Theories of Social Justice

Political Science 331

Spring 2013
Monday/Wednesday
2:30 – 4:00 pm
Umrah 140

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Office Hours: Tuesdays
9:30 – 11:30 am
Seigle 282

This course overviews the leading contemporary conceptions of social justice, including utilitarian, liberal, libertarian, communitarian, and deliberative-democratic theories, and their implications for the design of political, economic, and social institutions. In addition, this course will examine special topics such as justice between generations, global justice, and the rights of resistance or disobedience.

Course Requirements

1. **Readings.** The required readings listed below average about 75 – 100 pages per week. These are often dense and difficult works, requiring careful attention. Additional optional readings are listed at the end of the syllabus, which might be helpful in studying for exams and in writing the term paper.

2. **Exams.** There will be three (3) short exams, the first on February 20th, the second on March 27th, and the third on May 6th. Each exam is worth 20% of your overall grade. Makeup exams will not be offered, barring demonstrable emergencies.

3. **Term Paper, 7–10 pages.** Paper topics will be provided in the middle of the semester, but with permission you may write on any topic you choose related to issues discussed in the class. The term paper is worth 40% of your overall grade. Late papers will be marked down two (2) points each day until turned in; extensions will be considered only if requested at least three (3) days in advance of the due date.

Course Materials

For this course you will need the following books, all of which should be available for purchase at the Campus Bookstore:

- Bentham and Mill, *The Classical Utilitarians* (Hackett)
- Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (Hackett)
- Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (Basic Books)
- Walzer, *Spheres of Justice* (Basic Books)
Additional readings are available online on ARES (the course password is ‘Justice13’).

Schedule of Required Readings and Assignments

January 14  Introduction (no assignment)

I. UTILITARIANISM

January 16  Bentham, “Principles of Morals and Legislation,” chs. 1, 4, 13–15; and “The Greatest Good for the Greatest Number” Beccaria, Of Crimes and Punishments, selections (online)

January 21  no class (Martin Luther King day)


January 28  Mill, “On Liberty,” chs. 1, 3 Sidgwick, Elements of Politics, selections (online)


II. JUSTICE AS FAIRNESS

February 4  Locke, Second Treatise of Government, ch. 8 Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, selections (online) Rawls, Theory of Justice, preface, p. vii–ix

February 6  Rawls, Theory of Justice, §§ 1–9

February 11  Rawls, Theory of Justice, §§ 11–13, 15–17, 68

February 13  Rawls, Theory of Justice, §§ 20–26, 33, 29

February 18  Rawls, Theory of Justice, §§ 31, 34–37, 14, 43, 40

February 20  First Exam
III. LIBERTARIANISM

February 25  Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chs. 2, 5, 9


Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, § 48

IV. COMMUNITARIANISM

March 6  Sandel, “Morality and the Liberal Ideal” (online)
Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, p. xi–xvi, 3–30

March 11, 13  No class (spring break)

March 18  Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, p. 31–51, 64–91, 201–206


March 27  Second Exam

V. DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY

April 1  Cohen, “Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy” (in Bohman and Rehg)
Habermas, “Three Normative Models of Democracy” (online)

April 3  Cohen, “Procedure and Substance in Deliberative Democracy” (in Bohman and Rehg)
Habermas, “On the Internal Relation between the Rule of Law and Democracy” (online)

April 8  Knight and Johnson, “What Sort of Equality Does Deliberative Democracy Require?” (in Bohman and Rehg)
VI. EXTENDING JUSTICE

April 10  Intergenerational Justice 1 – Resource Consumption:
Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, § 44
Barry, “Justice Between Generations” (online)
de-Shalit, *Why Posterity Matters*, selections (online)

April 15  Intergenerational Justice 2 – Population:
Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, selections (online)
Narveson, “Moral Problems of Population” (online)

April 17  The Scope of Justice 1 – Global Justice:
Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” (online)
Nagel, “The Problem of Global Justice” (online)

April 22  The Scope of Justice 2 – The Duty of Justice:
Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chs. 18–19

April 24  Concluding Lecture – The Future of Social Justice

April 26  **Term Paper Due** (at 12:00 noon)

May 6  **Third Exam** (3:30 – 5:30 pm)

Additional Optional Readings

There exists extensive literatures on all the topics covered in this class, and this bibliography is hardly comprehensive. I have selected works here mainly for their usefulness in explaining the arguments we have discussed in class.

**UTILITARIANISM:**
- Mill, *Representative Government*, and *The Subjection of Women*
- Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, bk. 4
- Goodin, *Utilitarianism as a Public Philosophy*
- Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, ch. 2
- Griffin, *Well-Being: Its Meaning, Measurement, and Moral Importance*
- Brandt, *A Theory of the Right and the Good*

**JUSTICE AS FAIRNESS:**
- Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*
- Barry, *Justice as Impartiality*, chs. 1, 3–4, and 7
- Pogge, *Realizing Rawls*, parts 1–2
- Kelly, *Liberalism*
Kymlicka, Contemporary Political Philosophy, ch. 3
Kukathas and Pettit, Rawls: A Theory of Justice and Its Critics, chs. 1–4
Daniels, ed., Reading Rawls: Critical Studies on Rawls’s ‘A Theory of Justice’

LIBERTARIANISM:
Narveson, The Libertarian Idea
Steiner, An Essay on Rights
Tomasi, Free Market Fairness
Kymlicka, Contemporary Political Philosophy, ch. 4
Kukathas and Pettit, Rawls: A Theory of Justice and Its Critics, ch. 5
Cohen, Self-ownership, Freedom, and Equality, chs. 1–4

COMMUNITARIANISM:
Walzer, Thick and Thin
Miller, Principles of Social Justice
Taylor, Philosophical Papers, vol. II, chs. 7 and 11
Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice
Kymlicka, Contemporary Political Philosophy, ch. 6
Kukathas and Pettit, Rawls: A Theory of Justice and Its Critics, ch. 6
Mulhall and Swift, Liberals and Communitarians

DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY:
Christiano, Rule of the Many
Bohman and Rehg, eds. Deliberative Democracy, essays 2, 8, and 10
Young, Inclusion and Democracy
Dryzek, Deliberative Democracy and Beyond
Elster, ed. Deliberative Democracy
Knight & Johnson, The Priority of Democracy
Estlund, Democratic Authority

THE SCOPE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE:
de-Shalit, Why Posterity Matters, chs. 1–5
Beitz, Political Theory and International Relations
Pogge, Realizing Rawls, part 3
Rawls, The Law of Peoples
Singer, One World
Walzer, Obligations: Essays on Disobedience, War, and Citizenship
Miller, National Responsibility and Global Justice
What is social justice? Fundamentally concerned with the basic institutions and practices of society - the design of institutions and practices affect how things we value get distributed. Goods. things we care about the distribution of. includes rights, jobs, offices, income, wealth, love, education, salvation, etc. justice is concerned with the distribution of these goods. What does Walzer mean by social goods? A theory of justice that proposes single abstract principle governing distribution of goods libertarianism: goods distributed through free exchange utilitarianism: goods distributed to maximize sum total happiness. reasons why institutions and practices may not reflect shared values of society.