

Class: L32 Pol Sci 392

History of Political Thought II: Legitimacy, Equality and the Social Contract

Date and Time: M-W 1:00 pm-2:30 pm, Seigle Hall 104

Instructor: Dr. Ethan Alexander-Davey

Email: ealexand@artsci.wustl.edu

Office hours: Monday 2:30-4:00

Course Description:

L32 Pol Sci 392. History of Political Thought II: Legitimacy, Equality and the Social Contract. Government is often justified as legitimate on the grounds that it is based on the consent of the governed. In this course, we examine the origins of this view, focusing our attention on canonical works in the social contract tradition, especially those by Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), John Locke (1632–1704), and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), as well as those of their antecedents and contemporaries. In HP II, we trace the origins of the social contract and spell out its implications. The class focuses on particular conceptions of social and political equality and liberty developed by a variety of European political thinkers in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Additionally, it considers the practical significance of their claims, such as their implications for the design of constitutions and other institutions. This course is designed to be the second in a three-semester sequence on the history of political thought, and students are encouraged but not required to take the courses in chronological sequence. Prerequisite: One previous course in political theory or political philosophy.

Required texts:

Jean Bodin: *On Sovereignty* (Seven Treasures) ISBN: 1438288700

Robert Molesworth: *An Account of Denmark with Francogallia* (Liberty Fund)
ISBN: 0865978042

Thomas Hobbes: *Leviathan* (Penguin Classics) ISBN: 0140431950

Algernon Sidney: *Discourses Concerning Government* (Liberty Fund) ISBN: 0865971420

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (Cambridge) ISBN: 0521357306

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings* (Cambridge)
ISBN: 0521424461

Students are strongly encouraged to purchase these editions, and the use the ISBN numbers if ordering online. This is a text-based course and full participation requires that we navigate and explore the text together—that we be on the same page, so to speak.

Course Schedule:

August 28: Introduction

September 2: no class (Labor Day)

September 4: Jean Bodin, *On Sovereignty*, pp. 43-87, 91-114.

September 9: Bodin, *On Sovereignty*, pp. 135-145, 176-183, 185-196, 230-239.

September 11: Francois Hotman, *Francogallia* in Molesworth, pp. 209-214, 220-255, 260-269.

September 16: Hotman, *Francogallia* in Molesworth, pp. 270-324

September 18: Hugo Grotius, *The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic* (PDF)
September 23: King James I, *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*; Robert Filmer, *The Anarchy of a Limited or Mixed Monarchy* (PDF)
September 25: Philip Hunton, *A Treatise of Monarchy* (PDF)
September 30: *The Putney Debates* (PDF)
October 2: Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pp. 81-83, 110-118, 160-168, 183-222
October 7: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 223-274, 294-302
October 9: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 311-318, 363-394, 401, 405-6, 609-613, 717-729
October 14: **Midterm**
October 16: Algernon Sidney, *Discourses Concerning Government*, pp. 5-7, 17-19, 20-23, 30-31, 36-38, 46-53, 91-2, 97-107, 191-202, 217-223, 246-251
October 21: Sidney, *Discourses*, 251-258, 259-262, 287-303, 370-380, 398-401, 402-16
October 23: Sidney, *Discourses*, 439-446, 456-492, 510-513, 524-534, 547-552, 558-563, 569-578
October 28: John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, pp. 267-318
October 30: Locke, *Two Treatises*, 318-374
November 4: Locke, *Two Treatises*, 374-428 (**first paper due**)
November 6: Locke, *Letter on Toleration* (PDF)
November 11: David Hume, *Essays* (PDF)
November 13: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *2nd Discourse: On the origin of inequality* (PDF)
November 18: Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, pp. 41-81
November 20: Rousseau, *Social Contract*, pp. 82-120
November 25: Rousseau, *Social Contract*, pp. 121-152; *Discourse on Political Economy*, pp. 15-22
November 27: no class (Thanksgiving break)
December 2: Rousseau, *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, pp. 177-194, 197-232
December 4: Course summary (**final paper due**)

December 18: **Final Exam**, 1-3 pm.

Grading:

Class participation: 15%

Paper 1: 20/25% (the one that gets the higher score is 25%, the lower, 20% of your final grade)

Paper 2: 20/25%

Midterm: 15%

Final: 25%

Class policies:

Attendance: Class attendance is mandatory; if you miss more than 2 classes without an official excuse, such as from a doctor, your participation grade will be lowered.

Participation: Active participation is required. I will lecture for 45 minutes to an hour each class, but the rest of our time will be reserved for discussion. To ensure active participation, I am going

to require that you prepare questions and topics for discussion prior to every class. I have created a Facebook page, where you can submit your comments and questions. Coming up with questions is very easy to do. While doing your reading, mark passages that you find difficult or interesting for whatever reason. While listening to my prepared remarks, make marks in the margins of your notes next to concepts that you would like clarified, or issues you think deserve further examination. Post them to the facebook page no later than 9pm on the night before class.

Your class participation grade will take into account not only on the quantity, but also the quality of your written and spoken comments. There are no hard and fast rules about the kinds of questions or comments you should submit. However, let me say that I'd prefer most of your questions and comments to be text based. That is, you refer to something in the text, including the page number, and then give your related question or comment. You can submit simple clarification questions e.g. "Hobbes says x on page y. I don't understand. What is he saying here?" Or pose questions for discussion: "Rousseau presents an interesting idea on p. x. What are the implications of this idea for Rousseau's larger philosophical project, current debates about education policy, etc? Comparative questions are also good: e.g. How are Hobbes and Rousseau's ideas on x similar or different?

Clarification questions or comments about lecture are also welcome, of course. But again, I would prefer you to be as specific as possible. Questions like "What was your main point on Tuesday?" or "How do you feel about Locke's theory in general?" are too vague, and you will not get credit for them.

Exams: The midterm and final will both consist of two parts. Part I: You will identify and explain the significance of key terms from the texts and lectures. Part II: You will write an in-class essay on a prompt you will have seen in advance. Before the exam, I will distribute a list of four or five essay questions, two of which will appear on the exam. You will write your essay on one of those two topics.

Papers: Hand in all papers to me in hard copy as well as via email. If I do not receive a paper with you on the due date in both forms, your paper will be late until I do receive it in both forms. Each day that the paper is late, your final grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter grade (so if you would have gotten a B on the paper, one day late you would receive a B-). Please see me in advance if you have extenuating circumstances.

Your papers should be typed, double spaced, in 12 pt. Times New Roman font with 1 inch margins. Citations of the text should be in a scholarly form (such as Chicago or MLA). Avoid colloquial phrases. If you are unsure of how to proceed, contact me or the writing center. I will distribute suggested paper topics a couple weeks before the due date. You also have the option of writing on topics of your own choice, but in that case you should seek my consent to your topic during my office hours before proceeding. I will not read drafts of your paper; however, you may bring a one-page outline of your paper to my office hours.

Plagiarism: Academic honesty is critical. If you use sources apart from the assigned texts in your paper, you must cite those sources in footnotes or in-text citations with a bibliography at the end. Direct quotations must be placed in quotation marks and cited. Plagiarism will not be

tolerated—if I detect plagiarism, I will recommend that you receive a zero for the class. In addition, do not use wikipedia or other similar sources in your papers.

Grading: If you want to discuss the grade you've received on a particular assignment, 1) I require a written explanation of your reasons for asking for your grade to be reconsidered; 2) You must realize that your grade can go up or down after I reassess your work.

Rubric for paper grades:

A—An A paper will offer a strong, clear, nuanced, and persuasive argument, supported by the text. The organization will be clear and tight—each paragraph will follow in logical progression, each one tied back to the thesis. Quotations will be used to support the arguments; they will be integrated into the text of the paper and explained. The writing will be of high quality, with few grammatical errors.

B—A B paper will offer a strong argument, supported by the text. There will be small problems with either the organization, the integration of quotations, the grammar or the thesis and thesis development.

C—A C paper offers an argument that may miss some nuances, but is generally an accurate reflection of the text. There may be some serious problems with the organization, quotation integration, and/or grammar.

D—A D paper has serious problems with organization, writing, the paper's argument and/or grammar.