

The Democratic Citizen in Modern Society

Fridays 12:00-14:00, Seminarhaus 4.101

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The Main Idea

What does it mean to be a citizen in a modern democratic society? In this seminar, we will examine a variety of questions about modern democratic life from a political theory perspective, including: What is the significance of freedom? How do we understand specifically modern forms of power and domination? How does mass media affect democratic discussion and debate? How do we make sense of cultural diversity? How do the pressures of 21st-century capitalism influence democratic life? Readings will be drawn from Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Immanuel Kant, John Stuart Mill, Max Weber, Jürgen Habermas, Michel Foucault, Cécile Laborde, Wolfgang Streeck, and Nancy Fraser.

Progress and Assessment

Attendance: Everyone is responsible for attending all classes, keeping up with the weekly readings, and participating actively in our discussions. It is expected that you will not miss more than 2 sessions during the semester.

Weekly Readings: As you look over the syllabus, you will notice a list of readings for each week. Don't get nervous—you will not be asked to read all of them! The readings for each week are divided into several categories:

- *Primary readings:* The "primary reading" will be the main focus of that week's lecture and discussion. Each week's primary reading will typically be 25-40 pages long in total, though not always. It is expected that everyone will have read and will arrive to class ready to discuss the primary reading for each session. Primary readings will also be the focus of writing assignments for the

class. I have marked these readings in the syllabus with two stars (★★) so that they can be found easily.

- *Secondary readings*: For a number of our sessions, you can expect to find a handful of “secondary readings” listed after that week’s primary reading, which may be relevant to the issues raised or offer a differing perspective. These readings will be marked in the syllabus with one star (★). They are not required reading, but you may find some of them to be of interest.

Solo Points: Over the course of the semester you will be required to write a number of brief (300–500 words) critical reflections or “solos” on a given week’s reading. Precisely how many of these you will need to write will depend on how thoroughly you’ve done the readings and how well you’ve paid attention in class. *READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY.*

- For each solo, you are asked to bring to light one critical question or issue that is raised by the week’s primary reading. This may be a philosophical quandary, a broader implication, an objection, an example of real-world relevance—the choice is yours. However, it should meet the following minimal guidelines:
 - The solo must be written on a given week’s primary reading (marked with “★★”).
 - It should be between 300 and 500 words (not including title, headings, and bibliography); it should be emailed to me by noon on the Monday following the relevant class session.
 - The paper should demonstrate that you have read and understood the text—the *entire text*. Though you are asked to focus on a single point, you should be able to relate that point to the author’s overall argument.
 - It should *not* be a mere summary.
 - It should strive to make a *clear and concise point*.
 - Your point should be backed up by *citing page numbers in the text*.
 - You should *not* rely on large quotes.
- The solos will be marked on a scale of 0 to 3 points.
 - A solo earns **3 points** if it demonstrates a strong understanding of the reading and makes a clear and thoughtful point, which is backed by solid reasoning and evidence from the text.
 - A solo earns **2 points** if it is clear that the author has carefully read the reading and can show a good grasp of its major arguments.
 - A solo earns **1 point** if it displays some or partial understanding of the reading and its major arguments.
 - A solo earns **0 points** if it fails to meet the minimum requirements of the assignment.
 - Intermediate marks such as 1½, 2¾, etc., are also possible.
 - *Should you receive a mark of 1,499 or less on a solo, you are permitted to write the solo again for a better score.*

- **All students seeking credit are required to earn at least 8 solo points over the course of the semester.**

Final research paper: At the conclusion of the semester, students pursuing a *Leistungsschein* or *Modulprüfung* will write a research paper of 3500-4500 words (about 12-15 pages), which will be due **no later than 22 September, 2019**. Those pursuing a *Teilnahmeschein* are not required to submit a final paper.

- You are free to write the paper on any topic you wish, so long as your topic is based on the central themes of the course. *You are strongly encouraged to meet with me at least once to discuss your paper.* When writing, you should approach your final paper as a serious piece of scholarly research, complete with citations and bibliography: you should develop a clear central thesis; you should demonstrate knowledge of your topic; you should engage the material in a critical and thoughtful manner; you should be able to back up your arguments with reasons, evidence, and examples; and you should strive to show readers what conclusions they can draw from your efforts.
- The final research paper will be evaluated on the following criteria:
 - *Comprehension of material* (≈25%). Ability to make use of class readings and other research materials and display an understanding of the relevant ideas, themes, and arguments.
 - *Formulation and defense of argument* (≈30%). Presentation of a clear thesis and ability to defend that thesis in an organized way, using solid reasoning and evidence.
 - *Clear, concise, and well-organized writing* (≈20%). You should strive to organize your paper into well-structured paragraphs, write in clear sentences, use clear phrasing, avoid errors in spelling and grammar, and use proper and sufficient citation.*
 - *Critical thinking* (≈25%). Ability to identify the strengths, weaknesses, usefulness, and limits of the ideas and arguments presented by the authors covered by your research, and to think creatively and offer original perspectives on the relevant issues and problems.

Class participation: In addition to written assignments, *additional credit* may be awarded based on active and thoughtful class participation.

●●● IMPORTANT ●●●

All papers must be double-spaced, in 12-point type, with one-inch margins, using a normal-sized font, and must be submitted to me via email as either a Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or Adobe PDF (.pdf) file at **brian.m.milstein@gmail.com**.

Unfortunately, I will not be able to accept papers not written in English.

* See the weekly readings below for examples of a common style of bibliographic citation.

For all papers, you will be expected to adhere to proper conventions of scholarly attribution. Any work quoted or otherwise referenced must be appropriately and fully cited. Any idea, argument, information, or quotation that you might employ from an external source must likewise be accompanied by full citation. You are free to use any standard bibliographic citation style you wish, but you should apply it consistently. **Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and may result in automatic failure of the course.**

Weekly Readings

All required readings for the course will be made available on OLAT, as well as at least some of the suggested supplementary readings (which will be indicated with an OLAT icon).

••• **PLEASE NOTE:** The readings listed may be subject to change, and additional supplementary readings may be added or made available over the course of the term.
Check OLAT periodically for updated versions of this syllabus. •••

19 April / PUBLIC HOLIDAY

Week 1 (26 April) / Introduction

No reading

Week 2 (3 May) / Progress and Enlightenment I

★★ Primary reading:

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1987 [1750]) *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*, in *Basic Political Writings*, trans. and ed. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company). Pp1–21. OLAT

★ Secondary reading:

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau. 1987 [1762]. *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, in *Basic Political Writings*, trans. and ed. Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company. OLAT
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau. 1987 [1762]. *On the Social Contract*. Pp. 139–227 in *Basic Political Writings*, trans. and ed. Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company. Pp. 141–62 [Bks. I–II]. OLAT

Supplementary reading:

- Frederick Rauscher (2016) “Kant’s Social and Political Philosophy,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-social-political/>).

Week 3 (10 May) / Progress and Enlightenment II**★★ Primary reading:**

- In English:
 - Immanuel Kant (1970 [1793]) “On the Common Saying: This May Be True in Theory, but It Does not Apply in Practice,” in *Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss and trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press). Pp61–92. OLAT
- In German:
 - Immanuel Kant (1965 [1793]) “Über den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein, taugt aber nicht für die Praxis,” in *Politische Schriften*, ed. Otto Heinrich von der Gablentz (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien). Pp64–103. OLAT

★ Secondary reading:

- Immanuel Kant (1996 [1784]), “An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?” trans. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). Pp17–22. OLAT

Supplementary reading:

- Frederick Rauscher (2016) “Kant’s Social and Political Philosophy,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-social-political/>).

Week 4 (17 May) / Progress and Enlightenment III**★★ Primary reading:**

- In English:
 - John Stuart Mill (1989 [1859, 1869]) *On Liberty*, ed. Stefan Collini (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press). Pp86–120. OLAT
- In German:
 - John Stuart Mill (1969 [1859, 1869]) *Über Freiheit*, trans. Achim von Borries (Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt). Pp23–67. OLAT

★ Secondary reading:

- Karl Marx (2010 [1843]) “Letters from the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*,” trans. Clemens Dutt, in *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, vol. 3 (London: Lawrence & Wishart). Pp141–5. OLAT

Week 5 (24 May) / Modern Politics and the State**★★ Primary reading:**

- In English:
 - Max Weber (1946 [1919]) "Politics as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. and ed. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press). Pp77–128. OLAT
- In German:
 - Max Weber (2002 [1919]) "Politik als Beruf," in *Schriften 1894–1922*, ed. Dirk Kaesler (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag). Pp512–56. OLAT

Week 6 (TBD*) / Democracy I

Reading TBD

(* Due to my being out of town, the session scheduled for 31 May will be rescheduled)

Week 7 (7 June) / Democracy II**★★ Primary reading:**

- Jürgen Habermas (1985) "Civil Disobedience: Litmus Test for the Democratic Constitutional State," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 30: 95–116. OLAT

★ Secondary reading:

- Jürgen Habermas (2006) "Political Communication in Media Society: Does Democracy Still Enjoy an Epistemic Dimension? The Impact of Normative Theory on Empirical Research," *Communication Theory* 16: 411–26. OLAT
- Martin Luther King, Jr. (2015 [1963]), "Letter from a Birmingham City Jail" in Steven M. Cahn (ed), *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). Pp1117–26. OLAT
- John Rawls (1999 [1971]) "Civil Disobedience" [from *A Theory of Justice*] in Michael Rosen, Jonathan Wolff, and Catriona McKinnon (eds), *Political Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). Pp85–8. OLAT

Week 8 (14 June) / The Disciplinary Society I**★★ Primary reading:**

- Michel Foucault (1984) [excerpts from *Discipline and Punish* in] *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books). Pp170–205. OLAT

★ Secondary reading:

- Michel Foucault (1984) "Truth and Power" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books). Pp51–75. OLAT

Week 9 (21 June) / The Disciplinary Society II**★★ Primary reading:**

- Michel Foucault (1984) [excerpts from *Discipline and Punish* in] *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books). Pp206–38. [OLAT](#)

★ Secondary reading:

- Michel Foucault (1984) “Space, Knowledge, and Power” in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books). Pp170–205. [OLAT](#)

Week 10 (28 June) / Multiculturalism**★★ Primary reading:**

- Seyla Benhabib (2006) “Democratic Iterations: The Local, the National, and the Global” in Robert Post (ed), *Another Cosmopolitanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). Pp45–80. [OLAT](#)

★ Secondary reading:

- Cécile Laborde (2006) “Female Autonomy, Education, and the *Hijab*,” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 9(3): 351–77. [OLAT](#)

Week 11 (5 July) / Capitalism**★★ Primary reading:**

- Wolfgang Streeck (2011) “The Crises of Democratic Capitalism,” *New Left Review* 71: 5-29. [OLAT](#)

★ Secondary reading:

- Wolfgang Streeck (2012) “Citizens as Customers: Considerations on the New Politics of Consumption,” *New Left Review* 76: 27-47. [OLAT](#)
- Wolfgang Streeck (2014) “How Will Capitalism End?” *New Left Review* 87: 35-64. [OLAT](#)

Week 12 (12 July) / Social Reproduction**★★ Primary reading:**

- Nancy Fraser (2016) “Contradictions of Capital and Care,” *New Left Review* 100: 99–117. [OLAT](#)

★ Secondary reading:

- Shirin M. Rai, Catherine Hoskyns, and Dania Thomas (2013) “Depletion: The Cost of Social Reproduction,” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 16(1): 86-105. [OLAT](#)

- Arlie Russel Hochschild (2004) "Love and Gold" in Luciana Ricciutelli, Angela Miles, and Margaret H. McFadden (eds), *Feminist Politics, Activism, and Vision: Local and Global Challenges* (London: Zed Books). Pp34–46. [OLAT](#)
- Nancy Fraser (2014) "Behind Marx's Hidden Abode: For an Expanded Conception of Capitalism," *New Left Review* 86: 55-72. [OLAT](#)

••• Final paper due Monday, 22 September, at 12 noon •••