Course Description

This course examines some of the influential texts in democratic theory, with a slight emphasis on the relationship between freedom and violence and texts not covered by other upper level political theory courses at LSU.

The purpose of the course is to acquaint you with primary texts, which provide a jumping off point for your own ideas and research. While the complexity of some of the texts requires us to spend significant time grappling with the meaning and importance of the course materials, a high premium will be placed on creativity and the application of theory to practical problems.

Course Requirements

2 Presentations/Précis

Each week, one or two students will share their thoughts about the readings and the recommended readings for 5 to 10 minutes. Discuss things that provoked you, examine arguments that troubled you and, most importantly, raise questions that occurred to you. Along with the presentation, each presenter will write a one page précis, which encapsulates the most important themes in the book (or books) and distribute copies of the précis to all of the students in the class.

2 Papers

You will also write two papers for the course. I will distribute prompts a week before each paper is due, but you can also write on topics of your own choosing. Papers on particular thinkers should engage to some extent with the recommended reading or other secondary sources. The final paper can serve as a trial run for a journal length article.

Papers should be e-mailed to the instructor by the time and date on the syllabus. Late papers are deducted a full letter grade.
Participation
Your participation grade will be based on my sense of your overall engagement with the course materials. This includes participation in class discussion but can also include coming to office hours or questions and thoughts shared over email.

Grading Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentations and Précis</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper One (5 to 10 pages)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper Two (10 to 20 pages)</td>
<td>35%</td>
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Texts


*Discourses on Livy.* Niccolo Machiavelli

*Basic Political Writings.* Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Hackett Publishing.


*Self-Reliance and Other Essays.* Ralph Waldo Emerson. Dover Publications.


*Political Liberalism.* John Rawls. Columbia University Press

*Between Facts and Norms.* Jurgen Habermas. MIT Press.

Course Schedule

**Week One**
August 28\(^{th}\)  
No Class

Class moved to Tuesday August 26\(^{th}\)

Class Introduction
Screening of *Secret Ballot* (105 min.)

**Week Two**  
September 3\(^{rd}\)

**Plato, Apology, Crito**

Recommended:
Week Three  
September 11th

Plato, *Hippias Minor, Laches, Menexenus*

Recommended:
Dana Villa, *Socratic Citizenship*

Week Four  
September 18th

Aristotle, *The Politics*, Books 1, 3-7

Recommended:

Week Five  
September 25th

Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*
The Table of Contents  
I: 1-10, 16-18, 24, 27, 41, 42, 45-47, 53-55, 57-58  
II: 1-3, 9-10, 13, 19, 23, 28, 32  
III: 1, 3, 4, 6-9, 13, 19-24, 26, 28-29, 40-42, 49

Recommended:

Week Six  
October 2nd

Rousseau, *The Social Contract*

Recommended:
Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*  
Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract*

PAPER ONE DUE: October 7th, 2008 at 5pm

Week Seven  
October 9th
No Classes
Week Eight  
October 16th

Montesquieu, Spirit of the Laws
Preface, Author’s Notes, Books 1-3, 5, 6, 7 (chapters 8-17), 11, 12, 14 (1-6), 15 (1-8), 20-1 (first 3 chapters of each).

Recommended:
Hannah Arendt, On Revolution, Chapter 4: Constitutio Libertatis, pp. 141-178
Benjamin Constant, ‘On the liberty of the ancients compared with that of the moderns’
Isaiah Berlin, Liberty: Incorporating Four Essays on Liberty

Week Nine  
October 23rd

Publius, Federalist Papers, nos. 1, 2, 6, 9, 10, 14, 35, 49, 51, 72, 85
Brutus, The Letters of Brutus, nos. 1-4 (available online)

Recommended:
Hannah Arendt, On Revolution, Chapter 3: The Pursuit of Happiness, 115-140
Gordon Wood, The Radicalism of the American Revolution, part 3

Week Ten  
October 29th

Thoreau, Civil Disobedience
Emerson, Self-Reliance

Recommended:
Gandhi, Hind Swaraj

Week Eleven  
November 6th

Carl Schmitt, The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy
Carl Schmitt, The Concept of the Political

Recommended:
J. Habermas, ‘On the Relation Between the Nation, the Rule of Law, and Democracy’, in The Inclusion of the Other

Week Twelve  
November 13th

Albert Camus, The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt
Parts I, II, III (skim) and V.

Recommended:
Week Thirteen  
November 20th

Rawls, A Theory of Justice, Sections 31-37  
Rawls, Political Liberalism, Lecture 8

Recommended:  
John Seery, Political Theory for Mortals, Chapters One and Five

Week Fourteen  
November 27th  
No Classes

Week Fifteen  
December 4th

Habermas, Between Facts and Norms, Chapters 4, 7, 8 and 9.

Recommended:  
Vol. 2: 318-331, 343-403  
Iris Marion Young, “Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy”, in Benhabib (ed) Democracy and Difference  
Seyla Benhabib, “Toward a Deliberative Model of Democratic Legitimacy”, in Democracy and Difference.  

Final Exam Time: December 11th, 8:00pm-10:00pm  
Final paper due.  
Screening of Bomb It! (93 min.)