Democratic Justice

Political Science 491P
University of Notre Dame
Prof. Gerry Mackie
Fall 2004
DeBartolo 343
Tu Th 3:30-4:45

PurPOSE
One hundred years ago few people in the world were voting members of liberal democracies; up to World War Two the bulk of intellectual opinion, including in the West, disdained democracy; and twenty years ago the democratic countries were diagnosed as suffering from dangerous excesses of liberalism and democracy. Yet at the end of the 20th century liberal democracy is triumphant as the most common and most legitimate form of government in the world. The seminar will survey the basics of democratic theory. What is democracy, how does it work, can or should it be better than it is?

No special background in political theory, or democratic studies, is assumed. The first half of the course surveys models of democracy from ancient times to the present, and will provide essential background on democratic theory. After this preparation, we turn to the problem of justifying democracy: is democracy the best form of government, and, if so, why? We’ll spend the week before the election on the ethics of elections, and on election day we’ll discuss Robert Dahl’s essay on the democratic shortcomings of the U.S. Constitution. Also, we’ll spend extra time on the topic of representation, and on neorepublican theory (has nothing to do with U.S. Republican Party).

At the end of the course students should be familiar with the basic concepts of democracy as understood by contemporary political theory, be able to integrate them with one another and with newly encountered concepts, and be able to apply those concepts to actual cases and in practical political experience. Also, the student will have written one sustained research paper on a topic.

CONTACTS
My office is at 405 Decio Hall, tel. 631-7570, email gmackie@nd.edu. Office hours are Wednesday 11:00-12:30, Thursday 2:00-3:30, or by appointment. I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity for office consultations.

ASSESSMENT
This is a senior writing seminar. The goal is 25 total pages of writing, and a final paper.

Participation – 5%
First five-page paper assignment, 20%
Second five-page paper assignment, 20%
Statement of research design, two pages – 5%
Final 15-page paper, 45%

I’ve designed the course so that you get some writing guidance, and some ideas about what I expect, in two short-paper assignments, instead of having your whole grade ride on one big final paper. A first five-page paper will be assigned on September 16, and due on September 23. I will offer 3-4 questions, and with advance clearance you can write on your own topic. The second five-page paper will be assigned on October 12, and due on October 28. Same deal. No later than November 4, provide me with a two-page statement of research design for your final paper – I will return the design with advice. The final 15-page paper is due the last day of class, December 7.

Please speak up right away if you think the assessment plan can be improved. I’m willing to revise assessment, for sound reasons, during the first two weeks of the semester (but not thereafter, in fairness to students who enroll in the class with certain expectations).

PERFORMANCE
Papers are due no later than the beginning of class on the due date; no papers will be accepted after the beginning of class; do not miss class to finish writing the paper. Late papers will be penalized ½ grade for 5 minutes to 24 hours late, 1 grade for up to 48 hours, etc. Papers must have complete and proper citations.

Papers should be well-organized, well-considered, and well-written. Poor writing brings down the grade quickly. Please make use of the Notre Dame Writing Center. At my discretion, I may require rewrites, in which case the grade is an average of the original and the rewrite.

You are expected to be completely prepared for each session, and to participate actively in discussion. You are expected to keep current or ahead of the readings as listed in the syllabus. Lack of preparation or nonparticipation results in a lower grade.

Roll will be kept. If you miss more than three classes without proper university documentation, I reserve the right to lower your course grade by 1/2 point for each additional day you miss; for example, five unexcused absences would lower a B to a C.

HONESTY
We will abide strictly by the Academic Code of Honor. 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. Review the Code in DuLac. If you have any
questions about what is permitted, consult with me, as ambiguities will be construed against the violator. I do not have a forgiving attitude about academic dishonesty.

REQUIRED TEXTS
- Geoffrey Brennan and Alan Hamlin, Democratic Devices and Desires, Cambridge
- Helena Catt, Democracy in Practice, Routledge
- Robert Dahl, Democracy and its Critics, Yale
- Robert Dahl, How Democratic is the American Constitution?, Yale
- John Dryzek, Deliberative Democracy and Beyond, Oxford
- Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, Democracy and Disagreement
- David Held, Models of Democracy, 2nd edition, Polity
- Philip, Pettit, Republicanism, Oxford
- Dennis Thompson, Just Elections, Chicago

Note: I ordered paperback, and if possible used, editions. In most cases we are reading only some chapters of the book, and you may be able to save money by consulting a library reserve copy. There are more books than usual for a course like this, but this is compensated by far fewer photocopied readings.

READING PACKET
One short reading packet is available from the Copy Center, 301 O'Shaughnessy Hall.

SCHEDULE
Note: “Background” reading is not required; all else is required.

HISTORICAL MODELS OF DEMOCRACY
Aug 24, Introduction. Democracy defined. Catt, Ch. 1; Gutmann*; Definitions of Democracy*
Aug 26, Held, Ch. 1, Classical Democracy; Dahl, Ch. 1, The First Transformation: To the Democratic City State; Manin, Intro and Ch. 1
Aug 31, Held, Ch. 2, Republicanism; Dahl, Ch. 2, Toward the Second Transformation: Republicanism, Representation and the Logic of Equality
Sep 2, NO CLASS, instructor at APSA Convention
Sep 7, Held, Ch. 3, Liberalism; Dahl, Ch. 15, The Second Democratic Transformation: From The City-State to the Nation-State
Sep 9, Minimalist Democracy. Schumpeter*; Mackie on Schumpeter*; (Background: Held, Ch. 5)
Sep 14, Manin, Ch. 2, The Triumph of Election
Sep 16, First paper assigned. Held, 199-218 (Pluralism); 253-263 (Libertarianism); 263-273 (Participationism); Dahl Ch. 16; (Background: Catt, Ch. 3).

CONTEMPORARY MODELS OF DEMOCRACY
Sep 21, Manin, Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy*; (Background: Warren, Deliberative Democracy*)
Sep 23, First paper due. Dryzek, Ch. 1, Liberal Democracy; Ch. 2, Minimal Democracy
Sep 28, Dryzek, Ch. 3, Difference Democracy; Ch. 4, Insurgent Democracy
Sep 30, Dryzek, Ch. 5, Transnational Democracy; Ch. 6, Green Democracy; Ch. 7
Reflexive Democracy.
JUSTIFYING DEMOCRACY
Oct 5, Catt, Ch. 2, Collective Decisions; Dahl, Chs. 10, 11, 12
Oct 7, Dahl, Democracy and its Critics, Chs. 3-4-5, Anarchism, Guardianship, Critique of Guardianship
Oct 12, Second paper assigned. Dahl, Part III
Oct 14, Przeworski, Minimalist Conception of Democracy: A Defense*; Christiano, The Authority of Democracy*
-- FALL BREAK --
Oct 26, Thompson, Just Elections, Chs. 0, 1
Oct 28, Second paper due. Thompson, Just Elections, Chs. 2, 3
Nov 2, Dahl, How Democratic is the American Constitution?
Nov 4, Research design due. Brennan and Hamlin, Chs. 1-4
Nov 9, Brennan and Hamlin, Chs. 5-7
Nov 11, Gutmann and Thompson, Ch. 1, Persistence of Moral Disagreement – 41
Nov 16, Gutmann and Thompson, Ch. 2, The Sense of Reciprocity – 43
REPRESENTATION
Nov 18, Representation I. Catt, Ch. 5, Representation; Gutmann and Thompson, Ch. 4, The Scope of Accountability; (Background: Catt, Ch. 4, Initiatives and Referendums)
Nov 23, Representation II. Manin, Ch. 5, The Verdict of the People; Brennan and Hamlin, Ch. 9, Political Representation
NEOREPUBLICANISM
Nov 30, Pettit, Republicanism, 0,3,4
Dec 2, continued, 5,6
Dec 7, Final paper due. Conclusion

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