

“A liberal is a man too broadminded to take his own side in a quarrel.”
-- attributed to Robert Frost

Political Science 7982

Early Modern Political Theory: Liberalism

<<http://web2.bus.lsu.edu/courses/POLI7982>>

Fall 1999

This course will explore the political theory of liberalism, from its origins in early modern political thought to its contemporary expression. We will begin with a study of those philosophers who are now seen as its founding fathers, John Locke and Immanuel Kant, examining in each the epistemo logical, moral, and political dimensions of his thought: The liberal is skeptical about what man can know, and he designs a way of life and a polity around his doubts. After reading several works by John Stuart Mill, who gave nineteenth-century liberalism its classic expression, we will turn to contemporary authors, mostly in or related to the Anglo-American analytical school in philosophy, who define the debate over liberalism today. [Note that the dates below vary from the outline to accommodate the guest seminar by Prof. Kenneth Minogue.]

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Office Hours: Mondays, 1:30-4:00
Wednesdays and Fridays, 8:30-9:15, and by appointment

Course requirements:

Biweekly 4-5 page papers on topics in the readings [60%]
Class attendance and participation [10%]
Final take-home examination [30%]

Books available for purchase:

John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Oxford)
John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (Hackett)
John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (Cambridge)
Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* (Hackett)
Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of a Metaphysics of Morals* (MacMillan)
Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings* (Cambridge)
John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* (Prometheus)
John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty: with The Subjection of Women and Chapters on Socialism*
(Cambridge)
John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Harvard)
Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (Basic Books)
Michael Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge)
William Galston, *Liberal Purposes* (Cambridge)
Robert George, *Making Men Moral* (Oxford)
Pierre Manent, *The City of Man* (Princeton)

Library Reserve:

Many of the readings for the course will be made available on reserve in Middleton Library. In addition, I may from time to time place on reserve certain secondary works that I think you might find particularly useful in helping you interpret the authors we are studying. It should go without saying that secondary works are no substitute for the assigned reading; indeed, read without knowledge of the originals they are more apt to mislead than assist you.

SYLLABUS:

INTRODUCTION

Wed., 8/25 Minogue, *The Liberal Mind*, ch. 1

I. LIBERAL FOUNDATIONS: THE CRITIQUE OF REASON AND REVELATION, AND THE PROMISE OF NEW FREEDOM

Locke

Wed., 9/1 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (excerpts)

Wed., 9/8 Locke, *Some Thoughts on Education*

Wed., 9/15 Locke, *Second Treatise*

Kant

Wed., 9/22 Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*

Wed., 9/29 Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*

Wed., 10/6 Kant, *Political Writings* (excerpts)

Mill

Wed., 10/27 Mill, *System of Logic* (excerpts)
Mill, *Utilitarianism*

Wed., 11/3 Mill, *On Liberty*
Mill, *The Subjection of Women*

II. CONTEMPORARY LIBERALISM AND ITS CRITICISM

Wed., 10/13 Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*

Wed., 11/10 Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*

Wed., 10/20 Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*
Guest Seminar Leader: Kenneth Minogue, London School of Economics

Wed., 11/17 Galston, *Liberal Purposes*

Wed., 11/24 George, *Making Men Moral*

Wed., 12/1 Manent, *The City of Man*