Democracy and Its Critics

Political Science 110H -- 632727
University of California, San Diego
Prof. Gerry Mackie, Fall 2008
Center Hall 216; MWF, 10:00-10:50 AM

PURPOSE
A student completing this course would learn how the intellectual justifications of modern political democracy developed from the ancient world, through the modern democratic revolutions, against the alternatives of fascism and communism, to the practical triumph of liberal democracy today.

The course is focused on historical texts, most of them philosophical. Context for understanding the texts and the course of democratic development will be provided in the lectures, and by background reading included in the course packet. We begin with the remarkable Athenian democracy, and its frequent enemy the Spartan oligarchy. In Athens legislation was passed directly by an assembly of all citizens, and executive officials were selected by lot rather than by competitive election. Athenian oligarchs such as Plato more admired Sparta, and their disdain for the democracy became the judgment of the ages, until well after the modern democratic revolutions. Marsilius of Padua in the early Middle Ages argued for popular sovereignty. The Italian city-states of the Middle Ages did without kings, and looked back to Rome and Greece for republican models. During the English Civil War republicans debated whether the few or the many should be full citizens of the regime. The English, French, and American revolutions struggled with justifying and establishing a representative democracy suitable for a large state, and relied on election rather than lot to select officials. The English established a constitutional monarchy, admired in Europe, and adapted by the Americans in their republican constitution. The American Revolution helped inspire the French, and the French inspired republican and democratic revolution throughout Europe during the 19th century.

The doctrines of liberalism, democracy, and socialism emerged and diverged in the early 19th century. The theory and the practice of representative democracy was refined, and democracy grew as the right to vote in elections was gradually extended. Liberalism and socialism converged in democratic practice in the late 19th century; but a strongly antidemocratic reaction emerged around the beginning of the 20th century and developed into fascist and communist tyrannies after World War One, each claiming to realize true democracy. Fascism or communism was endorsed by many intelligent and educated people, and democracy had few intellectual defenders during the years of the Great Depression. Fascism died with defeat of the Axis powers in World War Two, and communism died as an idea with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989.

You are expected to attend and to be completely prepared for each session. You must keep current or ahead of the readings as listed in the syllabus. Readings average about 20 pages per session.
CONTACTS
My office is at 322 Chemistry Research Building, tel. 534-7015, email gmackie@ucsd.edu (please email rather than telephone). Office hours are Wednesday, 2-4, or by appointment. CRB 322: take elevator to third floor, turn left, then right.

The Teaching Assistant is John Lejeune, ilejeune@dss.ucsd.edu. His regular office hours are Friday 2-4, and he is available at other times by appointment. His office is on the third floor, Room 329, in the Social Sciences Building.

All course-related email must contain 110H in the subject line. Otherwise, it may be neglected.

Course Announcements and Instructions will be posted at the Announcements function of WebCT. I’ll say in class when an important announcement is posted. If you don’t come to class it’s your responsibility to check the announcements regularly.

ASSESSMENT
An in-class exam on Mon Oct 20, 30% of the grade.
A 4-page paper is due on Monday, Mon Nov 17, 30% of grade.
A final exam on Fri Dec 12, 40% of grade.

The first closed-book, closed-note exam will be cover everything up to that point. It will be one-half identifications and one-half essay questions. Identifications quote something in the readings or lectures, and ask you to identify the source of the quote and explain its meaning and context. It could be something from the readings that we never discussed, or something presented in the lectures but not in the readings. This is meant to assess how much effort you put into learning the content of course materials. The identifications will be neither obscure nor obvious (I’ll provide examples well before the exam). The essay questions are meant to assess how deeply you have thought about themes of the course.

The 4-page paper should be between 800 to 1200 words (word-count determines). We will provide three topics on material in the second third of the course, and you may choose one of them, or obtain permission from the TA for your own topic. A paper above 1250 words is deducted one whole grade (e.g., from A- to B-). Papers are due no later than the beginning of class on the due date; any submitted after that time will be considered late. We will use Turnitin.Com. Late papers will be penalized ½ grade for 5 minutes to 24 hours late, and another ½ grade for part or all of each additional 24-hour period (absent meeting in advance requirements for exceptions stated next). Lateness will be excused only if a) the T.A. is notified by email at least 24 hours before the due date and time, AND b) the student has a university-permitted AND c) properly documented excuse. Papers must have complete and proper citations, using any standard format. Papers should be well-organized, well-considered, and well-written. Solely at our discretion, we may require rewrites, in which case the grade is an average of the original and the rewrite.
The final closed-book, closed-note exam will contain identification questions from the latter two-thirds of the course, from Apr 25 on, worth 20% of the total grade, and a choice of essay questions on the whole course, worth 20% of the total grade. These will likely be the essay questions on the final exam:

- How do interpretations of Athens and Sparta inform our understandings of democracy?
- You are sent by the U.S. State Department to an authoritarian country such as Bhutan whose elite wants to transition to modern liberal representative democracy. What values and institutions would you recommend?
- What are the strongest arguments an opponent could make against democracy? How would a democrat answer the opponent?

The average grade in this class will be at least a B, and may be better depending on student effort. Success in the course requires mastering the readings, regularly attending the lectures, and thinking in depth about democracy. Those who skip the readings, the lectures, or both, won’t do well.

**HONESTY**

We will abide strictly by standards of academic honesty. That means you must not cheat on exams, must not plagiarize on the writing assignments, and must provide proper citations for written work that you submit, among other things. If you have any questions about what is permitted, consult with us, as ambiguities will be construed against the violator. I do not have a forgiving attitude about academic dishonesty.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

- **Purchase from University Readers:**
  - Course Reading Packet, POLISCI 110H
  - All readings are in course packet, $86.60, [www.universityreaders.com](http://www.universityreaders.com)
  - “Click the white “STUDENTS BUY HERE” button located within the red "Students" section in the upper-right corner of our home page. You will create an account and be prompted to choose your state and institution. Easy-to-follow instructions will lead you through the rest of the purchasing process. Payment can be made by all major credit cards or electronic check. Your order is then processed and shipped out to you (orders are typically processed within 24 hours and often same day). Shipping time will depend on the selected shipping method. If available for your course, you will also be emailed instructions on how to download a FREE 20% PDF download or how to access your Full Digital Pack (if your professor chose this format option) so you can get started on your required readings right away. If you have any difficulties, please e-mail orders@universityreaders.com or call 800.200.3908.”
  - If you purchase online, you can download a portion while awaiting your packet.
  - I think you can also pick up in person at 3970 Sorrento Valley Blvd., Ste 500, San Diego, CA 92121
• **Library Reserves**
  The first two weeks of course readings are on UCSD library electronic reserve: [http://reserves.ucsd.edu/eres/coursepass.aspx?cid=12897](http://reserves.ucsd.edu/eres/coursepass.aspx?cid=12897) (the versions in the course packet are easier to use than the ones on electronic reserve)

• Syllabus, announcements, calendar, and chat on WebCT. [http://iwdc.ucsd.edu/password.shtml](http://iwdc.ucsd.edu/password.shtml)

• WebCT for extension students: “Concurrent enrollment (Extension) students are not added automatically. Extension students should obtain a registration token from Extension student services or the ACS Help Desk. They can then register for a computing account online at [http://acs.ucsd.edu/students/](http://acs.ucsd.edu/students/). Auditors may be given access by bringing an add computing slip labeled auditor to the ACS Help Desk (AP&M 1313, M-F, 8-4:30). Add computing slips can be requested by calling x44061 or [acs-consult@ucsd.edu](mailto:acs-consult@ucsd.edu).

The course is text-intensive. You really must obtain access to the readings packet. You need to have texts available to follow and participate in class, and to prepare for exams.

**SCHEDULE**

Fri Sep 26. **Introduction and Overview.**
Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics*, chs. 1, 2, 15

Mon Sep 29. **What is Modern Political Democracy?**
Dahl, continued; Manin, pp. 1-7

Wed Oct 1. **Introduction to Ancient Democracy**
Dunn, Ch. 1, Hornblower; Manin, Ch. 1, pp. 8-41

Fri Oct 3. **Athens vs. Sparta**
J.S. Mill on Athens, on Plato’s *Protagoras*, on Sparta

Mon Oct 6. **Plato**
Plato’s *Republic* on democracy, 414b-415d, 487a- 494a  6 pp. 543a-545b and 555a-569c

Wed Oct 8. **Aristotle on Democracy**
Aristotle’s *Politics* on democracy, Book III, 6, 7, 8, Book IV, 3, 4, 9, 11, Book VI, 2

Fri Oct 10. **From Ancient Rome to Medieval Florence**
Dunn, Ch. 4, Skinner; Marsilius of Padua, *The Defender of the Peace*, Chs. 12, 13, 16, 18

Mon Oct 13. **Machiavelli and the Italian City-States**
Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, Book I, chs. 2, 4, 9, 58

Wed Oct 15. **The Logic of Equality**
The Putney Debates

Fri Oct 17. Aristocracy vs. Democracy: Class Debate

Mon Oct 20, IN-CLASS-EXAM

Wed Oct 22. Why Election Rather than Lot; the English Constitution
Montesquieu, Spirit of the Laws, Book XI, chs. 2-6

Fri Oct 24. The American Democratic Revolution
Dunn, Ch. 6, Wood; Federalist 10, 57 (ONLY paras. 1-5!), 63 (ONLY paras. 10-14!); Paine, Rights of Man, Part II, Ch. 3

Mon Oct 27. Rousseau and the French Revolution
Dunn, Ch. 7, Fontana; Rousseau, Social Contract, Book I, 6, 7, 8, Book II 1, 3,4, 6-7, Book III 1, 3, 4, 15, Book IV 1-3

Wed Oct 29. Rousseau, continued

Fri Oct 31. Rousseau, continued
Also Grofman, “Rousseau’s General Will: A Condorcetian Perspective”

Mon Nov 3. French Revolution: Democracy, Socialism, and Liberalism Emerge and Diverge
Sieyes, selections from “What is the Third Estate”

Wed Nov 5. French Revolution Continued: Terror

Burke, http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch13s7.html, one page; Lecture

Mon Nov 10. French Revolution Continued: Liberalism
Constant, “The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns”

Tue Nov 11. VETERANS’ DAY HOLIDAY

Wed Nov 12. Representative Democracy Matures
J.S. Mill, On Representative Government, Chs. 5, 6

James Bryce, American Commonwealth

Mon Nov 17. PAPER DUE
Democratic, Liberal, and Socialist Convergence
Hobhouse, Elements of Liberalism; Bernstein, Democracy and Socialism

Wed Nov 19. **Antidemocratic Reaction: Violence and Antisemitism**  
Sorel, *On Violence*, selections

Fri Nov 21 **Antidemocratic Reaction: The Elite Theorists**  
Michels, *Political Parties*, selections; Michels, “Charismatic Leadership”

Mon Nov 24. **Fascism: Against Peace, Liberalism, Socialism, Democracy, for True Democracy**  
Marinetti, “The Futurist Manifesto”; Mussolini, “The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism”

Wed Nov 26. **Communism: Against Liberal Democracy, for True Democracy**  
Vyshinsky, “Political Basis of the USSR,” from *Law of the Soviet State*, SKIM for historical background 140-158; READ and STUDY 159-176

Fri Nov 28. **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

Mon Dec 1. **Triumph of Modern Political Democracy**  
Dunn, Ch 8, Maier.  
Reread from Fri Sep 26 and Mon Sep 29: Dahl, Manin 1-7.

Wed Dec 3. **Process vs. Process**  
Lecture; short reading TBA

Fri Dec 5. **Class Debate: How Democratic is the U.S. Supreme Court?**

Fri Dec 12, 8-11 AM. **Final Exam**  
Hey, we don’t like the time either.

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