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DEMOCRACY, PAST AND PRESENT

Writing Senior Seminar, Fall 2006: POLS 53001 - 05

Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00—3:15

Classroom: 102 Hesburgh Center

Office hours : WE 3-5 and TH 12-2:00, or by appointment.

The meanings of democracy are many since its origins in Athens until today, ranging from common sense conceptions to sophisticated (albeit not necessarily better) theoretical formulations.

We will center on a topic often neglected: the historical trajectory of the idea of democracy as well as of others that came to be closely associated with it—republicanism and liberalism. For this purpose, we will, in addition to some historical works, read brief selections from some "classics." You have run into some of these authors during your studies at Notre Dame; the difference is that we will read them from the perspective of how ideas about contemporary democracy came about. Later on we will examine some contemporary issues and theories.

My hope is that we will gain an informed awareness of the various aspects involved in the history and practice of democracy, including some puzzling predicaments.

The course will function as a seminar. I expect you to participate by means of thoughtful presentations about selected readings, and to contribute to the general discussions. In addition, along the term I will request from each of you some short papers in which you reflect on authors and/or issues we are studying. Important: these papers should be distributed to all participants at least one day before the class in which they will be discussed. In addition, there will a discussant of each of these pieces.

There will be a midterm and a final exam, both take home. In the exams I will not look at how good your memory is, but at thoughtful and informed discussion of some of the issues we study during the term. Alternatively, instead of the final exam you may opt for writing a paper; in this case you must consult with me the latest during the week after the mid term break. The final grade will take into account the midterm and final exams (60%), the brief written pieces (20%), and participation in class discussions (20%) - -but notice that these are approximate figures; there is no sense in being mechanical in these matters.

The readings will be available in a packet; if some of you have problems with paying it, please email me that I'll arrange this.

SCHEDULE

Aug. 22. Class n. 1.

Introductions. Presentation of functioning, goals and scope of the seminar.
Preliminary remarks.

Aug. 24. Class n. 2.

Introductory lecture. Report and discussion assignments.

Written assignment for all: Write your own definition of “democracy,” and email to me before next class. Note: 1. I am requesting a **definition**; i.e., 10 lines should be more than enough; 2. The definitions should be email to me only, before the next class; 3. I will **not** grade this assignment.

Aug. 29. Class n. 3.

Democracy: Athens.

Read: *Finer* 341-368

Aug. 31. No class (meeting of the American Political Science Association in Philadelphia)

Sept. 5. Class n. 4

Democracy: Athens

Read: Plato (Defense of Socrates) 42-59

Plato (Crito) 63-79 (Notice useful explanatory notes in 96-109)

Plato (Republic) 13-31

Sept. 7. Class n.5

Democracy: Athens

Read: Aristotle 92-95, 110-123, 257-262

Sept. 9. Class n. 6

Republic: Rome

Read: *Finer* 395-417

Cantor 41-47

Sept.14. Class n. 7

Republic: Rome

Read: Cicero 13-29, 57-69, 97-107

Sept.19. Class n. 8

Feudalism and the Church

Read: Cantor 66-88, 195-204, 207-211, 430-433

Sept. 21. Class n. 9

Feudalism and the Church

Read: Holmes 243-249, 265-276, 435-451, 480-487

Sept. 28. Class n. 10

Republics: Italy

Read: Machiavelli 217-232, 243-257, 385-392.

Skinner

Oct. 3. Class n. 11

State-making and Absolutism.

Read: Finer 1261-1265, 1269-1283, 1335-1345.

Oct. 5. Class n. 12

State-making and proto-liberalism

Read: Sorell 13-38

Hobbes 82-110, 120-127

Oct. 10. Class n. 13

Liberalism: England

Read: Dunn 1-26

Locke 7-14, 114-125, 131-132

Oct. 12. Class n. 14

Revolution: The United States

Read: Tocqueville 284-295, 309-318, 329-339

Wood

MID-SEMESTER BREAK

Oct. 24. Class n. 15

Constitutionalism

Read: Federalist Papers n. 10, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51

Oct. 26. Class n. 16
Revolution: France
Read: Rousseau 54-58, 63-70, 73-75, 100-102, 136-139

Oct. 31. Class n. 17
Revolution: France
Read: Fontana

Nov. 2. Class n.18
Constitutionalism to contemporary times
Read: Finer 1588-1604

Nov. 7. Class n. 19
Liberalism
Read: Collini vii-xxi
J.S. Mill 13-18, 53-55, 109-115

Nov. 9. Class n. 20
Contemporary topics: Polyarchy
Read: Dahl 35-80, 83-99, 166-177

Nov. 14. Class n. 21.
Contemporary topics: Constitutionalism
Read: Holmes

Nov. 16. Class n. 22
Contemporary topics: gender
Read: Walby
Phillips

Nov. 21. Class n. 23
Contemporary topics: diversity, multiculturalism
Read: Kymlicka

Nov. 23. No class.
THANKSGIVING.

Nov. 28. Class n. 24
Contemporary topics: democracy and human agency
Read: O'Donnell

Nov. 30. Class n. 25

Contemporary topics: some empirical findings

Read: Verba et al., 1-48, 500-533

Dec. 5. Class n. 26

Last class.

Overview, general discussion

Dec.14.

Deadline for submitting final exams or papers.

READINGS.

I. Brief selections from "Clasics."

Plato	The Republic Defense of Socrates Crito
Aristotle	The Politics
Cicero	De Re Publica
Machiavelli	Discourses
Hobbes	Leviathan
Locke	The Second Treatise on Civil Government
Rousseau	The Social Contract
Mill	On Liberty
Tocqueville	Democracy in America

II. References.

Norman Cantor, **The Civilization of the Middle Ages** (New York: Harper-Collins, 1993)

Robert Dahl, **On Democracy** (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998)

Biancamaria Fontana, "Democracy and the French Revolution," in Dunn, John, ed. **Democracy. The Unfinished Journey. 508 BC to AD 1993** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)

George Holmes, **The Oxford History of Medieval Europe** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)

Stephen Holmes, "Constitutionalism," in Seymour Martin Lipset, ed., **The Encyclopedia of Democracy** (London: Routledge, 1995) 299-306

Will Kymlicka, "The Good, the Bad, and the Intolerable," **Dissent**, Summer 1996 (1996) 22-30.

Guillermo O'Donnell, "Democracy, Law and Comparative Politics," **Studies in Comparative International Development**, Spring 2001, 36, n.1, p.7-36.

Anne Phillips, "Dealing with Difference: A Politics of Ideas, or a Politics of Presence?" in Seyla Benhabib, ed., **Democracy and Difference. Contesting the Boundaries of the Political** (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

Quentin Skinner, "The Italian City Republics" in Dunn, John, ed. **Democracy. The Unfinished Journey. 508 BC to AD 1993** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)

Sidney Verba, et al., **Voice and Equality. Civic Voluntarism in American Politics** (Cambridge USA: Harvard University Press, 1995)

Silvia Walby, "Is Citizenship Gendered?," **Sociology**, 28, n.2 (May 1994) 379-395.

Gordon Wood, "Democracy and the American Revolution," in Dunn, John, ed. **Democracy. The Unfinished Journey. 508 BC to AD 1993** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)