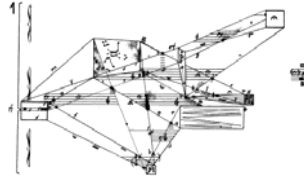


## Contemporary Political Theory Govt. 339

Spring, 2007

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*Per tre sul piano, S. Bussotti*

This course studies a number of important theories of the twentieth century. It is the third course in the political theory sequence, Govt. 337, 338 and 339. We will discuss several major issues, including the role of reason in grounding the basic values and principles of our moral and political lives, the moral and conceptual foundations of democracy, and critiques of liberalism from communitarian, critical theory, poststructuralist, postmodern, feminist and realist perspectives.

### Course Expectations and Requirements:

**It is essential that the readings be done before class in order to make an effective discussion possible.** It is the responsibility of all participants to make class discussion fruitful, and that will be possible only if everyone has completed the readings and has thought about the issues they raise. I expect significant class participation. The assignments are rather substantial, so it is crucial that you budget your reading time accordingly.

**Papers:** In addition to doing the assigned readings on time and participating in class discussions, students will be expected to write three 6-8 page papers and take a final, comprehensive exam. You must submit all three papers and take the final to receive credit for the course.

I will provide paper topics in advance. The papers will be due on February 23; April 6; and May 4. Note that the papers are **due on Fridays, not class days**. They should be placed in the Govt 339 lock-box outside of the Government Department (1st floor, PAC) no later than noon. Late papers will be marked down one letter grade per day. There are absolutely no exceptions to this rule.

**Final Exam:** The exam will be given on the scheduled exam date.

Your final grade will be calculated in the following way:

Each paper: 25%  
Final exam: 15%  
Participation: 10%

**Attendance policy:** Students are required to attend every class. Students who miss more than two classes will have their final grade reduced by one letter grade per class missed. There are absolutely no exceptions to this rule, either.

**Incompletes:** No incompletes will be given for this class. All work must be submitted by the listed deadlines, no exceptions.

Some points regarding your papers:

1. Establish a focus. A good paper has a thesis, a central idea or claim that it is making, and it presents an argument supporting that thesis. You should be able to make an outline of your paper, which will at the same time be the skeleton of the argument you are making. It is often helpful to write out the outline – in sentence form, not simply as a list of topics – before writing the paper or, at least, the final draft. A good way to think about your paper is to ask yourself, “What do I want my readers to believe after they have read my paper? What reasons can I offer them to think that?” If you can answer these questions succinctly, you’re off to an excellent start.
2. Title. The title should express the main idea or focus of your paper, preparing your reader to see immediately what you’re going to say, and why it’s interesting.
3. Structure and organization. The paper should have a clear structure, with an introduction presenting the central question or problem you are addressing, a body that sets out a logical development of the reasons and evidence you are offering, and a conclusion that ties the paper together. In the longer paper it is often useful to provide section headings. The introduction should generally state your main thesis, and provide an overview of the structure of the argument, to make it easier for your reader to follow it.

Some specific points:

1. Please NUMBER your pages and staple the paper.
2. All quotations, paraphrases, and direct use of another's ideas (even if not quoted) MUST BE cited. Using parenthetical references [author’s last name, year, page number; eg. (Adorno 1960: 45)] with a bibliography is fine; you do not have to use footnotes or endnotes. Footnotes can be used to present additional ideas, qualifications, or other points that would detract from the flow of the paper.
3. Avoid non-scholarly sources, particularly from the web (for example, DO NOT USE Wikipedia or answers.com). These are unreliable, incomplete and just plain lame. The only web sources you should use are the journal articles you download through the library page.
4. Avoid common but egregious errors such as misuse of too, to or two; there, they're, or their; its or it's; affect or effect; then or than.
5. Stamp out sexism. If you mean men and women or he and she, say so. Don't assume that "man" or "men" refer to human beings generally. There are lots of ways of writing that avoid the awkwardness of, for example, saying he or she over and over again. For help, you might consult Williams (see #6) or a more specialized guide such as *The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing* by Miller and Smith.
6. There are a number of excellent guides for good writing. Strunk and White *The Elements*

*of Style* is a classic, especially for grammar and word usage; it also offers a useful set of “principles of composition.” I especially recommend Joseph Williams, *Style: Toward Grace and Clarity*. His work is particularly helpful in offering examples of how awkward passages can be rewritten, using rules or principles that are fairly concrete and address specific issues such as clarity, cohesion, emphasis, etc. (these are all chapter headings in his book).

Anthony Weston, *A Rulebook for Arguments*, offers a helpful discussion of how to develop (and express) an argument in a tight, logical way.

7. Reread your paper before turning it in.

**Books:** The following books have been ordered at the bookstore and are on reserve. In some cases, we will not be reading an entire book, so you may wish to use the reserve room rather than purchase every book.

1. Nietzsche, Friedrich *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo* trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Vintage Books, 1989)
2. MacIntyre, Alasdair *After Virtue* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Notre Dame Press, 1984)
3. Schmitt, Carl *Concept of Political* (University of Chicago, 1996)
4. Oakeshott, Michael *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Liberty Fund, 1991)
5. Marcuse, Herbert *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Beacon Press, 1991)
6. Arendt, *The Human Condition* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (University of Chicago, 1998)
7. Rawls, John *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* (Harvard University Press, 2001)
8. Foucault, Michel *The Foucault Reader* Paul Rabinow (ed.) (New York: Pantheon books, 1984)
9. Freud, Sigmund *Civilization and Its Discontents* James Strachey (trans.) (Norton Reissue Edition, 1989)
10. Connolly, William E. *The Ethos of Pluralization* (University of Minnesota, 1995)
11. Brown, Wendy *States of Injury* (Princeton University Press, 1995)
12. Zolo, Danilo *Democracy and Complexity* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992)

## **Schedule:**

### **Week 1**

January 25

Introduction

## Week 2

### The Critique of Enlightenment

#### January 30

-Nietzsche, Friedrich *Genealogy of Morals*  
Preface, First and Second Essays

#### February 1

-Nietzsche, Friedrich *Genealogy of Morals*  
Third Essay

#### *Suggested Readings:*

- Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil*
- Strong, Tracy *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration*
- Derrida, Jacques *Spurs*

## Week 3

#### February 6

-MacIntyre, Alasdair *After Virtue* 1-6, 9

#### *Suggested Readings:*

- MacIntyre, Alasdair *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*
- Horton, John, and Susan Mendus (eds.), *After MacIntyre: Critical Perspectives on the Work of Alasdair MacIntyre*
- Murphy, Mark C. (ed.), *Alasdair MacIntyre*

#### February 8

-Schmitt, Carl *The Concept of the Political*  
pp. 19-79

#### *Suggested Readings:*

- Balakrishnan, Gopal *The Enemy: An Intellectual Portrait of Carl Schmitt*, (esp. 66-115)
- Dyzenhaus, David (ed.), *Law as Politics: Carl Schmitt's Critique of Liberalism*
- McCormick, John *Carl Schmitt's Critique of Liberalism*, (esp. 157-205)
- Mouffe, Chantal *The Democratic Paradox* (esp. 36-59)

## Week 4

### Going Deeper: Conservatism

#### February 13

-Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition):  
"Rationalism in Politics" pp.5-42;

“Political Education” pp.43-69;  
“Rational Conduct” pp.99-131;  
“The Tower of Babel” pp.465-487

*Suggested Readings:*

-Franco, Paul *The Political Philosophy of Michael Oakeshott*

February 15

-Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition):

“Political Discourse” pp. 70-95;

“The Study of Politics in a University” pp.184-218;

“On Being Conservative” pp.407-437;

“The Voice of Poetry in the Conversation of Mankind” pp.488-541

**Week 5**

Psychoanalytic Theory

February 20

-Freud, Sigmund *Civilization and its Discontents*

February 22

-Freud.

-Butler, Judith “Circuits of Bad Conscience” in *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*

*Suggested Readings:*

-Lacan, Jacques “The Mirror Stage,” in *Ecrits*

-Stern, David “The Return of the Subject?: Power, Reflexivity and Agency”  
*Philosophy Social Criticism* vol. 26 (2000)

**FIRST PAPER DUE: FRIDAY FEBRUARY 23: NOON, in LOCK BOX**

**Week 6**

Critical Theory

February 27 and March 1

-Marcuse, Herbert *One Dimensional Man* pp. 1-83; 123-199

*Suggested Readings:*

-Horkheimer, Max and Theodor Adorno *Dialectic of Enlightenment*

**Week 7**

Political Action and the Threat of the Social

March 6

-Arendt, Hannah *The Human Condition*

Ch1 secs. 1-2 (3, optional); Ch II, secs 4-7 (9, optional); Ch III secs 11, 17

## March 8

-Arendt, Hannah *The Human Condition*

Ch IV secs. 20-21; CH V secs 24-8, 33 (34, optional); (Ch VI, sec 45, optional)

### *Suggested Readings:*

-Villa, Dana "Beyond Good and Evil: Arendt, Nietzsche, and the Aestheticization of Political Action," *Political Theory*, vol. 20, no. 2

-Benhabib, Seyla "Models of Public Space: Hannah Arendt, The Liberal Tradition, and Jürgen Habermas," in Craig Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere*

*Spring Break. Enjoy it.*

## **Week 8**

### Liberty, Justice, Pluralism: The Liberal View

## March 27 and 29

-Scanlon, T. M. "Contractualism and Utilitarianism" in A. Sen and B Williams, eds. *Utilitarianism and Beyond*

-Rawls, John *Justice As Fairness, A Restatement*  
Parts I-IV

### *Suggested Readings:*

-Larmore, Charles *The Morals of Modernity*, chs. 1,2,6,7.

-Rawls, John *The Law of Peoples*

-Connolly, William *Why I am not a Secularist* (esp. 1-46)

-Wolterstorff, Nicholas "The Role of Religion in Decision and Discussion of Political Issues," in *Religion in the Public Sphere: The Place of Religious Convictions in Political Debate*

-Habermas, Jürgen *The Inclusion of the Other*, (esp. 49-104).

-Rawls, John "Reply to Habermas," *The Journal of Philosophy* vol. 92, no. 3

-McCarthy, Thomas "Kantian Constructivism and Reconstructivism: Rawls and Habermas in Dialogue," *Ethics* vol. 105, no. 1

-Moon, J. Donald *Constructing Community*

## **Week 9**

### The Communitarian Response

## April 3 and 5

-MacIntyre, Alasdair *After Virtue* chs. 14-17

-Sandel, The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self, *Political Theory* vl. 12 (Feb 1984): 81-96

-Taylor, Charles *Philosophy and the Human Sciences*, pp. 211-29 and 248-88

-A. Baier "The Need For More Than Justice" in M. Hanen and Kai Nielson, (eds.) *Science, Morality and Feminist Theory*, pp. 41-56.

*Suggested Readings:*

-Sandel, Michael *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.

-Sandel, Michael (ed.) *Liberalism and Its Critics*

-Kymlicka, Will *Multicultural Citizenship*

-Okin, Susan Moller, *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?*

-Taylor, Charles, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*

**SECOND PAPER DUE: FRIDAY APRIL 6: NOON, in LOCK BOX**

**Week 10**

Radical Responses

A. Post-structuralism

April 10 and 12

-Foucault, Michel *The Foucault Reader*

"Introduction" pp. 3-29;

"Truth and Power" pp. 51-75;

"Nietzsche" pp. 76-100;

"Disciplines" pp. 170-238;

"Bio-power" and "Sex" pp. 257-329;

"Practices..." pp.333-390

*Suggested Readings:*

-Kelly, Michael (ed.) *Critique and Power: Recasting the Foucault/Habermas Debate* (esp. essays by Bernstein, McCarthy, Deleuze, Fraser, and Sawicki)

-Deluze, Gilles and Felix Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*

**Week 11**

B. Post-modernism and Critical Liberalism

April 17 and 19

-Connolly, William *The Ethos of Pluralization*

*Suggested Readings:*

-Connolly, William *Why I Am Not a Secularist*, (esp. 47-72)

-White, Stephen *Sustaining Affirmation: The Strengths of Weak Ontology in Political Theory*, (esp. 106-50)

-Derrida, Jacques "Force of Law: The Mystical Foundation of Authority," *Cardozo Law Review* 11 (1990) (esp. Part I)

## **Week 12**

### **C. Feminism and Emancipation**

April 24 and 26

Brown, Wendy *States of Injury*

*Suggested Readings:*

-Brown, Wendy and Janet Halley (eds.), *Left Legalism/Left Critique*

-Butler, Judith *Gender Trouble*

-Benhabib, Seyla, Nancy Fraser, Drucilla Cornell, Judith Butler *Feminist Contentions: Rethinking Gender*

## **Week 13**

### **Realism**

May 1 and 3

Zolo, Danilo *Democracy and Complexity*

**THIRD PAPER DUE: FRIDAY MAY 4: NOON, in LOCK BOX**

## **Week 14**

May 8

Conclusion. No assignment.

**Final Exam will be given during scheduled exam date.**