



**UNSW**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

**Arts and  
Social Sciences**

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & LANGUAGES

ARTS2384

**Utopia, Violence & Free Speech:  
Introducing Political Theory**

SEMESTER 2, 2013

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## **COURSE STAFF**

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Consultation Times: Mondays 1-2 pm (for other times, e-mail to make an appointment)

## **COURSE DETAILS**

Historical introduction to political philosophy by means of close readings of texts by Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704) and Hannah Arendt (1906-75). Topics covered will include: the nature of political philosophy, the relation between moral and political values, the justification and limits of state authority, ideas of social contract, consent, power, rights, property, freedom, democracy, mechanisms of political change and conceptions of the public political sphere.

Units of credit: 6

## **LECTURE TIMES (WEEKS 1-9, 11-13)**

Mondays 10 am -12 noon: Rupert Myers Theatre

## **TUTORIAL TIMES (WEEKS 2-9, 11-13)**

Mondays 3-4 pm: Morven Brown G5 **OR**

Mondays 4-5 pm: Morven Brown G5

## **COURSE AIMS**

The aims of this course are:

- To instil a critical appreciation of central texts of Western political philosophy
- To build on students' existing knowledge of the history of philosophy
- To develop advanced skills in research and philosophical inquiry

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the completion of this course students will be able to:

- Identify and understand the theories and arguments of some of the major European political philosophers
- Apply critical and conceptual thought to existing and proposed political institutions
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches within political philosophy
- Display skills associated with scholarly inquiry in the discipline of political philosophy, such as information literacy, critical analysis, argument and written expression

## **LEARNING AND TEACHING RATIONALE**

The course is structured around weekly readings, lectures and tutorial discussions. Preparation by reading the set texts is crucial for successful participation in the course.

The challenge of understanding a text from the history of philosophy requires both sympathy and suspicion. It requires sympathy because in order to find our feet in a text we have to put aside our own philosophical preoccupations and orient ourselves with regard to the problem

that the text sets itself. If we are sympathetic, we will not let ourselves stop too soon, judging the text by what we are inclined to find implausible, fallacious or insignificant. Without such sympathy we are at risk of never being able to step back from our own prejudices and the prejudices of our age: sympathy on one front can thus motivate critique on another. Yet sympathy turns into credulousness or condescension toward the philosophical text if it is carried too far. The text, inasmuch as it is philosophical, wants us to be suspicious and to judge it by how well it addresses the problem it lays out.

The history of philosophy is, for philosophy, never something done and dusted, since new interpretations keep arising in response to perceived disproportions between later readers' sympathy and suspicion. In this context of open-ended engagement, the history of philosophy is not so much a store of solutions to which we can resort or a cautionary tale about blind alleys as it is a means of throwing our current conceptions off balance as we attempt to arrive at truth and understanding.

What the three political thinkers we will be studying in the course have in common is that they all wrote in English. From there their paths diverge, for whereas Hobbes offers a philosophical defence of absolutist government, Locke advocates setting limits to government in the name of private property and Arendt champions a participatory and pluralist political realm. From an engagement with their thought students can expect an initial orientation in the Anglophone tradition of political philosophy.

## TEACHING STRATEGIES

The course will run as a weekly two-hour lecture with tutorials addressing the material covered in the previous week's lecture.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Weeks	Topic	Date	Reading
Week 1	Introduction Hobbes	29/7	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , pp. 75-149
Week 2	Hobbes	5/8	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , pp. 150-222
Week 3	Hobbes	12/8	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , pp. 223-94
Week 4	Hobbes	19/8	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , pp. 294-363
Week 5	Hobbes	26/8	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , pp. 363-408, 717-29
Week 6	Locke	2/9	Locke, <i>The Second Treatise of Government</i> , pp. 1-56

Week 7	Locke	16/9	Locke, <i>The Second Treatise of Government</i> , pp. 57-112
Week 8	Locke	23/9	Locke, "A Letter Concerning Toleration", pp. 113-53
Week 9	Arendt	30/9	Arendt, <i>On Revolution</i> , pp. 1-48
Week 10	Public Holiday	7/10	
Week 11	Arendt	14/10	Arendt, <i>On Revolution</i> , pp. 49-131
Week 12	Arendt	21/10	Arendt, <i>On Revolution</i> , pp. 132-206
Week 13	Arendt	28/10	Arendt, <i>On Revolution</i> , pp. 207-73

## COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Student evaluative feedback on this course is welcomed and is gathered periodically, using among other means UNSW's Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

Student feedback is taken seriously, and continual improvements are made to the course based in part on such feedback. Significant changes to the course will be communicated to subsequent cohorts of students taking the course.

## REFERENCES

### Texts

There are three required texts for this course. All are available for purchase from the UNSW Bookshop.

- 1) Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (London: Penguin, 1985).
- 2) John Locke, *The Second Treatise of Government and A Letter Concerning Toleration* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2002).
- 3) Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (London: Penguin, 2006).

### Moodle

One of the first things to do in this course is to make sure you have access to ARTS2384 on Moodle.

Lecture notes will be posted on Moodle.

### **Suggested further reading on Hobbes:**

- Aubrey, John. "Thomas Hobbes" in *Brief Lives*. There are multiple editions of this celebrated early biography.
- Baumgold, Deborah. 2008. "The Difficulties of Hobbes Interpretation." *Political Theory* 36: 827-55.
- Cromartie, Alan. 2008. "The God of Thomas Hobbes." *The Historical Journal* 51: 857-79.
- Curran, Eleanor. 2002. "A Very Peculiar Royalist: Hobbes in the Context of his Political Contemporaries." *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 10: 167-208.
- Hamilton, James J. 2009. "Hobbes the Royalist, Hobbes the Republican." *History of Political Thought* 30: 411-54.
- Hardin, Russell. 1991. "Reading Hobbes in Other Words: Contractarian, Utilitarian, Game Theorist." *Political Theory* 19: 156-80.
- Hill, Christopher. 1997. "Thomas Hobbes and the Revolution in Political Thought." In *id.*, *Puritanism and Revolution: Studies in Interpretation of the English Revolution of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century*, 248-68. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Mintz, Samuel I. 1962. *The Hunting of Leviathan: Seventeenth-Century Reactions to the Materialism and Moral Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Skinner, Quentin. 2008. *Hobbes and Republican Liberty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sreedhar, Susanne. 2010. *Hobbes on Resistance: Defying the Leviathan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Strauss, Leo. 1952. *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: Its Basis and Its Genesis*. Translated by Elsa M. Sinclair. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Sussmann, Naomi. 2010. "How Many Commonwealths Can 'Leviathan' Swallow? Covenant, Sovereign and People in Hobbes's Political Theory." *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 18: 575-96.
- Taminiaux, Jacques. 1987. "The Hobbesian Legacy." *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 13: 1-15.
- Tuck, Richard. 1993. "The Civil Religion of Thomas Hobbes." In *Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain*, edited by Nicholas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner, 120-38. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Vaughan, Geoffrey M. 2001. "The Audience of Leviathan and the Audience of Hobbes's Political Philosophy." *History of Political Thought* 22: 448-71.

### **Suggested further reading on Locke:**

- Brown, Vivienne. 1999. "The 'Figure' of God and the Limits to Liberalism: A Rereading of Locke's 'Essay' and 'Two Treatises'." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 60: 83-100.
- Brubaker, Stanley C. 2012. "Coming into One's Own: John Locke's Theory of Property, God, and Politics." *The Review of Politics* 74: 207-32.
- Darmstedt, Benjamin G. 2003. "Limiting Locke: A Natural Law Justification for the Fair Use Doctrine." *Yale Law Journal* 112: 1179-221.
- Grant, Ruth W. 2012. "John Locke on Custom's Power and Reason's Authority." *The Review of Politics* 74: 607-29.

- Moots, Glenn and Greg Forster. 2010. "Salus populi suprema lex. John Locke versus Contemporary Democratic Theory." *Perspectives on Political Science* 39: 35-45.
- Myers, Peter C. 1995. "Between Divine and Human Sovereignty: The State of Nature and the Basis of Locke's Political Thought." *Polity* 27: 629-49.
- Pasquino, Pasquale. 1998. "Locke on King's Prerogative." *Political Theory: An International Journal of Political Philosophy* 26: 198-208.
- Powers, Thomas F. 2007. "The Act/Belief Doctrine and the Limits of Lockean Religious Liberty." *Perspectives on Political Science* 36: 73-83.
- Simmons, A. John. 1989. "Locke's State of Nature." *Political Theory* 17: 449-70.
- Schwartzman, Micah. 2005. "The Relevance of Locke's Religious Arguments for Toleration." *Political Theory* 33: 678-705.
- Stevens, Jacqueline. 1996. "The Reasonableness of John Locke's Majority: Property Rights, Consent, and Resistance in the *Second Treatise*." *Political Theory* 24: 423-63.
- Tate, John William. 2009. "Locke and Toleration: Defending Locke's Liberal Credentials." *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 35: 761-91.
- Tierney, Brian. 2005. "Historical Roots of Modern Rights: Before Locke and After." *Ave Maria Law Review* 3: 23-43.
- van der Schaar, Maria. 2012. "Locke on Judgement and Religious Toleration." *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 20: 41-68.
- Vogt, Phillip. 1997. "Locke, Eden and Two States of Nature: The Fortunate Fall Revisited." *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 35: 523-44.

### **Suggested further reading on Arendt:**

- Barnouw, Dagmar. 1986. "Speech Regained: Hannah Arendt and the American Revolution." *Clio: A Journal of Literature, History and the Philosophy of History* 15: 137-52.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1990. "Speaking about Modernity: Arendt's Construct of the Political." *New German Critique* 50: 21-39.
- Bernasconi, Robert. 1996. "The Double Face of the Political and the Social: Hannah Arendt and America's Racial Divisions." *Research in Phenomenology* 26: 3-24.
- Breen, Keith. 2007. "Violence and Power: A Critique of Hannah Arendt on the 'Political'." *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 33: 343-72.
- Demirović, Alex. 2003. "Revolution and Freedom." Translated by Kurt Hirtler. *Parallax* 9: 42-55.
- Feher, Ferenc. 1987. "Freedom and the 'Social Question' (Hannah Arendt's Theory of the French Revolution)." *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 12: 1- 30.
- Flakne, April N. 2002. "Beyond Banality and Fatality: Arendt, Heidegger and Jaspers on Political Speech." *New German Critique* 86: 3-18.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. 1965. "On Revolution, by Hanna Arendt." *History and Theory* 4: 252-57.
- Honig, Bonnie. 1995. *Feminist Interpretations of Hannah Arendt*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- James, Barry. 2007. "The Growth of the Social Realm in Arendt's Post-Mortem of the Modern Nation-State." *Telos: A Quarterly Journal of Radical Social Theory* 138: 97-119.
- King, Richard H. 2011. "Hannah Arendt and the Concept of Revolution in the 1960s." *New Formations: A Journal of Culture/Theory/Politics* 71: 30-45.

Kristeva, Julia. 2008. "Refoundation as Survival: An Interrogation of Hannah Arendt." *Common Knowledge* 14: 353-64.

Magun, Artemy. 2007. "The Double Bind: The Ambivalent Treatment of Tragic Passions in Hannah Arendt's Theory of Revolution." *History of Political Thought* 28: 719-46.

Villa, Dana Richard. 1999. *Politics, Philosophy, Terror: Essays on the Thought of Hannah Arendt*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Visker, Rudi. 2009. "Beyond Representation and Participation: Pushing Arendt into Postmodernity." *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 35: 411-26.

Students are strongly advised to venture beyond these recommendations. An engagement with the secondary literature will assist students in orienting their own interpretations of the primary texts covered in the course. Each of the three thinkers with whom we will be dealing is the subject of a vast secondary literature that continues to grow. It is a feature of an academic essay that a position is adopted in relation to previous commentaries.

### Websites

Students seeking resources can also obtain assistance from the UNSW Library. One starting point for assistance is:

<http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html>

The database "Philosopher's Index" is one recommended research tool for exploring the scholarly literature on political philosophy.

### ASSESSMENT

Tutorial Questions. Percentage of total mark: 10%

All students are expected to write a comment and question each week on the set reading.

These should demonstrate an engagement with the reading.

The point of this exercise is to help students feel their way into the arguments, terminology and aims of the prescribed texts.

The comments and questions will be read aloud at the start of the tutorials and will guide the discussion. Comments and questions that are vague and/or simplistic are unlikely to generate discussion.

In week 13 each student should also send all his or her comments and questions in a single e-mail to the lecturer. The lecturer will then review them and assign a grade. Without a copy of the comments and questions no grade can be awarded.

90% of the course mark is drawn from three academic essays that students will need to write on the three thinkers dealt with in the course. Students are welcome to devise their own topics but must obtain the course convenor's approval of the topic prior to submission.

First Essay: 1,600 words. Percentage of total mark: 30%

Topic: Hobbes

Due date: Monday **2 September** (week 6).

Essay questions: 1) Discuss and evaluate Hobbes's materialism in its bearing on his account of law and liberty.

2) What is Hobbes's view of religion? How does it inform his political thought?



- 3) What is the problem for which Hobbes proposes the sovereign as a solution? What are the merits/defects of this solution?
- 4) What is Hobbes's legacy for modern political thought?

Second Essay: 1,600 words. Percentage of total mark: 30%

Topic: Locke

Due date: Monday **30 September** (week 9).

- Essay questions:
- 1) Discuss and evaluate Locke's arguments for limited government.
  - 2) Discuss and evaluate Locke's impact on Western politics.
  - 3) Analyse Locke's account of the relations between church and state.

Third Essay: 1,600 words. Percentage of total mark: 30%

Topic: Arendt

Due date: Friday **1 November** (week 13).

- Essay questions:
- 1) How does Arendt define the political and the social? What follows from her definitions? What problems do these definitions surmount/create?
  - 2) Discuss and evaluate Arendt's account of the French Revolution?
  - 3) Discuss and evaluate Arendt's account of the American Revolution?

The criteria against which the essays will be marked are:

CONTENT/STRUCTURE	HD	D	C	P	F	CONTENT/STRUCTURE
Coherent overall argument						Argument lacks overall coherence
Clear exposition of key issues that demonstrates understanding						Issues unclear/poorly chosen
Insightful/original analysis of primary texts and commentaries						Superficial/perfunctory analysis of primary texts and commentaries

ACADEMIC ESSAY STYLE						ACADEMIC ESSAY STYLE
Grammatically correct						Numerous/grave grammatical errors
Accurate referencing						Poor referencing
Pertinent quotations supporting argument						Quotations poorly used

Your overall grade is **not** obtained by averaging your grades against the six criteria.

## **Rationale for Essays**

Successful completion of the essays will help you to develop a number of the attributes that UNSW expects of its graduates, most notably scholarly methods, critical thinking, independent learning and effective communication skills.

## **Assignment Submission**

- The cut-off time for all assignment submissions in the School is **4 pm** of the stated due date.
- 2 assignment copies must be submitted for every assessment task - 1 paper copy and 1 electronic copy.
- All hard/paper copy assessments should be posted into the Assignment Drop Boxes outside the front counter of the School of Humanities and Languages on level 2, Morven Brown Building by 4pm on the due date.
- A completed cover sheet must be securely attached to assignments. The School is not responsible for any missing pages from poorly bound or stapled assignments.
- In addition, a soft copy must be sent through **Moodle** on Turnitin by 4 pm on the due date

## **Important Note**

Only hard copies submitted in the drop boxes will be marked/assessed.

## **Assignment Collection**

Assignments should be collected from your lecturer and must be collected by the owner/author of the assignment. A stamped self-addressed envelope must be provided on submission if students require their assignment to be posted back to their home address.

## **Assignment Extensions**

A student may apply to the lecturer for an extension to the submission date of an assignment. Requests for extension must be made via myUNSW before the submission due date, and must demonstrate exceptional circumstances, which warrant the granting of an extension. If medical grounds preclude submission of assignment by due date, contact should be made with the course convenor as soon as possible. A medical certificate will be required for late submission and must be appropriate for the extension period.

To apply for an extension please log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration

## **Late Submission of Assignments**

Assignments submitted after the due or extended date will incur a 1% penalty per day including weekends (calculated from the maximum marks available for the entire course). Assignments received more than 14 calendar days after the due or extended date will not be allocated a mark.

## **ATTENDANCE**

To successfully complete this unit you are required to attend minimum 80% of classes. If this requirement is not met, you will fail the unit. The course convenor will keep attendance records.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM**

Students seeking information on plagiarism should visit the following web site:

<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/index.html>

## **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others.

Any OHS concerns should be raised with your immediate supervisor, the School's OHS representative, or the Head of School. The OHS guidelines are available at:

[http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/ohs\\_policies/index.html](http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/ohs_policies/index.html)

## **STUDENT EQUITY AND DIVERSITY**

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to, or at the commencement of the course. Alternatively, the Student Equity and Diversity Unit can be contacted on 9385 4734. Further information is available at:

<http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au>

## **GRIEVANCES**

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should in the first instance attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors. If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and Languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at: <https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Complaints.html>

## **OTHER STUDENT INFORMATION**

myUNSW is the single online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing & current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au>

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html>