warren Quinn, "The Right to Threaten and the Right to Punish", *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (1985)

Week Three: John Locke on Natural Rights and Private Property

Primary Reading

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters I – V and sec. 54

Seminar Reading

Victor Tadros, *The Ends of Harm*, chapters 12 and 13

Secondary Reading

John Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Political Philosophy*, 'Lectures on Locke', I

A. J. Simmons, 'John Locke's Two Treatises of Government', Peter Anstey, *The Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Eighteenth Century*

A. John Simmons, *The Lockean Theory of Rights*, chapters 1, 5, and 6

J. Waldron, *The Right to Private Property*, pp. 137-252

Gopal Sreenivasan, *The Limits of Lockean Rights in Property*

Jeremy Waldron, *God, Locke, and Inequality*

Week Four: Locke on Legitimate Political Authority

Primary Reading

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters VII-XII, and XV-XVI

Seminar Reading

Michael Otsuka, *Libertarianism without Inequality*, 'Introduction' and Chapter 1, the latter of which originally appeared in *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (1998): 65 - 92

Secondary Reading

John Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Political Philosophy*, Lectures on Locke, II - III

A. John Simmons, "Inalienable Rights and Locke's *Treatises*", *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1983)

Richard Ashcraft, "Locke's Political Philosophy", in Vere Chappell (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Locke*

Jeremy Waldron, *The Dignity of Legislation*, Chapter 4

David Hume, *Of the Original Contract*

[<http://www.constitution.org/dh/origcont.htm>]

Week Five: Rousseau on the General Will

Primary Reading

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Books 1 and 2

Seminar Reading

Frederick Neuhouser, 'The Contemporary Relevance of Rousseau's Critique', *Rousseau's Critique of Inequality*, chapter 5

Secondary Reading

John Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Political Philosophy*, pp. 191-248
Joshua Cohen, *Rousseau: A Free Community of Equals*
Frederick Neuhouser, *Rousseau's Critique of Inequality*
Christopher Bertram, *Rousseau and the Social Contract*
Nicholas Dent, *Rousseau*
Frederick Neuhouser, *Rousseau's Theodicy of Self-Love*
J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, sec. 54 and pp. 85-86
Gopal Sreenivasan, 'What is the General Will?', *Philosophical Review* (2000)
Frederick Neuhouser, 'Freedom, Dependence and the General Will',
Philosophical Review (1993)
Amartya Sen, 'Games, Justice and the General Will', *Mind* (1965)
P. J. Kain, 'Rousseau, the General Will, and Individual Liberty', *History of Philosophy Quarterly* (1990)

Week Six: Rousseau on Democracy

Primary Reading

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Books 3 and 4

Presentation Reading

Thomas Christiano, 'The Authority of Democracy', *The Constitution of Equality*, chapter 6

Secondary Reading

Bernard Grofman and Scott Feld, 'Rousseau's General Will: A Condorcetian Perspective', *American Political Science Review* (1988)
David Estlund and Jeremy Waldron, 'Democratic Theory and the Public Interest: Condorcet and Rousseau Revisited', *American Political Science Review* (1989)
Robert Goodin, 'The Paradox of Persisting Opposition', *Politics, Philosophy & Economics* (2002)
J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, sec. 54 and pp. 85-86
David Estlund, 'Why Not Epistocracy?', in Naomi Reshotko (ed.), *Desire, Identity and Existence: Essays in honor of T. M. Penner*
<http://www.brown.edu/academics/philosophy/david-estlunds-papers>
Niko Kolodny, 'Rule Over None II: Social Equality and the Justification of Democracy', *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (2014)

Week Seven: Marx on Alienation, History, and Exploitation

Primary Reading

Karl Marx, in Jon Elster (ed.), *Karl Marx: A Reader*, Chs. 2, 5, 12, 13, 14, and 15

Seminar Reading

G. A. Cohen, 'Use-Value, Exchange-Value, and Contemporary Capitalism', *Karl Marx's Theory of Justice*, chapter XI

Secondary Reading

Paula Casal, 'From Unilinear to Universal Historical Materialism', *Poznan Studies in Philosophy* (1998)

G. A. Cohen, *History, Labour and Freedom*, Parts I and II, and Chapter 10, esp. Chapter 1 summarizing Cohen's interpretation of historical materialism

G. A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History*

G. A. Cohen, *If You're An Egalitarian, How Come You're So Rich?*, Chapters 3 - 5

G. A. Cohen, 'Why Not Socialism?', E. Broadbent (ed.), *Democratic Equality: What Went Wrong?*

Jon Elster, *Making Sense of Marx*, Chapters 2 and 5

Allen Wood, *Karl Marx*

C. J. Arthur, *Dialectics of Labour* (<http://chrisarthur.net/dialectics-of-labour/>)

Week Eight: Marx and Rawls

Primary Reading

John Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Political Philosophy*, Lectures on Marx, I - III

Seminar Reading

Philippe Van Parijs and Robert van der Veen, 'A Capitalist Road to Communism', *Theory and Society* (1986)

Secondary Reading

G. A. Cohen, 'The Labour Theory of Value and the Concept of Exploitation', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1979): 338-60

John Roemer, 'Should Marxists Be Interested in Exploitation?', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1985): 30 -65

G. A. Cohen, *Self-Ownership, Freedom and Equality*, "Exploitation in Marx: What Makes it Unjust?"
Jon Elster, *Making Sense of Marx*, Chapter 4
Allen Wood, 'Marx and Equality', in J. Roemer (ed.), *Analytical Marxism*
John Roemer, 'The Morality and Efficiency of Market Socialism', *Ethics* (1992)
Philippe Van Parijs, 'Basic Income Capitalism', *Ethics* (1992)
Richard Arneson, 'Is Socialism Dead? A Comment on Market Socialism and Basic Income Capitalism' *Ethics* (1992)

Week Nine: John Stuart Mill on Freedom of Expression

Primary Reading

J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapters 1 and 2

Seminar Reading

Jeremy Waldron, 'Dignity and Defamation: the Visibility of Hate', *Harvard Law Review* (2009), *The Holmes Lectures*, 1 and 2

[http://www.harvardlawreview.org/media/pdf/vol123_waldron.pdf]

Secondary Reading

T. M. Scanlon, 'A Theory of Freedom of Expression', *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (1972)

T. M. Scanlon, "Freedom of Expression and Categories of Expression", *University of Pittsburgh Law Review* (1979)

(For Scanlon, see too: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GdLmdhvOXno>)

J. Cohen, "Freedom of Expression", *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (1993)

Jonathan Wolff, "Mill, Indecency, and the Liberty Principle", *Utilitas* (1998): 1-16

D. Dyzenhaus, "John Stuart Mill and the Harm of Pornography", *Ethics* (1992)

D. Jacobsen, "Mill on Liberty, Speech, and the Free Society", *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (2000)

Joseph Raz, "Free Expression and Personal Identification", *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* (1991): 303-324

Week Ten: John Stuart Mill on Well-Being and Paternalism

Primary Reading

J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapters III, IV, and V

Seminar Reading

David Velleman, "Against the Right to Die", 2004 revised version available at [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2088349]

Secondary Reading

Arthur Ripstein, 'Beyond the Harm Principle', *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (2006)

Colin Bird, 'Harm versus Sovereignty: A Reply to Ripstein', *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (2007)

Richard Arneson, "Mill vs. Paternalism", *Ethics* (1980): 470-89

Gerald Dworkin (ed.), *Mill's On Liberty: Critical Essays*.

John Gray, *Mill on Liberty: A Defence*

David Brink, "Mill's Deliberative Utilitarianism", *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1992)

Joseph Raz, "Autonomy, Toleration, and the Harm Principle", in Ruth Gavison (ed.), *Issues in Contemporary Legal Philosophy*

David Lewis, "Mill and Milquetoast", *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 67 (1989): 152-71

An Alternative to Presentations

In previous years, students have given presentations but feedback suggests they dislike listening to those presentations, and usually find them overlong – despite continual exhortations on the tutor's part for presenters to be more concise.

For this reason, and because of the unusually large number of students taking the course this year, we shall experiment with a new form of participation.

Having read the assigned "Seminar Reading", selected students will imagine that we have all just heard a seminar presentation of the paper and will attempt to formulate a question that could be posed for the author by a member of the audience.

Some audience members, especially in academic cultures that are uncompetitive and authoritarian, tend to make speeches rather than ask clear focused questions. *Please do not imitate them!*

Instead assume your audience has limited patience and try to be concise: use no more than three minutes to state and explain your question. Where you use Powerpoint to provide some explanation of the specific question you pose please make this clear by writing the question in **bold type**. Where you quote a statement by someone else please clearly indicate the source of your quotation so that interested listeners can easily check it.

The question might address whether some of the author's premises are sound or whether her conclusion follows from her premises. It might instead attempt to identify a specific unclarity in the author's remarks and suggest some ways in which it might be resolved; or it might ask what the implications of the author's position are for a specific practical issue.

The class will then discuss how the author might respond, and other issues raised by the question. To facilitate discussion and encourage clearly formulated questions, each question should be sent to me via email by 10.00 on Tuesday morning, and I will then pre-circulate the questions before the class.

Assessment

Completed essays should be submitted to me via andrew.williams@upf.edu by noon on December 14, 2015. All essays must include a Word Count, and be under 2,000 words; students should not count on excess words being read. Late essays and essays without a Word Count will receive a grade but no comments, and may be subject to further penalty of .5 for every 24 hours delay.

All essay titles must either come from a list of Sample Titles below or receive the written agreement of the Tutor by December 1, 2014. A one point penalty will be deducted from the grade of any submitted essay failing to satisfy this condition; i.e. if penalized, an essay that would otherwise receive a grade of 7 will receive a grade of 6.

When devising a title please ensure that it addresses a subject clearly related to the course. When you write on that subject ensure that it is clear you are drawing on the course, and some of the module readings. *On no account, attempt to recycle material you have used in other courses, here or elsewhere, or write more than 2,000 words.* Also, because depth is far more important than breadth, don't feel that because you've read something you should refer to it in your essay.

Students may not miss over 20% of the sessions without a serious and documented justification. Class participation (attendance, seminar questions, and discussions) may raise the essay mark up by half a point.

Sample Essay Titles

Here are some possible titles.

1. "If Hobbes's description of individuals in the state of nature was sound then they would be unable to institute a state." If so, does this undermine Hobbes's defence of political authority? If not, why not?
2. How, if at all, does game theory help us to understand and evaluate Hobbes's political philosophy?
3. Explain and assess Locke's justification of private property.
4. Explain and assess Locke's argument for the conclusion that consent is necessary for political authority.
5. What was Rousseau's biggest mistake?
6. Does Rousseau succeed in showing that democratic authority preserves freedom?
7. What are the strengths and weaknesses of Marx's critique of capitalism?
8. Is capitalist exploitation always unjust? If so, what follows? If not, why not?
9. Should all restrictions on liberty be governed by Mill's "one very simple principle"?
10. On what grounds is the right to freedom of expression best defended?
11. Does Mill succeed in reconciling liberalism and utilitarianism?

Grading Guidelines

When drafting your essays, here are four questions to ask yourself.

- Is my writing clear and concise and my argument well-structured?
- Does my essay demonstrate an understanding of the issues and some of the relevant literature raised by the question under consideration?
- Does my essay argue a plausible case in response to that question?
- Does my essay anticipate and attempt to rebut some of the most likely responses to that case?

These are also the types of question that will be considered when your essays are graded. It is therefore well worth considering those questions as you write, as well as the following more specific suggestions.

(1) *Argue a case in response to the essay title.* An essay is better to the extent that it defends a particular conclusion in some depth, explicitly setting out a supporting argument. You should avoid writing that merely surveys various positions without attempting to establish a particular conclusion. In addition, you should ensure that the essay answers the specific question under consideration. In some cases, the question will include certain technical terms, and these will need to be defined or discussed.

In supporting your conclusion you may refer to the work of particular theorists. In doing so, it is desirable to expound and assess their views. How convincing are the arguments for or against them? Are there any relevant distinctions that the authors ignore? Are their inferences valid and their premises sound? Essays are often more engaging if you take a stand on the issue yourself and argue for it as convincingly as possible. If this is not possible, because you are undecided on the issue, you should argue why neither side of the case is wholly convincing.

(2) *Ensure that your essay is clearly structured.* It might, for example, include: an opening section, in which the key terms are defined and, perhaps, the main features of the essay are sign-posted; a middle section, in which the arguments are developed, making the necessary distinctions, responding to possible objections, and criticizing other positions; and, if space permits, a set of conclusions which summarize the key features of the argument and re-address the original question.

(3) *Express your ideas as clearly and concisely as possible.* Always define any technical terminology you find in the question or yourself employ. Essay-writing requires thought about how best to communicate your ideas. It might be that the way in which you arrive at a view is not the best way to present it. It can be very worthwhile to ask someone to read a first draft of your essay in order to remedy obscurities or gaps in the argument, and take into account their comments.

Writing Guidelines

For further guidance about philosophical writing, I strongly recommend that you read James Pryor's excellent 'Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper':

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>

For more general guidance on writing effectively in English, I also strongly recommend Joseph Williams's excellent book, *Toward Clarity and Grace*, available here:

www.unalmed.edu.co/~poboyca/documentos/Doc.%20Seminario%20I/style.pdf

Not merely because this a *political* philosophy course taught in *Barcelona*, I recommend reflection on the six rules mentioned in the George Orwell's classic essay on style, 'Politics and the English Language', which is available here:

www.orwell.ru/library/essays/politics/english/e_polit/

It might also be instructive and entertaining to consult Jimmy Lenman's advice on essay-writing, which is available at:

https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.316711!/file/Crap-Essay.doc

Please do not hesitate to contact me with further questions or requests for supplementary reading.