PLSC 118A, THE MORAL FOUNDATIONS OF POLITICS

Yale University, Fall 2013
Ian Shapiro

Lectures Tuesday and Thursday 10:30-11:20 am
Whitney Humanities Center Auditorium

Office hours: Wednesdays, 9:30 to 11:30 am
Or by appointment with Barbara.papacoda@yale.edu
110 Luce Hall, 34 Hillhouse

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 of 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

• Regular Students: Midterm in class October 22 (30%); Final (50%); section participation (20%).

• Writing-intensive students: Papers (50%); in-class final (30%); section participation (20%).
  Paper length ≈ 2,500-3000 words. Due dates:
  Paper 1 Rough draft: Oct 10 Final draft: Oct 31
  Paper 2 Rough draft: Nov 12 Final draft: Dec 5

KEY

• YB = On sale at the Yale Bookstore on Broadway Street
• R = In reader, on sale at Tyco on Elm Street
• B = On reserve at Bass Library
• If a reading is hyperlinked, it is available on eReserves; click and log in using your Net ID. (Some links require you to be on the Yale network; if off campus, connect using VPN).
COURSE SYLLABUS AND SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Thursday, August 29
Informational and housekeeping session

Tuesday, September 3
Introductory lecture

Required:

Suggested:
- Arendt, *Eichmann*, the rest

I. ENLIGHTENMENT POLITICAL THEORY

Thursday, September 5 (All sections start this week)
Natural law roots of the enlightenment

Required:
- Descartes, “Discourse on the Method” Parts 2 and 4 and “Principles of Philosophy” Part I, Items 1-8 in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes* Vol.1 (R, B)

Suggested:
- Locke, *First Treatise of Government*, I-III, IX-XI (YB, B)
- Ian Shapiro, *Moral Foundations of Politics*, Ch. 1 (YB, B)

II. UTILITARIANISM: CLASSICAL AND NEOCLASSICAL

Tuesday, September 10
Origins of classical utilitarianism

Required:

Suggested:
- Bentham, *Introduction* …, Chs. 5, 6

Thursday, September 12
Classical utilitarianism and distributive justice

Required:

Suggested:
- Elie Halévy, *The Growth of Philosopich Radicalism*, Part I Chs.1 & 3 and Part II Chs. 1-3 (B)
- Shapiro, *Moral Foundations of Politics*, Ch. 2 (YB, B)
Tuesday, September 17
From classical to neoclassical utilitarianism

Required:

Suggested:
• Shapiro, *Moral Foundations of Politics*, Ch. 3 (YB, B)

Thursday, September 19
The neoclassical synthesis of rights and utility

Required:
• Mill, *On Liberty*, Chs. 3-4 (YB, B)

Suggested:
• Mill, *Utilitarianism*, Chs. 1-3 (B)

Tuesday, September 24
Limits of the neoclassical synthesis

Required:
• Mill, *On Liberty*, Ch. 5 (YB, B)

Suggested:
• Mill, *Utilitarianism*, Chs 4-5 (B)

III. MARXISM, ITS FAILURES AND ITS LEGACY

Note: Page numbers for Marx readings are from *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Tucker (YB, B).

Thursday, September 26
The Marxian challenge

Required:

Suggested:
• Marx, “Theses on Feuerbach,” pp. 143-5.

Tuesday, October 1
Marx’s theory of capitalism and exploitation

Required:
• Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program*, pp. 525-41

Suggested:

Thursday, October 3
The Marxian failure and legacy

Required:
• Marx, “Crisis Theory” (Ch XVII of *Theories of Surplus Value*), pp. 443-65
• J. Roemer, “Should Marxists be interested in exploitation?” *Analytical Marxism* (R)
Suggested:
- Shapiro, *Moral Foundations of Politics*, Ch. 4 (YB, B)

### IV. The Social Contract Tradition

**Tuesday, October 8**
Secularizing natural law

*Required:*
- Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, 2nd Section (esp. 37-49) (R, O)

*Suggested:*

**Thursday, October 10**
The Rawlsian social contract

*Required:*
- John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Ch. 1 §4; Ch. 2 §11-12 and §14-15 (YB, B)

*Suggested:*
- Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Ch. 1 §1-3; Ch.2 §13 and §16-17

**Tuesday, October 15**
Distributive justice and the welfare state

*Required:*
- Rawls, *Theory..., Ch. 3 §20-22, §24-26, §29-30; Ch. 4 §40

*Suggested:*
- Rawls, *Theory..., Ch. 3 §23 and §27; Ch.5 §41-43, Ch. 9 §79
- Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, pp. 183-231 (YB, B)
- Shapiro, *Moral Foundations of Politics*, Ch.5 (YB, B)

**Thursday, October 17**
The “political-not-metaphysical” legacy

*Required:*
- Shapiro, “Justice and Workmanship in a Democracy” in *Democracy’s Place* (R, B)

**Tuesday, October 22: MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS**

(October Recess: Tuesday, October 22 – Sunday, October 27)

**Tuesday, October 29**
The Nozickian minimal state

*Required:*
- Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, Chs. 1-3 (YB, B)
Thursday, October 31
Rights-as-side constraints and the minimal state

Required:
• Nozick, Anarchy... Ch. 4

Suggested:
• Nozick, Anarchy... Chs. 5, 8-10

Tuesday, November 5
Compensation versus redistribution

Required:
• Nozick, Anarchy..., Chs. 6 & 7, pp. 149-64 & 167-82

V. ANTI-ENLIGHTENMENT POLITICS

Thursday, November 7 [Visiting Professor, David Bromwich]
The Burkean outlook

Required:
• Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France (Yale University Press), pp. 3-45, 77-83 (YB, B)
• Patrick Devlin, Morals and the Criminal Law (R)

Suggested:
• David Bromwich, “Introduction to Burke,” in On Empire, Liberty, and Reform (R, B).
• Burke, Reflections (YB, B), the rest.

Tuesday, November 12
Contemporary communitarianism

Required:
• Alasdair MacIntyre, After Virtue, Chs. 1-3, 5 (YB, B)

Suggested:
• MacIntyre, After Virtue, Chs. 4 & 6-8

Thursday, November 14
Contemporary communitarianism

Required:
• MacIntyre, After Virtue, Chs. 9, 14

Suggested:
• MacIntyre, After Virtue, Chs. 10-12, 13, 15-19
• Shapiro, Moral Foundations of Politics, Ch. 6 (YB, B)

VI. DEMOCRACY

Tuesday, November 19
Republicanism vs. democracy

Required:

Suggested:
• Ibid. Papers No. 15, 16, 17, 23, 47, 49, 55, 58, 63, 84, 85.

Thursday, November 21
In Search of the General Will

Required:
• Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract, Book I Ch. 6-7, Book II Ch. 3 (R)
• Jürgen Habermas, “Three Normative Models of Democracy” (R)
• James Fishkin, “Deliberative Polling: Toward a Better-Informed Democracy” (R)

Suggested:
• Shapiro, The State of Democratic Theory, Ch.1 (B)
• James Fishkin, The Voice of the People or his online lecture on deliberative democracy.
• William H. Riker, Ch. 5, “The Meaning of Social Choice” in Liberalism against Populism (R), the rest.

(November Recess: Saturday, November 23 – Sunday, December 1)

Tuesday, December 3
Majority rule

Required:
• Locke, Second Treatise of Government, Chs. X, XVII-XIX (YB, B)
• Joseph Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy, Ch. XXI and XXII (R)
• Buchanan and Tullock, The Calculus of Consent, excerpt from Ch.6 (R)

Suggested:
• Shapiro, “John Locke’s Democratic Theory,” in Locke’s Two Treatises of Government (YB, B)
• Shapiro, The State of Democratic Theory, Ch. 2-3 (B) and Ch. 5 (R, B)

Thursday, December 5
Final lecture: Democracy, Science, and Rights

Required:
• Shapiro, Democracy’s Place, Ch.8 (R, B)

Suggested:
• Shapiro, Moral Foundations of Politics, Ch. 7-8 (YB, B)

(Reading Period: Friday, December 6 – Wednesday, December 11)

Review session will be scheduled during reading week.