This is an introductory course in political theory. Through an examination of classic texts, case studies, news clippings, editorials, speeches, music, literature, documentary and film, we will explore two general themes: 1) the ways that individuals are consciously and unconsciously shaped by various modes of power embedded in the social and political worlds in which they live; and 2) theories and practices of resistance that have emerged to challenge modes of power perceived as unjust.

Books for purchase

John Stuart Mill, ‘On Liberty’ and Other Writings (Cambridge)

Henry David Thoreau, Civil Disobedience and Other Essays (Dover)

All other readings on TED

Requirements

One open-book mid-term exam (40%) and one final project (50%) due Friday, August 2 at noon. The remaining 10% will be at our discretion, based upon attendance and participation in class discussion. Significant improvement in your written work will be considered when calculating your final grade!

Schedule

Week 1: Power and Obedience

M: Introduction: Power and Justice

W: Authority (please review at home on TED)

READ: Stanley Milgram, “The Perils of Obedience”

FILM: The Milgram Experiment Revisited, Stanley Milgram

Come to class Monday July 8 ready to discuss the following questions:

Describe the internal conflict experienced by the “tester”
What does the “tester” both gain and lose in the course of obeying the authority figure?
What arguments seemed to make the tester more likely to obey the commands of authority figure?
Were the testers sadistic?
Why do testers sometimes laugh? How can we understand the laughter?
Week 2: Authority

M:  **Discipline:**
    **READ:** Michel Foucault, “Panopticism”; Plato, *Republic* 514a-517a

W:  **Tyranny of opinion:**
    **READ:** John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, chs 1-3; On the Subjection of Women, ch. 1

Week 3: Power and Justice

M:  **Case Study: Nazi Germany**
    **READ:**
    Ervin Staub, “Genocide and Mass Killing: Cultural-Societal and Psychological Origins”
    Bruno Bettelheim, “Remarks on the Psychological Appeal of Totalitarianism”
    Melissa Dittmann, *What Makes Good People Do Bad Things?*
    **FILM:** selections from Leni Riefenstahl, *Triumph of the Will*

W:  **Resistance I: Conscience**
    **READ:**
    Henry David Thoreau, *On Civil Disobedience*
    **FILM:** *The Courage to Care*

Week 4: Justice as Resistance

M:  **Resistance II**
    Gandhi, selections
    Martin Luther King, *Letter from Birmingham Jail*
    Malcolm X, *Ballot or the Bullet*
    Einstein, *The Negro Question*
    Nelson Mandela, *I am Prepared to Die*
    [http://db.nelsonmandela.org/speeches/pub_view.asp?pg=item&ItemID=NMS010](http://db.nelsonmandela.org/speeches/pub_view.asp?pg=item&ItemID=NMS010)
    **VIDEO CLIPS:** Martin Luther King, Malcolm X: AUDIO CLIP: Mandela

W:  **OPEN-BOOK MID TERM EXAM (1.5 hours)**
    **FINAL PROJECT PROMPT DISTRIBUTED (on TED)**

Week 5: Global Justice

T:  **Global power, global justice**
    **READ:**
    Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence and Morality”
    Thomas Nagel, “Poverty and Food: Why Charity is Not Enough”
    Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, selections
    **FILM:** *The End of Poverty?*

Th:  **Localizing the Global: Tijuana - San Diego**
Guest Lecture: Professor Teddy Cruz, UCSD Professor of Public Culture and Urbanism, Department of Visual Arts; Co-Director UCSD Cross-Border Initiative.

READ:
Forman & Cruz, *Nature's Nation*

Final Project Discussion with Yile Zhang

**TAKE-HOME FINAL PROJECT DUE on TED August 2, noon.**