

Revolution and Reaction: Political Thought From Kant to Nietzsche

Political Science 110C -- 741860
University of California, San Diego
Prof. Gerry Mackie, Spring 2012
MWF 10:00-10:50 AM, Center 212

PURPOSE

The course surveys European political thought from the French Revolution to the end of the 19th century. The student will be introduced to leading political thinkers in this period, will primarily study original texts, will learn how to interpret and evaluate conceptually difficult material, and will be able to apply concepts learned to today's political issues and controversies.

What are the rights of citizens? What is liberty, what is equality, what is justice? How are moral and political values defended and criticized? How might these values guide our political lives? These are some of the questions we'll consider.

The idea that individuals, citizens, have rights was proposed in the Enlightenment and declared in the English Revolution of 1689, the American Revolution of 1776, and the French Revolution of 1789. The French event was the most genuinely revolutionary and (although traversing democracy, terror, and empire) shaped all modern politics. At that time Paine was the voice of rights and progress, and Burke was the voice of hierarchy and tradition: the argument continues today. Rights challenged tradition, as did the utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill (for whom any right was derived from the greatest good for the greatest number). Kant justified rights more directly, and contractarian justice, based on the autonomy of the subject. Meanwhile, industrialization and its stark inequalities gave rise to a working class movement, and, after the failed revolutions of 1848, Marx became its leading theorist (Marxism evolved into social democracy in Western Europe and into communism in the East). Towards the end of the century, liberalism split into classical liberalism and into today's social liberalism (in America traditionalism has fused with classical liberalism, and social democracy with social liberalism). Nietzsche rejected Enlightenment rationalism, morality, equality, democracy, and liberalism; and, in our day, as communism decayed, helped inspire postmodernism.

You are expected to attend and to be completely prepared for each session. You are expected to keep current or ahead of the readings as listed in the syllabus.

CONTACTS

My office (do **not** mail) is at: 322 Social Sciences *Research* Building (aka Chemistry Research Bldg., #393, **NOT** SSB); S. of Media Center, E. of Cog. Sci, N. of Peterson Hall; <http://maps.ucsd.edu>; elevator to 3rd floor, turn left, then right, to 322. Telephone

858 534-7015, email gmackie@ucsd.edu (please email rather than telephone). Office hours are 3-5 Wed, or by appointment. Instructor website:

<http://polisci.ucsd.edu/~gmackie>

| Teaching Assistant information: To be arranged. [Alan Ward, details to be provided.](#) They are also available by email appointment.

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

ASSESSMENT

An in-class exam on **Mon Apr 23**, 30% of the grade.

A 4-page paper is due on **Mon May 21** 30% of grade.

A final exam on **Mon Jun 11**, 40% of grade.

The average final grade in the course will be at least a B. You won't learn anything unless you do the readings, attend lectures, and think about course topics. The readings are difficult to understand without the lectures, and the lectures are difficult to understand without the readings. Ideally, one does a reading, noting difficulties, attends lecture, and returns to the reading again. Course assessments are designed to reward those who do the work of learning.

The first closed-book, closed-note exam will 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 much you have thought about themes of the course.

The 5-page paper should be between 1000 and 1500 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 1600 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 each additional week (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, Kant through Nietzsche, worth 20% of the total grade, a choice of essay questions on Mill and Nietzsche, worth 10% of the total grade; and a choice of essay questions on the whole course, worth 10% of the total grade.

There will be one discussion question stated, on JS Mill, on Nietzsche, or both. Here are study questions (the exam question may differ).

J.S. Mill, On Liberty

What is Mill's harm principle?

What are some of its strengths and weaknesses?

How does it oblige state, society?

How does a utilitarian defend an absolute right? Does he succeed?

Is individual development always necessary to well-being?

Something illegal but shouldn't be by the harm principle? Something legal but shouldn't be?

Nietzsche, Genealogy of Morals

How does the pair good:bad differ from the pair good:evil?

What is the origin of standard Christian morality?

What is resentment?

Why did slave morality triumph?

What is the will to power?

What does Nietzsche mean by perspectivism?

On what grounds does Nietzsche object to equality, liberalism, democracy, justice, and morality?

How do N's views on individual development differ from Mill's?

The essay questions on the whole course are as follows:

Give an answer that integrates your knowledge over the entire course. Refer to at least six documents or thinkers we've read, at least two from each half (Half: Weeks 1-5, Weeks 6-10). You will be graded primarily on how well you put together the material we've studied (you needn't strain to prove that you've read and remembered every last thing, as the Identification Questions assess that aspect of your learning). What is YOUR analysis, YOUR response. Originality and creativity are welcome, so long as you are accurate. Go long. You may study together on these questions, as long as you don't produce a joint outline or a joint essay which each of you memorizes.

In the political thought of the long 19th century (the whole course's readings and lectures):

1. How is the relationship between individual on the one hand, and society or the state on the other hand, conceived? Is there any pattern of development in this relationship?

2. How is liberty conceived, in thought and in practice? Is precisely the same liberty appropriate for all times and places?

3. How did our thinkers evaluate the contest between what J.S. Mill called a party of order or stability and a party of progress or reform? How can we here and now (in the

U.S. and elsewhere on the planet), distinguish what is fit to be preserved from what ought to be swept away?

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 at bookstore:

- Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Hackett)
- Kant, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays* (Hackett)
- Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* (Anchor)
- Marx, *Selected Writings* (Hackett)
- Bentham, J.S.Mill, *The Classical Utilitarians* (Hackett)
- Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* (Vintage)

Download from internet:

- *English Bill of Rights*, 1689, <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/england.htm>
- *The Declaration of Independence*, <http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/index.htm>
- Tom Paine, *Common Sense*, skip Introduction and Appendix, <http://www.ushistory.org/paine/commonsense/>
- *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, <http://www.hrcr.org/docs/frenchdec.html>
- James Mill, "Government" will be posted on WebCt.

SCHEDULE

1. Introduction.....Mon Apr 2

- What is Political Theory?

2. Rights.....Wed Apr 4, Fri Apr 6

- *English Bill of Rights*
- Tom Paine, *Common Sense*
- *The Declaration of Independence*
- *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*

3. Tradition.....Mon Apr 9, Wed Apr 11, Fri Apr 13, Mon Apr 16

- Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 3-99, 124-125, 144-153, 160-163, 213-218
- Mon Apr 16, class debate on rights and tradition

4. **Utility**.....Wed Apr 18, Fri Apr 20

- Jeremy Bentham, 8-12, 16-17 (XI-XVII), 19-20 (I-IV), 36-37 (XXVII)
- James Mill, “Government” Sections 3-333, 52-56, 68-83, 88.
- J.S. Mill, “Utilitarianism,” 95-102(top), 115-119, 127-131, 136-138(top), 144(bottom)-145

*******IN CLASS EXAM, Mon Apr 23*******

5. **Autonomy**.....Wed Apr 25, Fri Apr 27, Mon Apr 30, Wed May 2

- Immanuel Kant, “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?”
- Kant, “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent”
- Kant, “To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch” (107-125)

6. **Revolution**.....Fri May 4, Mon May 7, Wed May 9, Fri May 11, Mon May 14, Wed May 16, Fri May 18

- Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*
- Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto* (read first, won’t be discussed first)
- Marx, *On the Jewish Question* (1-21 only)
- Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* (58-79)
- Marx, *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (187-208) – look at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_French_Empire
- Preface to a Critique of Political Economy (209-213)

*******PAPER DUE, Mon May 21*******

7. **Liberalism**.....Mon May 21, Wed May 23, Fri May 25, ~~Mon May 28 MEMORIAL DAY~~ Wed May 30, Fri Jun 1

- J.S. Mill, *On Liberty*, Chs. 1-4, 5 (223-226)
- Wed May 30, class debate, Mill’s harm principle

8. **The Will to Power**, Mon Jun 4, Wed Jun 6, Fri Jun 8

- Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Preface, Parts I, III (15-56, 97-163)

*******FINAL EXAM, Mon Jun 11, 8 -11 AM *******

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