

Problems in Political Theory. Proseminar: Power and Freedom

POLI 617 Winter 2019 422 Ferrier M 11:35-14:25	Professor Yves Winter email: yves.winter@mcgill.ca Office: 418 Ferrier Office hours: W 14:30-16:30 & by appointment
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Description

This course will offer a survey of some of the most important treatments of the relation between power and freedom in the history of modern Western political thought.

Note on the comprehensive exam preparation for PhD students: This is a proseminar, which means that it is designed, in part, to help prepare graduate students for the comprehensive exam in political theory. Yet although this course will help with the preparation, it is only one element. While nearly all of the texts we read in this course are on the comprehensive exam list, they cover only about a third of the minimum required texts for the exam. Moreover, all of these texts are more complex than we adequately account for within the time allotted to the course. Exam preparation should include: (1) taking multiple iterations of the proseminar (coverage changes every year); (2) attending lectures for the undergraduate sequence in the history of Western political thought (333, 334, 433, and 434); (3) participating in study groups; (4) writing full practice exams.

Note that the second meeting (January 9) is a make-up class and will take place at an unusual time and location.

Prerequisites

This is a course primarily for PhD students taking the comprehensive exam in political theory. Other PhD or MA students with backgrounds in political theory are welcome to enrol.

Texts

I recommend the following editions and translations. These are not the cheapest editions, but I consider them superior to the alternatives and strongly recommend them. Copies are available at **The Word, 469 Milton Street** (cash or cheque only). I recommend that you get the books you wish to buy early in the semester.

Niccolò Machiavelli, The Prince, trans. Harvey Mansfield (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998)

Niccolò Machiavelli, Discourses on Livy, trans. Harvey Mansfield & Nathan Tarcov (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996)

GWF Hegel, Elements of the Philosophy of Right, trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)

Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, trans. Goldhammer (New York: Library of America, 2004)

Karl Marx, Capital: Volume 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 1990)

Karl Marx, Later Political Writings, ed. Terrell Carver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)

Frederick Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom (New York: Penguin, 2003)

Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, trans. Constance Borde & Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (New York: Vintage, 2011)

Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition, second ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998)

Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1995)

Requirements

This is a seminar and **attendance** and **participation** are required.

Students will write a total of **8 reflection papers** throughout the semester. Reflection papers should be no longer than 2 pages (double-spaced). They are not summaries or reading reports but argumentative or interpretive-analytical pieces of writing about the assigned readings, typically covering only a part of the assigned text. They may raise questions about the reading, identify interpretive problems, problematize explicit and implicit assumptions, evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of an argument and/or possible counter-arguments. In addition, they may connect texts to previous weeks' readings. Reflection papers will be uploaded to myCourses no later than **8:00 pm** the evening prior to the seminar. **Late papers will receive zero credit.** Exceptions will only be made in the case of documented medical emergencies.

Grades:

1. Participation (20%)
2. Reflection papers (24%)
3. And one of:
 - a. One term paper of 8,000-9,000 words (56%)
 - b. Two seminar papers of 4,000-5,000 words (28% each)
 - c. One paper of 6,000-7,000 words (40%), and one practice comprehensive exam (16%)

Students planning to take the comprehensive exam in political theory should select option 3c. MA students should normally select option 3b, unless they think that the paper they write for this class might become the basis of their MA Research Paper or MA thesis. Anyone is free, however, to select any option they wish. Students must decide which option to select no later than **January 31** and inform me accordingly.

The deadline for the term papers is **April 26**. This includes the two week extension for TAs, from which everyone benefits. I will not be granting further extensions that go into the summer or next semester. Students choosing 3b should submit their first papers by **March 11**. Students choosing either 3a or 3c should submit a paper proposal of up to 750 words by **March 18**.

Papers must be submitted by **4:30pm** on the due date, in **hard copy**, to my mailbox in **414 Leacock**.

The **practice comprehensive exam** will be scheduled for **Monday, April 29**, location TBA. The exam will last 2.5 hours, and require you to answer two questions, one on the early modern and one on the 19th/20th century section. (Note that this corresponds to exactly half the actual exam, which would also include the ancient and the thematic sections).

McGill University values **academic integrity**. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#). Please note that I take plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty seriously, and your work will be reviewed for potential plagiarism issues by means of text-matching software.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant-e a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.

As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#) (514)398-6009.

Class Schedule

January 7	Introduction. Constant, "On the Liberty of the Ancients Compared With That of the Moderns"
January 9	12-3pm (476 Ferrier). Note unusual date, time, and place. Machiavelli, <u>The Prince</u> ; <u>Discourses on Livy</u> , bk 1
January 14	Machiavelli, <u>Discourses on Livy</u> , bks 2 & 3
January 21	Tocqueville, <u>Democracy in America</u> , Introduction, Vol. 1, Part 1: chs. 3, 4, 5; Part 2: chs. 2, 4, 5-10; Vol 2: Preface, Part 1: chs. 1-5; Part 2: chs. 1-8, 11-15, 20; Part 3: chs. 1, 8-10, 12, 13, 17, 21, 22; Part 4: chs. 1-4, 6-8
January 28	Hegel, <u>Phenomenology of Spirit</u> , Chs IV, VI.B.3; <u>Elements of the Philosophy of Right</u> , Preface, §§1-141
February 4	Hegel, <u>Elements of the Philosophy of Right</u> , §§142-360
February 11	Marx, <u>From the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right</u> ; <u>On the Jewish Question</u> ; <u>From the Paris Notebooks</u> (selections from the 1844 manuscripts); <u>On Feuerbach</u>
February 18	Marx, <u>Capital: Volume One</u> , Prefaces, Chs 1, 3.2, 4-13, 16, 19, 23, 24.1, 25.3-4, 26-32.
February 25	Marx, <u>Manifesto of the Communist Party</u> ; <u>The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte</u> ; "Preface to <u>A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy</u> "; <u>The Civil War in France</u> ; <u>Critique of the Gotha Program</u>
March 4	Reading Week
March 11	Douglass, <u>My Bondage and My Freedom</u>
March 18	No class
March 25	Beauvoir, <u>The Second Sex</u> , Vol. 1: Introduction; chs 1.1-1.3; 2.1; 3.1; 3.3; Vol. 2: Introduction; chs 1.1; 2.6; 2.10; 4.14; Conclusion
April 1	Arendt, <u>The Human Condition</u>
April 8	Foucault, <u>Discipline and Punish</u>

Further Reading

Machiavelli

Louis Althusser, Machiavelli and Us
Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner, and Maurizio Viroli, eds., Machiavelli and Republicanism
Filippo Del Lucchese, The Political Philosophy of Niccolò Machiavelli
Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini
Mark Hulliung, Citizen Machiavelli
John McCormick, Machiavellian Democracy
Hannah Pitkin, Fortune is a Woman
J.G.A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment, chs. 6,7
Quentin Skinner, The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Vol. 1
Leo Strauss, Thoughts on Machiavelli
Catherine H. Zuckert, Machiavelli's Politics

Tocqueville

George Armstrong Kelly, The Humane Comedy: Constant, Tocqueville, and French Liberalism
Abraham S. Eisenstadt, ed., Reconsidering Tocqueville's Democracy in America
Jack Lively, Social and Political Thought of Alexis de Tocqueville
Pierre Manent, Tocqueville and the Nature of Democracy
Ken Masugi, ed. Interpreting Tocqueville's Democracy in America
Alexis de Tocqueville, Writings on Empire and Slavery, ed. and trans. Jennifer Pitts
Cheryl Welch, De Tocqueville
Sheldon Wolin, Tocqueville Between Two Worlds
Marvin Zetterbaum, Tocqueville and the Problem of Democracy

Hegel

Theodor W. Adorno, Hegel: Three Studies
Will Dudley, ed., Hegel and History
Jean Hyppolite, Studies on Marx and Hegel
Paul Franco, Hegel's Philosophy of Freedom
Alexandre Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel
Domenico Losurdo, Hegel and the Freedom of Moderns
Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution
Frederick Neuhouser, Foundations of Hegel's Social Theory
Z.A. Pelczynski, ed., The State and Civil Society
Terry Pinkard, Hegel
Robert Pippin, Idealism as Modernism: Hegelian Variations, chs 1, 4, 5
Robert Pippin, Hegel's Idealism
Gillian Rose, Hegel Contra Sociology
Charles Taylor, Hegel and Modern Society
Charles Taylor, Hegel
Allen Wood, Hegel's Ethical Thought

Marx

Kevin B. Anderson, Marx at the Margins: On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies

Shlomo Avineri, [The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx](#)
Etienne Balibar, [The Philosophy of Marx](#)
Warren Breckman, [Marx, the Young Hegelians, and the Origins of Radical Social Theory](#)
David Harvey, [A Companion to Marx's Capital](#)
Michael Heinrich, [An Introduction to the Three Volumes of Karl Marx's Capital](#)
David Leopold, [The Young Karl Marx](#)
Michael Postone, [Time, Labor, and Social Domination](#)
Cedric J. Robinson, [Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition](#)
Allen W. Wood, [Karl Marx](#)

Douglass

Nicholas Buccola, [The Political Thought of Frederick Douglass: In Pursuit of American Liberty](#)
Robert Gooding-Williams, [In the Shadow of Du Bois: Afro-Modern Political Thought in America](#)
Bill Lawson and Frank Kirkland, eds. [Frederick Douglass: A Critical Reader](#)
Stephen H. Marshall, [The City on the Hill From Below: The Crisis of Prophetic Black Politics](#)
Peter Myers, [Frederick Douglass: Race and the Rebirth of American Liberalism](#)
Jack Turner, [Awakening to Race: Individualism and Social Consciousness in America](#)
Cynthia Willett, [Maternal Ethics and Other Slave Moralities](#)

Beauvoir

Nancy Bauer, [Simone de Beauvoir, Philosophy, and Feminism](#)
Penelope Deutscher, [The Philosophy of Simone de Beauvoir: Ambiguity, Conversion, Resistance](#)
Elizabeth Fallaize, ed. [Simone de Beauvoir: A Critical Reader](#)
Sonia Kruks, [Simone de Beauvoir and the Politics of Ambiguity](#)
Eva Lundgren-Gothlin, [Sex and Existence: Simone De Beauvoir's the Second Sex](#)
Lori Marso, [Politics with Beauvoir: Freedom in the Encounter](#)
Toril Moi, [Simone de Beauvoir: The Making of an Intellectual Woman](#)
Toril Moi, [What is a Woman? And Other Essays](#)

Arendt

Seyla Benhabib, [The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt](#)
Richard J. Bernstein, [Why Read Hannah Arendt Now?](#)
Margaret Canovan, [Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought](#)
Mary Dietz, [Turning Operations: Feminism, Arendt, and Politics](#)
George Kateb, [Hannah Arendt: Politics, Conscience, Evil](#)
Mauricio Passerin d'Entrèves, [The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt](#)
Hanna Pitkin, [The Attack of the Blob: Hannah Arendt's Concept of the Social](#)
Elizabeth Young-Bruehl, [Why Arendt Matters](#)

Foucault

Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, [Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics](#)
Gary Gutting, ed., [Cambridge Companion to Foucault](#)
Béatrice Han, [Foucault's Critical Project](#)
Mark G. E. Kelly, [The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault](#)
Johanna Oksala, [Foucault on Freedom](#)
Jon Simons, [Foucault and the Political](#)