

SYC 514E Contemporary Political Theory: Thinkers, Traditions, and Challenges

Spring 2025-2026 Tuesday 9:30-12:30 ITB Library

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Course Description

This advanced seminar offers a comprehensive and critical engagement with the central thinkers, traditions, and conceptual challenges in contemporary political theory. It explores how leading theorists reinterpret, extend, and contest classical and modern paradigms, while formulating original responses to the political, ethical, and ecological crises of our time.

Students will examine a wide spectrum of philosophical schools and movements—including liberalism, conservatism, communitarianism, critical theory, radical democracy, post-structuralism, and environmental political theory—through sustained analysis of core political concepts such as **justice, democracy, equality, power, solidarity, freedom, and oppression**. The course emphasizes the interplay between normative theory and empirical inquiry, highlighting the methodological diversity and interdisciplinary scope of contemporary political thought.

Special attention will be given to the practical relevance of political theory in addressing contemporary issues such as **global justice, identity politics, ecological sustainability, the role of the state, and the ethics of resistance**. Through close textual analysis, seminar discussion, and independent research, students will develop the intellectual tools necessary to critically assess and contribute to ongoing debates in political theory and public life.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of key concepts, arguments, and theoretical frameworks in contemporary political theory.
2. Critically evaluate the epistemological and normative foundations of diverse political traditions and their responses to pressing political questions.
3. Compare and synthesize competing theoretical perspectives, assessing their implications for political institutions, practices, and values.
4. Formulate original, well-supported arguments through rigorous engagement with primary texts and scholarly debates.
5. Apply theoretical insights to contemporary political challenges, demonstrating the relevance of political theory to democratic practice, policy formation, and civic engagement.
6. Communicate complex ideas effectively in both oral and written formats, using appropriate academic conventions, conceptual precision, and critical vocabulary.

Course Structure and Assessment

1. Participation (20%)

- **Engagement:** Active and sustained contributions to seminar discussions.
- **Preparation:** Demonstrated familiarity with assigned readings through informed and critical commentary.

- **Attendance:** Regular attendance is expected. More than two unexcused absences will result in a grade penalty.

2. Oral Presentation (20%)

Each student will deliver a 10–15 minute presentation on a selected reading or theorist.

- **Content Mastery:** Accurate and concise summary of the text's central arguments.
- **Theoretical Contextualization:** Placement of the reading within broader debates in political theory.
- **Critical Reflection:** Identification of key tensions, critiques, and implications.
- **Presentation Skills:** Clear, confident, and well-organized delivery, with effective use of visual aids where appropriate.

3. Final Paper (60%)

A. Research Proposal (20%)

Due mid-semester (500–750 words)

- **Research Question:** Clearly defined, focused, and analytically significant.
- **Preliminary Argument:** Tentative thesis and rationale, indicating theoretical relevance.
- **Outline:** Coherent structure of the paper's sections.
- **Bibliography:** Initial list of at least five scholarly sources, demonstrating engagement with relevant literature.

B. Term Paper (40%)

Final submission (4,000–5,000 words)

- **Introduction:** Clear articulation of the research question, its significance, and the paper's structure.
- **Literature Review:** Critical overview of relevant scholarship, identification of key debates, and positioning of the paper's contribution.
- **Methodology:** Justification of theoretical approach and use of sources.
- **Argument and Analysis:** Development of a coherent and original argument, supported by textual evidence and critical reasoning.
- **Counterarguments:** Engagement with alternative perspectives and potential objections.
- **Conclusion:** Summary of findings, restatement of thesis, and reflection on broader theoretical and practical implications.
- **Academic Rigor:** Clarity, coherence, originality, and adherence to scholarly standards of citation, structure, and argumentation.

Course Readings and Materials

All required readings will be made available through **İTÜ KOVAN**. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before each seminar and come prepared to discuss them critically. Supplementary readings may be provided to support specific topics or student interests.

If you encounter difficulties accessing the materials or wish to explore additional resources, please contact the instructor.

Week 1: What Is Political Theory, and Why Does It Matter?

Core Themes

- Defining political theory and its relationship to political science and philosophy
- Normative inquiry and methodological pluralism

- The boundaries and scope of politics
- Comparative and global perspectives
- The role of political theory in public reasoning and policy

Core Readings

1. Defining Political Theory

- Barry, Brian (2002). *Why Political Science Needs Political Theory*. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 25(2), 107–115.
- Brown, Wendy (2002). *What Is Political Theory?* *Political Theory*, 30(4), 556–576.
- Parekh, Bhikhu (2000). *Theorizing Political Theory*. In *Political Theory in Transition*, ed. Noël Sullivan.
- Larmore, Charles (2013). *What Is Political Philosophy?* *Journal of Moral Philosophy*, 10(3), 276–306.
- Warren, Mark E. (1989). *What is Political Theory/Philosophy? PS: Political Science and Politics*, 22(3), 606–612.

2. Political Theory and Political Science

- Dryzek, John S., Honig, Bonnie, & Phillips, Anne (2011). *Overview of Political Theory*. In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, ed. Robert E. Goodin.
- Wolff, Jonathan (2018). *Method in Philosophy and Public Policy: Applied Philosophy versus Engaged Philosophy*. Routledge. Chapter 1.
- Anderson, Elizabeth (2015). *Moral Bias and Corrective Practices*. *Proceedings and Addresses of the APA*, 89, 21–47.

3. Methodology and Approaches

- List, Christian & Valentini, Laura (2016). *The Methodology of Political Theory*. In *Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Methodology*.
- McDermott, Daniel (2008). *Analytical Political Philosophy*. In *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches*, eds. Leopold & Stears.
- Frazer, Elizabeth (2008). *Political Theory and the Boundaries of Politics*. In *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches*, eds. Leopold & Stears.

4. Comparative and Global Perspectives

- Jenco, Leigh K., Idris, Murad, & Thomas, Megan C. (2020). *Comparison, Connectivity, and Disconnection*. In *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Political Theory*.

Week 2: Political Theory as Understanding and Thinking

Core Themes

- Political theory as a mode of understanding and critical reflection
- The epistemic and ethical dimensions of political theorizing
- Realism, idealism, and feasibility
- Thought experiments, conceptual analysis, and reflective equilibrium
- Political theory as vocation and practice

Core Readings

1. Foundations and Purpose of Political Theory

- Berlin, Isaiah (1988). *Does Political Theory Still Exist?* In *Concepts and Categories*, ed. Henry Hardy.

- Wolin, Sheldon S. (1969). *Political Theory as a Vocation*. *American Political Science Review*, 63, 1062–1082.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair (1983). *The Indispensability of Political Theory*. In *The Nature of Political Theory*, eds. Miller & Siendentop.
- Grant, Ruth W. (2002). *What Is Political Theory?* *Political Theory*, 30(4), 577–595.

2. Political Theory as Thinking and Practice

- Freedman, Michael (2013). *The Political Theory of Political Thinking: The Anatomy of a Practice*. Oxford University Press.
- Brown, Wendy (2005). *At the Edge: The Future of Political Theory*. In *Edgework*.
- Gunnell, John G. (2017). *Political Concepts and the Concept of the Political*. *Teoria Polityki*.
- Voegelin, Eric (1952). *The New Science of Politics*. University of Chicago Press. Pp. 1–26.
- Waldron, Jeremy (2016). *Political Political Theory: Essays on Institutions*. Harvard University Press. Pp. 1–23.

3. Methodological Tools and Epistemic Strategies

- Daniels, Norman (1996). *Justice and Justification: Reflective Equilibrium in Theory and Practice*. Ch. 1.
- Brownlee, Kimberley & Stemplowska, Zofia (2017). *Thought Experiments*. In *Methods in Analytical Political Theory*, ed. A. Blau.
- Olsthoorn, Johan (2017). *Conceptual Analysis*. In *Methods in Analytical Political Theory*, ed. A. Blau.
- Johnson, James (2014). *Models Among the Political Theorists*. *American Journal of Political Science*, 58(3), 547–560.
- Kincaid, Harold & van Bouwel, Jeroen (eds.). *Handbook of Philosophy of Political Science*.

4. Idealism, Realism, Feasibility, and Human Nature

- Galston, William A. (2010). *Realism in Political Theory*. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 9(4), 385–411.
- Williams, Bernard (2005). *Realism and Moralism in Political Theory*. In *In the Beginning Was the Deed*.
- Southwood, Nicholas (2016). *Does ‘Ought’ Imply ‘Feasible’?* *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 44(1), 7–45.
- Estlund, David (2011). *Human Nature and the Limits (If Any) of Political Philosophy*. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 39(3), 207–237.
- Valentini, Laura (2012). *Ideal vs. Non-Ideal Theory: A Conceptual Map*. *Philosophy Compass*, 7(9), 654–664.

5. Historical and Comparative Perspectives

- Dunn, John (1996). *The History of Political Theory and Other Essays*. Pp. 11–38.
- Baderin, Alice (2021). *The Continuity of Ethics and Political Theory*. *The Journal of Politics*, 83(4).

Suggested Readings

- **Theory and Practice:** Ball (1995), Benhabib (1995), Isaac (1995), Kiss (1995), Mansbridge (2014), Vincent (2007)

- **Methodology and Epistemology:** Knight (2017), Hamlin & Stemplowska (2012), Nagel (1994), Taylor (1994), Weber (1946, 1994), Slavny (2020), Hall (2015), Lawford-Smith (2013)
- **Historical and Comparative:** Germino (1963), Connolly (1993), Parel & Keith (2003), Thiele (1997)
- **Critical Perspectives:** Brown (2002), Freeden (2014), Balbus (2010)

Week 3: Political Theory as Interpretation

Core Themes

- Interpretation as a method and epistemology in political theory
- Hermeneutics, contextualism, and meaning
- Comparative and cross-cultural political theory
- Normativity and critique in interpretive approaches
- The relationship between political theory and social science

Core Readings

1. Foundations of Interpretive Political Theory

- Skinner, Quentin (1969). *Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas. History and Theory*, 8.
- Taylor, Charles (1971). *Interpretation and the Sciences of Man. Review of Metaphysics*, 25(1), 3–51.
- Habermas, Jürgen (1990). *Reconstruction and Interpretation in the Social Sciences. In Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action.*
- Bevir, Mark (2011). *The Contextual Approach. In Oxford Handbook of the History of Political Philosophy.*
- Blau, Adrian (2017). *Interpreting Texts. In Methods in Analytical Political Theory*, ed. A. Blau.

2. Political Theory and Social Science

- Gunnell, John G. (2011). *Political Theory and Social Science: Cutting Against the Grain. Palgrave*, pp. 129–155.
- Lawler, Janet & Waldner, David (2022). *Interpretivism versus Positivism in an Age of Causal Inference. In Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Political Science.*
- Martin, Michael (1994). *The Philosophical Importance of the Rosenthal Effect. In Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science.*
- Almond, Gabriel (1988). *Separate Tables: Schools and Sects in Political Science. PS: Political Science and Politics*, 828–842.

3. Comparative and Cross-Cultural Interpretation

- Dallmayr, Fred (2004). *Beyond Monologue: For a Comparative Political Theory. Perspectives on Politics*, 2(2), 249–257.
- Jenco, Leigh (2007). *What Does Heaven Ever Say? A Methods-centered Approach to Cross-cultural Engagement. American Political Science Review*, 101(4), 741–755.
- March, Andrew (2009). *What is Comparative Political Theory? Review of Politics*, 71(4), 531–565.
- Voegelin, Eric (1990). *Equivalences of Experiences and Symbolization in History. In Collected Works*, Vol. 12.

4. Normativity, Critique, and Interpretation

- Estlund, David (2020). *Utopophobia: On the Limits (If Any) of Political Philosophy*. Princeton University Press, pp. 3–81.
- Rehfeld, Andrew (2010). *Offensive Political Theory*. *Perspectives on Politics*, 8(2), 465–486.
- Williams, Bernard (2006). *Political Philosophy and the Analytical Tradition*. In *Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline*.

Suggested Readings

- **Hermeneutics and Interpretation:** Follesdal (1994), Geertz (1973), Foucault (1982), Watkins (1994), Skinner (2002), Martin (1994) on Taylor, Wolin (1968), Vincent (2007), O’Sullivan (2000), Gerring (2006)
- **Comparative and Global Perspectives:** Bleiker (2004), Euben (2004), Godrej (2009), Parel & Keith (2003)
- **Political Science and Methodology:** Amadae & Bueno de Mesquita (1999), Taylor (1994), Nagel (1994), Mansbridge (2014)

Week 4: The Methodological Foundations of Political Theory — Methodological Individualism and Behavioralism

Core Themes

- Methodological individualism vs. holism
- Behavioralism and its critiques
- Micro–macro linkages in political analysis
- Mechanisms, agency, and structure
- Functionalism, game theory, and rational choice
- Normative implications of methodological choices

Core Readings

1. Foundations of Methodological Individualism

- Lukes, Steven (1968). *Methodological Individualism Reconsidered*. *British Journal of Sociology*, 19(2), 119–129.
- Watkins, J.W.N. (1952). *The Principle of Methodological Individualism*. *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 3, 186–189. (Suggested)
- Hodgson, Geoffrey M. (2007). *Meanings of Methodological Individualism*. *Journal of Economic Methodology*, 14(2), 211–226.
- Little, Daniel (2010). *Methodological Individualism*. In *Encyclopedia of Political Theory*, ed. Mark Bevir.
- Zahle, Julie & Kincaid, Harold (2019). *Why Be a Methodological Individualist?* *Synthese*, 196(2), 655–675.
- Schumpeter, Joseph A. (1980). *Methodological Individualism*. Brussels: Institutum Europaeum.

2. Micro–Macro Link and Mechanisms

- Alexander, Jeffrey (1987). *The Micro–Macro Link*. University of California Press.
- Coleman, James S. (1986). *Social Theory, Social Research, and a Theory of Action*. *American Journal of Sociology*, 91(6), 1309–1355.

- Bennett, Andrew & Mishkin, Benjamin (2022). *Nineteen Kinds of Theories About Mechanisms*. In *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Political Science*.
- List, Christian & Spiekermann, Kai (2013). *Methodological Individualism and Holism in Political Science: A Reconciliation*. *American Political Science Review*, 107, 629–642.

3. Behavioralism and Its Critics

- Easton, David (1979). *A Framework for Political Analysis*. Chapters 9–10.
- Wahlke, John (1979). *Pre-Behavioralism in Political Science*. *American Political Science Review*, 73(1), 9–31.
- Skinner, B.F. (1953). *Science and Human Behavior*. New York: Free Press.
- Leslie, Michael (1970). *In Defence of Anachronism*. *Political Studies*, 18(4), 433–447.

4. Marxism, Functionalism, and Rational Choice

- Elster, Jon (1982). *Marxism, Functionalism, and Game Theory: The Case for Methodological Individualism*. *Theory and Society*, 11, 453–482.
- Levine, Andrew, Sober, Elliott & Wright, Erik O. (1987). *Marxism and Methodological Individualism*. *New Left Review*, 162, 67–84.
- Hall, Peter A. & Taylor, Rosemary C. (1996). *Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms*. *Political Studies*, 44(5), 936–957.

Suggested Readings

- **Methodological Individualism and Holism:** Udehn (2001), Watkins (1955), Goldstein (1958), Kincaid (1997), Schumpeter (1909)
- **Behavioralism and Political Science:** Stoker & Marsk (2010), Garfinkel (1981), Hardin (1982)
- **Functionalism and Marxist Methodology:** Cohen (1994), Elster (1982), Levine et al. (1987)

Week 5: Methodological Individualism and Rational Choice Theory

Core Themes

- Rational choice theory as a framework for understanding political behavior
- Methodological individualism and its role in rational choice explanations
- Judgment and preference aggregation
- Collective action, public goods, and social choice
- Normative critiques and interpretive alternatives to rational choice
- Interpersonal agency and shared intentionality

Core Readings

1. Foundations of Rational Choice and Methodological Individualism

- Arrow, Kenneth J. (1994). *Methodological Individualism and Social Knowledge*. *American Economic Review*, 84(2), 1–9.
- Herfeld, Catherine & Marx, Johannes (2022). *Rational Choice Explanations in Political Science*. In *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Political Science*.
- Kogel, Brian & Gaus, Gerald (2017). *Rational Choice Theory*. In *Methods in Analytical Political Theory*, ed. A. Blau.
- Chai, Sun-Ki (2005). *Rational Choice: Positive, Normative, and Interpretive*. ASA Annual Meeting Paper.

2. Judgment, Preference, and Information Aggregation

- List, Christian (2012). *The Theory of Judgment Aggregation: An Introductory Review*. *Synthese*, 187, 179–207.
- Dietrich, Franz (2010). *The Aggregation of Propositional Attitudes*. *Oxford Studies in Epistemology*, 3, 215–234.
- Chapman, Bruce (2002). *Rational Aggregation*. *Politics, Philosophy & Economics*, 1, 337–354.
- Austen-Smith, David & Banks, Jeffrey S. (1996). *Information Aggregation and the Condorcet Jury Theorem*. *American Political Science Review*, 90, 34–45.
- Bossert, Walter & Weymark, John A. (1996). *Utility in Social Choice*. In *Handbook of Utility Theory*, Vol. 2.

3. Collective Action and Social Choice

- Olson, Mancur (1971). *The Logic of Collective Action*. Harvard University Press. Ch. 1–2.
- Zamora-Bonilla, Jesús (2022). *Public Choice vs Social Choice as Theories of Collective Action*. In *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Political Science*.
- Przeworski, Adam (1985). *Marxism and Rational Choice*. *Politics & Society*, 14(4), 379–409.

4. Normative and Behavioral Critiques

- Sen, Amartya K. (1977). *Rational Fools: A Critique of the Behavioral Foundations of Economic Theory*. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 6(4), 317–334.
- *Critical Rationalism, Metaphysics and Science*, Vol. 1 (Dordrecht: Kluwer), pp. 159–168.

5. Shared Agency and Interpersonal Rationality

- Bratman, Michael (2014). *Shared Agency: A Planning Theory of Acting Together*. Oxford University Press. Pp. 3–43 and 151–159.

Suggested Readings

- **Rational Choice and Social Choice Theory:** Arrow (1951/1963), McLean & Urken (1995), Roberts (1995), Kornhauser (2008), List & Pettit (2002), Dryzek & List (2003)
- **Critiques and Alternatives:** Sen (1998), Elster (1994, 2000), Stone (1997), Follesdal (1994), Kincaid (1994), Bunge (1996)
- **Behavioralism and Methodological Individualism:** Kydd (2008), Laver (1997), Little (2014), Eulau (1962), Russell Kirk (1962)

Week 6: Methodological Holism

Core Themes

- Holism vs. individualism in social explanation
- Structural and emergent properties in political analysis
- Collective intentionality and group agency
- Mechanisms and macro-level phenomena
- Explanatory pluralism and epistemic complementarity

Core Readings

1. Foundations of Methodological Holism

- Epstein, Brian (2015). *The Ant Trap: Rebuilding the Foundations of the Social Sciences*. Oxford University Press. Pp. 133–250.
- Zahle, Julie (2014). *Holism, Emergence and the Crucial Distinction*. In *Rethinking the Individualism–Holism Debate*, eds. Zahle & Collin.
- Jackson, Frank & Pettit, Philip (1992). *Structural Explanation in Social Theory*. In *Reduction, Explanation and Realism*, eds. Charles & Lennon.
- Haslanger, Sally (2016). *What is a (Social) Structural Explanation?* *Philosophical Studies*, 173(1), 113–130.

2. Reconciliation and Pluralism

- List, Christian & Spiekermann, Kai (2013). *Methodological Individualism and Holism in Political Science: A Reconciliation*. *American Political Science Review*, 107(4), 629–643.
- Marchionni, Caterina (2007). *Explanatory Pluralism and Complementarity*. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 38(3), 314–333.
- Van Bouwel, Jeroen (2008). *Understanding in Political Science: The Plurality of Epistemic Interests*. In *Scientific Understanding*, eds. De Regt et al.

3. Mechanisms and Macro-Phenomena

- Mayntz, Renate (2004). *Mechanisms in the Analysis of Social Macro-Phenomena*. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 34(2), 237–259.
- Rios, Diana (2005). *Social Complexity and the Micro–Macro Link*. *Current Sociology*, 53(5), 773–559.
- Ylikoski, Petri (2014). *Rethinking Micro–Macro Relations*. In *Rethinking the Individualism–Holism Debate*, eds. Zahle & Collin.

4. Collective Intentionality and Sociality

- Tollefsen, Deborah P. (2002). *Collective Intentionality and the Social Sciences*. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 32(1), 25–50.
- Tuomela, Raimo (2007). *The Philosophy of Sociality: The Shared Point of View*. Oxford University Press.

Suggested Readings

- **Structural and Functional Explanation:** Cohen (1982), Garfinkel (1981), James (1984), Kincaid (2009)
- **Collective Agency and Emergence:** List & Pettit (2011), Sawyer (2005), Kaidesoja (2013), Little (2016)
- **Philosophical and Epistemological Context:** Zahle (2013), O'Neill (1973), Bunge (1996), Sangiovanni (2018)

Week 7: The Normative Foundations of Political Theory — Contemporary Liberal Perspectives

Core Themes

- Liberal neutrality, perfectionism, and pluralism
- Public reason and political legitimacy
- Classical, new, and agnostic liberalisms
- Liberalism and its critics: communitarianism, neoliberalism, and republicanism
- Liberty, equality, and justice in liberal thought

Core Readings

1. Liberal Neutrality and Perfectionism

- Arneson, Richard J. (2003). *Liberal Neutrality on the Good: An Autopsy*. In *Perfectionism and Neutrality*, ed. George Klosko.
- Galston, William (1995). *Two Concepts of Liberalism*. *Ethics*, 105, 516–534.
- Gaus, Gerald F. (2004). *The Diversity of Comprehensive Liberalisms*. In *Handbook of Political Theory*, eds. Gaus & Kukathas.
- Gauthier, David (1995). *Public Reason*. *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 12, 19–42.
- Rawls, John (1996). *Political Liberalism*. Columbia University Press.

2. Classical, New, and Agnostic Liberalisms

- Freeden, Michael (1978). *The New Liberalism: An Ideology of Social Reform*. Oxford University Press.
- Gray, John (1994). *After the New Liberalism*. *Social Research*, 61(3), 719–735.
- Gray, John (1995). *Agnostic Liberalism*. In *Enlightenment's Wake*.
- Waldron, Jeremy (1987). *Theoretical Foundations of Liberalism*. *Philosophical Quarterly*, 37(147), 127–150.
- Skinner, Quentin (1998). *Liberty Before Liberalism*. Cambridge University Press.

3. Liberalism and Its Critics

- Guttman, Amy (2003). *Communitarian Critics of Liberalism*. In *Debates in Contemporary Political Philosophy*, eds. Matravers & Pike.
- Nagel, Thomas (1991). *Equality and Partiality*. Oxford University Press.
- Shklar, Judith (1989). *The Liberalism of Fear*. In *Liberalism and the Moral Life*, ed. Rosenblum.
- Peck, Jamie (2010). *Constructions of Neoliberal Reason*. Oxford University Press. Ch. 1.
- Greenawalt, Kent (2016). *From the Bottom-Up: Selected Essays*. Oxford University Press. Pp. 1–27.

Suggested Readings

- **Liberalism and Justice:** Cohen (1997), Galston (1991), Rawls (1997), Mack & Gaus (2004)
- **Historical and Ideological Contexts:** Hayek (1978), Keynes (2004), Riker (1982), Sandel (1984), Evans (2001)
- **Critiques and Alternatives:** Sandel (1984), Guttman (2003), Sangiovanni (2018), Skinner (1998)

Week 8: Liberal Perspectives on Individuality

Core Themes

- The liberal self: autonomy, agency, and identity
- Historical and philosophical foundations of individualism
- Liberalism and the politics of recognition
- The moral and legal boundaries of individual freedom
- Individuality in relation to community, compromise, and deliberation

Core Readings

1. Historical and Philosophical Foundations

- Lukes, Steven (1971). *The Meanings of Individualism*. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 32(1), 45–66.
- Morris, Colin (1989). *The Discovery of the Individual: 1050–1200*. SPCK. (Preface & Ch. 1)
- Siedentop, Larry (2014). *Inventing the Individual: The Origins of Western Liberalism*. Penguin. (Preface & Ch. 1)
- Coleman, Janet (1996). *The Individual in Political Theory and Practice*. Clarendon Press.

2. Liberalism, Identity, and Autonomy

- Appiah, Kwame Anthony (2001). *Liberalism, Individuality and Identity*. *Critical Inquiry*, 27(2), 305–332.
- Bird, Colin (1999). *The Myth of Liberal Individualism*. Cambridge University Press.
- Dworkin, Gerald (1988). *The Theory and Practice of Autonomy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Krause, Sharon (2015). *Freedom Beyond Sovereignty: Reconstructing Liberal Individualism*. University of Chicago Press.
- Taylor, Charles (1992). *Ethics of Authenticity*. Harvard University Press.

3. Legal, Moral, and Political Dimensions

- Feinberg, Joel (1984). *Harm to Others*. In *The Moral Limits of the Criminal Law*, Vol. 1. Clarendon Press.
- Copp, David (1984). *What Collectives Are: Agency, Individualism and Legal Theory*. *Dialogue*, 23, 249–270.
- Fumurescu, Alin (2013). *Compromise – A Political and Philosophical History*. Cambridge University Press. Ch. 4.
- Loury, Glenn (1996). *Individualism before Multiculturalism*. *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy*, 19(3).
- Mansbridge, Jane (2015). *A Minimalist Definition of Deliberation*. In *Deliberation and Development*, eds. Heller & Rao.

Suggested Readings

- **Liberty and Autonomy:** Berlin (1969), Hayek (1960), Sumner (2017), Sandel (1984)
- **Historical and Cultural Contexts:** Brown (1990), Dilcher (1996), Taylor (1989), Siedentop (2014)
- **Philosophical and Psychological Perspectives:** Humphrey & Dennett (1989), Coleman (1996), O'Neill (1973)

Week 9: Political Conservative Perspectives

Core Themes

- Conservatism as an ideology and disposition
- Tradition, authority, and skepticism of rationalism
- Moral order, cultural continuity, and social cohesion
- Conservative critiques of liberalism, multiculturalism, and modernity
- Varieties of conservatism: classical, analytic, cultural, and religious

Core Readings

1. Foundations and Ideological Structure

- Huntington, Samuel P. (1957). *Conservatism as an Ideology*. *American Political Science Review*, 51, 454–473.
- Freedman, Michael (1995). *Ideologies and Political Theories: A Conceptual Approach*. Chapters 8–10.
- Nisbet, Robert (1986). *Conservatism*. Open University Press.
- Kirk, Russell (1953). *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Eliot*. “The Idea of Conservatism” and “Conservatives Promise”.

2. Philosophical and Cultural Conservatism

- Oakeshott, Michael (1991). *On Being Conservative*. In *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*.
- Scruton, Roger (2002). *The Meaning of Conservatism*. St. Augustine’s Press.
- Cohen, G.A. (2011). *Rescuing Conservatism*. In *Reasons and Recognition*, eds. Wallace et al.
- Bloom, Allan (1987). *The Closing of the American Mind*. Simon & Schuster.

3. Contemporary and Analytical Perspectives

- Brennan, Geoffrey & Hamlin, Alan (2004). *Analytic Conservatism*. *British Journal of Political Science*, 34(4), 675–691.
- Kelly, Richard & Crowcroft, Robert (2012). *From Burke to Burkha: Conservatism, Multiculturalism, and the Big Society*. *Political Quarterly*, 83(4), 786–791.

Suggested Readings

- **Classical and Historical Foundations:** Burke (1790), Strauss (1950, 1968), Pocock (1999), Viereck (2005)
- **Contemporary and Cultural Critiques:** Gray (2010), Gottfried & Fleming (1988), King (1987), Scruton (2015)
- **Libertarian and Market-Oriented Conservatism:** Nozick (1974), Hayek (1960), Riker (1982)

Week 10: Contemporary Republican and Communitarian Perspectives

Core Themes

- The communitarian critique of liberal individualism
- Civic republicanism and the ideal of non-domination
- Community, solidarity, and moral belonging
- Public reason, deliberation, and civic virtue
- The role of tradition, identity, and shared values in political life

Core Readings

1. The Communitarian Critique of Liberalism

- Buchanan, Allen (1989). *Assessing the Communitarian Critique of Liberalism*. *Ethics*, 99(4), 852–882.
- Sandel, Michael (1984). *The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self*. *Political Theory*, 12(1), 81–96.
- Taylor, Charles (2003). *Cross Purposes: The Liberal–Communitarian Debate*. In *Debates in Contemporary Political Philosophy*, eds. Matavers & Pike.

- Dworkin, Ronald (1989). *Liberal Community*. *California Law Review*, 77, 479–504.

2. Foundations of Communitarian Thought

- Etzioni, Amitai (2014). *Communitarianism Revisited*. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 19(3), 241–260.
- Frazer, Elizabeth (1991). *The Problems of Communitarian Politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Mason, Andrew (2000). *Community, Solidarity and Belonging*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tams, H. (1998). *Communitarianism: A New Agenda for Politics and Citizenship*. Macmillan.
- Putnam, Robert D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Simon & Schuster.

3. Republicanism and Civic Freedom

- Pettit, Philip (2000). *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government*. Oxford University Press.
- Michelman, Frank (1988). *Law's Republic*. *Yale Law Journal*, 97(8).
- Dewey, John (1954). *The Public and Its Problems*. Swallow Press.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair (1984). *After Virtue*. 2nd ed., Chapters 14–17. University of Notre Dame Press.
- Walzer, Michael (1994). *Thick and Thin*. University of Notre Dame Press.

Suggested Readings

- **Communitarianism and Its Critics:** Bell (1993, 1995, 2005), Avineri & De-Shalit (1992), Mulhall & Swift (1996), Etzioni (1995), Caney (1992)
- **Republicanism and Civic Virtue:** Sunstein (1988), Taylor (1979), Strauss (1950), Pocock (1999)
- **Community and Identity:** Bellah (1985), Ehrenhalt (1999), Putnam (2004), Chan (2014)

Week 11: Communitarian Perspectives on Friendship, Solidarity, and People

Part I: Friendship in Political Theory

Core Themes

- Friendship as a political and ethical relationship
- Civic friendship and democratic solidarity
- The role of personal relations in public life
- Friendship and equality in political communities
- Strangeness, intimacy, and social cohesion

Required Readings

- Alexander, Jeffrey C. (2004). *Rethinking Strangeness*. *Thesis Eleven*, 79, 87–104.
- Devere, Heather & Smith, Graham M. (2010). *Friendship and Politics*. *Political Studies Review*, 8(3), 341–356.
- Lewis, C. S. (1993). *Friendship—The Least Necessary Love*. In *Friendship: A Philosophical Reader*, ed. Badhwar.

- Mallory, Peter (2012). *Political Friendship in the Era of the Social*. *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 12(1).
- Telfer, Elizabeth (1991). *Friendship*. In *Other Selves*, ed. Pakaluk.
- Pahl, Ray (2000). *On Friendship*. Polity Press. Ch. 3.
- Schwartz, Daniel (2007). *Friendship as a Reason for Equality*. *CRISPP*, 10(2), 167–180.
- Schwarzenbach, Sibyl (2005). *Democracy and Friendship*. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 36(2), 233–254.

Suggested Readings

- Aristotle (Books VIII–IX), Kant, Kierkegaard, Aelred of Rievaulx
- Arendt (1955), Foucault (1997), Hochschild (2003), Simmel (1971), Wittel (2001)

Part II: The Concept of “The People” in Political Theory

Core Themes

- Popular sovereignty and democratic legitimacy
- The social ontology of collective identity
- Publics, counterpublics, and civic agency
- The common good and public interest
- Historical and philosophical constructions of “the people”

Required Readings

- Arendt, Hannah (1998). *The Human Condition*. Ch. 2.
- Canovan, Margaret (2008). *The People*. In *Oxford Handbook of Political Theory*.
- Dewey, John & Rogers, Melvin L. (2012). *The Public and Its Problems*. Chs. I–III.
- Douglas, Bruce (1980). *The Common Good and the Public Interest*. *Political Theory*, 8(1), 103–117.
- Habermas, Jürgen (1997). *Popular Sovereignty as Procedure*. In *Deliberative Democracy*.
- Morgan, Edmund (1988). *Inventing the People*. Ch. 11.
- Nasstrom, Sofia (2007). *The Legitimacy of the People*. *Political Theory*, 35(5), 524–558.
- Schmid, Hans Bernhard (2023). *We, Together*. Ch. 1.
- Skinner, Quentin & Bourke, Richard (2016). *Popular Sovereignty in Historical Perspective*.
- Tuck, Richard (2016). *The Sleeping Sovereign*. Cambridge University Press.
- Warner, Michael (2002). *Publics and Counterpublics*. *Public Culture*, 14(1), 49–90.

Suggested Readings

- Bodin (1992), Derrida (2001), Elshtain (2006), Frank (2010)
- Habermas (1994, 2001, 1989), Honig (2001), Lippmann (1933), Sanders (1997), Schmitt (2006)

Week 12: Critical Political Theory

Core Themes

- The meaning and function of critique in political theory

- The Frankfurt School and its legacy
- Normativity, power, and ideology
- Critical theory and social movements
- Gender, race, and dispossession in critical frameworks
- The relationship between critique, emancipation, and democratic practice

Core Readings

1. Foundations of Critical Theory

- Horkheimer, Max ([1937] 1982). *Traditional and Critical Theory*. In *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*.
- Adorno, Theodor W. (2005). *Critique*. In *Critical Models*.
- Habermas, Jürgen (1989). *The Tasks of a Critical Theory of Society*. In *Critical Theory and Society*.
- Celikates, Robin & Flynn, Jeffrey (2023). *Critical Theory (Frankfurt School)*. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
- Chambers, Simone (2004). *The Politics of Critical Theory*. In *Cambridge Companion to Critical Theory*.

2. Normativity, Recognition, and Emancipation

- Benhabib, Seyla (1986). *Critique, Norm, and Utopia*. Columbia University Press.
- Honneth, Axel (2007). *Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory*. Polity Press.
- Kompridis, Nikolas (2011). *Critique and Disclosure*. MIT Press.
- Forst, Rainer (2011). *The Basic Right to Justification*. In *The Right to Justification*. Columbia University Press.

3. Critique and Power

- Foucault, Michel (1997). *What is Critique? and What is Enlightenment?* In *The Politics of Truth*.
- Koselleck, Reinhart (2000). *Critique and Crisis*. MIT Press.
- Tully, James (2002). *Political Philosophy as a Critical Activity*. *Political Theory*, 30(4), 533–555.
- Geuss, Raymond (1981). *The Idea of a Critical Theory*. Cambridge University Press.

4. Critical Theory and Social Movements

- Masquelier, Charles (2013). *Critical Theory and Contemporary Social Movements*. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 16, 395–412.
- Nichols, Robert (2020). *Theft is Property! Dispossession and Critical Theory*. Duke University Press.
- Shelby, Tommie (2003). *Ideology, Racism, and Critical Social Theory*. *Philosophical Forum*, 34(2), 153–188.
- Okin, Susan (1989). *Justice, Gender and the Family*. Basic Books.

5. Gender, Bodies, and Subjectivity

- Butler, Judith (1993). *Bodies That Matter*. Routledge. Introduction & “Bodies That Matter”
- Allen, Amy (2013). *The Politics of Ourselves*. Columbia University Press.
- Zerilli, Linda M. G. (2005). *We Feel Our Freedom*. *Political Theory*, 33(2), 158–188.

Suggested Readings

- **Foundational and Historical Context:** Horkheimer & Adorno (1987), Kant (2006), Arendt (1994), Ingram & Simon-Ingram (2002)
- **Power, Autonomy, and Resistance:** Foucault (1982, 1994), Calhoun (1995), Jaeggi (2009), Honig (2001)
- **Democracy, Representation, and Justice:** Habermas (1994, 1995, 2001), Phillips (1998), Sanders (1997)

Discussion Points

1. What Is Critique?

- How do Horkheimer, Adorno, and Foucault define critique?
- What distinguishes critical theory from traditional theory?

2. Normativity and Emancipation

- How do Benhabib, Honneth, and Forst ground critique in normative principles?
- What is the role of recognition and justification in critical theory?

3. Power and Ideology

- How does critical theory engage with structures of power and domination?
- What is the relationship between critique and resistance?

4. Bodies, Gender, and Race

- How do Butler, Okin, and Shelby expand critical theory to include gender and racial justice?
- What are the implications of embodied critique?

5. Critical Theory in Practice

- How does critical theory inform contemporary social movements?
- What are the challenges of applying critique in neoliberal contexts?

Week 13: Radical Political Theory

Core Themes

- Emancipation, resistance, and transformation
- Radical democracy, anarchism, and utopian thought
- Oppression, agency, and epistemic resistance
- Marxist, feminist, and anti-capitalist critiques
- The politics of imagination, solidarity, and collective action

Core Readings

1. Foundations of Radical Critique

- Allen, Amy (2008). *Rationalizing Oppression*. *Journal of Power*, 1(1), 51–65.
- Cudd, Ann (2006). *Analyzing Oppression*. Oxford University Press, pp. 3–27.
- Young, Iris Marion (1990). *Five Faces of Oppression*. In *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, pp. 39–65.
- Hay, Carol (2011). *The Obligation to Resist Oppression*. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 42(1), 21–45.

2. Radical Democracy and Political Subjectivity

- Critchley, Simon (2005). *True Democracy*. In *Radical Democracy*, eds. Tønder & Thomassen, pp. 219–235.
- Laclau, Ernesto (2005). *The Future of Radical Democracy*. In *Radical Democracy*, pp. 256–262.
- Kalyvas, Andreas (2019). *Democracy and the Poor*. *Constellations*, 26(4).
- Dean, Jodi (2009). *Democracy: A Knot of Hope and Despair*. In *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies*.

3. Marxist and Utopian Perspectives

- Cohen, G. A. (2009). *Why Not Socialism?* Princeton University Press.
- Balibar, Étienne (2002). *Three Concepts of Politics*. In *Politics and the Other Scene*, pp. 1–39.
- Chrostowska, S. D. & Ingram, James D. (2017). *Political Uses of Utopia*. In *New Marxist, Anarchist, and Radical Democratic Perspectives*, pp. 179–219.
- Castoriadis, Cornelius (1997). Selected chapters from *The Castoriadis Reader*, pp. 139–217, 319–337.

4. Anarchism and Resistance

- Graeber, David (2002). *The New Anarchists*. *New Left Review*, 13.
- Gourevitch, Alex (2018). *The Right to Strike: A Radical View*. *American Political Science Review*, 112, 905–917.
- MacKinnon, Catharine A. (1988). *Feminism Unmodified*. Harvard University Press.
- Medina, José (2013). *Active Ignorance and Epistemic Friction*. In *The Epistemology of Resistance*, Ch. 1.

Suggested Readings

- **Radical Democracy and Discourse:** Blaug (1999), Gutman & Thompson (1996), Little & Lloyd (2009), Laclau & Mouffe (2001), Mouffe (2013)
 - **Anarchism and Anti-Authoritarianism:** Gordon (2008), Springer (2011), Taylor (1982), Wolff (1998), Nail (2010)
 - **Postcolonial, Feminist, and Indigenous Critiques:** Fanon (1986), Spivak (1988), Hunt (2014), Phillips (1998)
 - **Freedom, Politics, and Imagination:** Arendt (1994), Ostrowski (2020), Derrida (2001)
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Week 14: Environmental Political Theory

Core Themes

- Green political ideologies and ecological citizenship
 - Environmental justice and global inequality
 - Democracy, sovereignty, and the green state
 - Climate ethics, geoengineering, and ecological modernization
 - Radical, critical, and post-humanist approaches to nature and politics
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Core Readings

1. Foundations of Green Political Theory

- Barry, John (2014). *Green Political Theory*. In *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, pp. 153–178.

- Dobson, Andrew (2007). *Green Political Thought*. Routledge.
- Goodin, Robert E. (1992). *Green Political Theory*. Polity.
- Humphrey, Mathew (2015). *Green Ideology*. In *Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, pp. 526–551.

2. Radical and Critical Green Thought

- Carter, Alan A. (2013). *Radical Green Political Theory*. Routledge.
- Latour, Bruno (2004). *Why Political Ecology Has to Let Go of Nature*. In *Politics of Nature*, pp. 9–52.
- Luke, Timothy (2003). *Interenvironmental Relations*. *Alternatives*, 28, 393–422.
- Toke, D. (2000). *Green Politics and Neo-Liberalism*. Palgrave Macmillan.

3. Environmental Justice and Democracy

- Schlosberg, David (2003). *The Justice of Environmental Justice*. In *Moral and Political Reasoning in Environmental Practice*, pp. 77–106.
- Shrader-Frechette, Kristin (2002). *Environmental Justice*. Oxford University Press.
- Shue, Henry (1999). *Global Environment and International Inequality*. *International Affairs*, 75(3), 531–545.
- Radcliffe, J. (2000). *Green Politics: Dictatorship or Democracy?* Palgrave Macmillan.

4. Climate Politics and the Green State

- Dryzek, John S. & Schlosberg, David (2013). *Climate-Challenged Society*. Oxford University Press.
- Eckersley, Robyn (2004). *The Green State*. MIT Press.
- Gardiner, Stephen & McKinnon, Catriona (2020). *The Justice and Legitimacy of Geoengineering*. *CRISPP*, 23(5), 557–563.

5. Theory and Practice

- De-Shalit, Avineri (2000). *The Environment: Between Theory and Practice*. Oxford University Press.

Suggested Readings

- **Green Ideologies and Citizenship:** Dobson (1993, 2003), Connolly & Smith (2012), Smith (1998), Barry (2006)
- **Environmental Justice and Ethics:** Caney (2014), Armstrong (2017), Gardiner et al. (2010), Pellow (2000), Di Chiro (2008)
- **Democracy and Ecological Governance:** Hayward (2001), Plumwood (2007), Dobson (1995), Ellis (1995), Torgerson (2000)
- **Critical and Posthumanist Perspectives:** Luke (1997), Leopold (1949), Fischer (2000), Wagner (2008), Beeson (2010)