PLSC 118B, THE MORAL FOUNDATIONS OF POLITICS

Yale University, Spring 2016
Ian Shapiro

Lectures Tuesday and Thursday 11:35 - 12:25 + 1 htab
Whitney Humanities Center Auditorium

Office hours: Wednesdays, 9:30 to 11:30 am
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When do governments deserve our allegiance, and when should they be denied it? This course explores the main answers that have been given to this question in the modern West. We start with a survey of the major political theories of the Enlightenment: Utilitarianism, Marxism, and the social contract tradition. In each case we begin with a look at classical formulations, locating them in historical context, but then shift to the contemporary debates as they relate to politics today.

Next we turn to the rejection of Enlightenment political thinking, again exploring both classical and contemporary formulations. The last part of the course deals with the nature of, and justifications for, democratic politics, and their relations to Enlightenment and Anti-Enlightenment political thinking.

In addition to exploring theoretical differences among the various authors discussed, considerable attention is devoted to the practical implications of their competing arguments. To this end, we discuss a variety of concrete problems, including debates about economic inequality, affirmative action and the distribution of health care, the limits of state power in the regulation of speech and religion, and difficulties raised by the emerging threat of global environmental decay. There are no prerequisites.

REQUIREMENTS

• Students are expected to attend all lectures and sections.

• Regular Students: Midterm 30%, Final 50%, section participation 20%.

• Writing-intensive students: Papers 50%, Final, 30%, section participation 20%.
  Paper length ≈ 2,500-3000 words. Due dates:
  Paper 1  Rough draft: noon Fri Feb 19  Final draft: noon Fri March 4
  Paper 2  Rough draft: noon Fri Apr 8  Final draft: 11:00 AM Tue Apr 26

READINGS

We discuss some readings that are in the public domain and some that are not. The public domain readings are marked with P and are available at mofopo.com. The non-public domain readings, marked with R, can be purchased from the reader available at students.universityreaders.com/store (select “Connecticut” and “Yale University” when creating an account). Alternatively, they can be found in original sources by reference to the Bibliographical Appendix at the end of this syllabus.
COURSE SYLLABUS AND SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

R = Reader; P = Public Domain

INTRODUCTION

Tuesday, January 19
Informational and housekeeping session

Thursday, January 21
Introductory lecture
  • Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Chs. 2, 3 and 8 [R, 2-37]

I. ENLIGHTENMENT POLITICAL THEORY

Tuesday, January 26 (All sections start this week)
Natural law roots of the enlightenment
  • John Locke, *First Treatise of Government*, Chs. 1-2, 9 (up to §93, inclusive) P
  • John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Ch. 1 P
  • Thomas Hobbes, *Six Lessons to the Professors of Mathematics* P

II. UTILITARIANISM: CLASSICAL AND NEOCLASSICAL

Thursday, January 28
Origins of classical utilitarianism

Tuesday, February 2
Classical utilitarianism and distributive justice

Thursday, February 4
From classical to neoclassical utilitarianism
  • (No required reading)

Tuesday, February 9
The neoclassical synthesis of rights and utility

Thursday, February 11
Limits of the neoclassical synthesis
  • Mill, *On Liberty*, Ch. 5 P
III. MARXISM, ITS FAILURES AND ITS LEGACY

Tuesday, February 16
The Marxian challenge
  • Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* P

Thursday, February 18
Marx’s theory of capitalism
  • Marx, *Capital* (Vol. I), Prefaces, Chs. I, IV, VI, XII, XVI (excerpts) P

Tuesday, February 23
Marxian exploitation and social justice
  • Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program* P

Thursday, February 25
The Marxian failure and legacy
  • Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value*, Ch. XVII (Sections 8-11, 14) P
  • Roemer, “Should Marxists be interested in exploitation?” [R, 40-69]

IV. THE SOCIAL CONTRACT TRADITION

Tuesday, March 1
Secularizing natural law
  • Locke, *First Treatise of Government*, Chs. 3-4 P
  • Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, 2nd Section (focus on p. 19-33) P

Thursday, March 3
The state of nature
  • Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Introduction, Chs. 13-17, 21 P
  • Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chs. 2-5 P

Tuesday, March 8
The Rawlsian social contract/Distribute justice and the welfare state

Thursday, March 10  MIDTERM EXAMINATION IN CLASS

Tuesday, March 29
The “political-not-metaphysical” legacy
  • Shapiro, “Resources, Capacities, and Ownership.” *Political Theory* 19.1 (February 1991), 47-72 [R, 142-165]

Thursday, March 31
The Nozickian minimal state

**Tuesday, April 5**
Compensation versus redistribution
• Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, pp. 149-164, 174-182 [R, 184-227]

**V. ANTI-ENLIGHTENMENT POLITICS**

**Thursday, April 7**
The Burkean outlook
• Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (excerpt 1 and 2) P
• Patrick Devlin, “Morals and the Criminal Law” [R, 228-245]

**Tuesday, April 12**
Contemporary communitarianism
• Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Chs. 1-3 [R, 246-277]

**Thursday, April 14**
Contemporary communitarianism
• MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Ch. 5 [R, 248-289]

**VI. DEMOCRACY**

**Tuesday, April 19**
Republicanism vs. democracy
• Hamilton, Jay, and Madison, *The Federalist Papers*, Papers No. 1, 9, 10 14, 39, 48, 51, 62, 70, 78 P

**Thursday, April 21**
In Search of the General Will
• Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and the First and Second Discourses*, Book I Ch. 6-7, Book II Ch. 3 P
• Jürgen Habermas, “Three Normative Models of Democracy” [R, 300-311]

**Tuesday, April 26**
Majority rule
• Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chs. 17-19 P
• Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, Ch. XXI and XXII [R,328-351]
• Buchanan and Tullock, *The Calculus of Consent*, excerpt from Ch.6 [R,352-361]
• Douglas Rae, “The Limits of Consensual Decision” [R, 384-429]
Thursday, April 28
Democracy, Science, and Rights
  • Shapiro, “Elements of Democratic Justice.” Political Theory. [R, 430-467]

(Reading Period: Friday, April 29 — Thursday, May 5)

Review session will be scheduled during Reading Week.
Bibliographical Appendix for Students who do not want to buy the Reader

Below are additional details on the readings not in the public domain. You will need to purchase, rent, or borrow copies of the relevant books. Articles in scholarly journals can be found in print collections or accessed via library resources as indicated.

Thursday, January 21

Tuesday, February 2

Thursday, February 25

Tuesday, March 8
  - pp. 3-19: Chapter 1 (Sections 1 – 4)
  - pp. 52-56: (Section 11. “Two Principles of Justice”)
  - pp. 102-109: Chapter 3 (Sections 20 & 21)
  - pp. 118-123: Section 24
  - pp. 153-160: Section 29
  - pp. 221-227: Section 40

Tuesday, March 29
- Shapiro, “Resources, Capacities, and Ownership.” *Political Theory* 19.1, February 1991

Thursday, March 31 and Tuesday, April 5

Thursday, April 7

Thursday, April 21

Tuesday, April 26