

Politics 9504b: Political Theory II

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“Disagreement in Political Theory”

In this seminar we will discuss a number of positions in political theory that have taken as their focus the fact of disagreement. How should we understand disagreements in politics, how should we respond to them, and what kind of arrangements give them appropriate recognition? We will begin by examining Locke's *Letter Concerning Toleration* and its sequels, and assess his attempt to defend and sustain a free-standing political response to religious controversy. We will then turn to a second classic in liberal political thought, Mill's *On Liberty*, focusing on its epistemic claims about the outcomes of conflict, and considering its bearing on current facts of social pluralism. We then turn to five alternative approaches to the accommodation of disagreement, different from Locke and Mill and from each other: the idea of “recognition,” “moral pluralism” as defended by Berlin and Raz; the “burdens of judgment (Rawls); deliberative democracy; finally, the idea of “essential contestability” (ancestor of “agonistic pluralism”).

After Week 6 there will be a take-home exam, worth 15% of the final mark. (You will be asked to read an article and comment on it in light of our discussions so far.) Seminar participation will be worth 25%. The remaining 60% will be based on a term paper, due one week after our last class. The topic must be discussed in advance with the instructor; some topics will require additional readings.

Weeks 1-3: Locke on Toleration:

Locke on Toleration, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy: 2010, pp. 1-163.

Jeremy Waldron, “Locke, Toleration and the Rationality of Persecution”, in Susan Mendus ed., *Justifying Toleration*, Cambridge University Press, 1988.

4-5. Mill: From Toleration to Diversity – what kind?

J.S. Mill, *On Liberty* (any edition), chapters 1-3.

Jonathan Riley, “Racism, Blasphemy and Free Speech”, and Jeremy Waldron, “Mill and Multiculturalism”, in C.L. Ten ed., *Mill's On Liberty*, Cambridge University Press, 2008

Shefali Misra, “Friend not Foe: Mill's Liberal Multiculturalism”, *European Journal of Political Theory* 11 (2012) 273-91.

6. From Toleration to Recognition?

Anna Elisabeta Galeotti, *Toleration as Recognition*, Cambridge University Press 2002, chapters 3 and 4.

Peter Jones, "Toleration, Recognition and Identity", *Journal of Political Philosophy* 14 (2006) 123-43.

At the end of this class the take-home exam will be distributed.

7. Class discussion of take-home exam.

8. Moral Pluralism

Isaiah Berlin, *The Crooked Timber of Humanity*, New York: Knopf, 1991, chapters 1 & 2.

Joseph Raz, "Autonomy, Toleration, and the Harm Principle", in Mendus, *Justifying Toleration*.

George Crowder, "From Value Pluralism to Liberalism", in Richard Bellamy and Martin Hollis eds., *Pluralism and Liberal Neutrality*, London: Cass, 1999.

9. The "burdens of judgment."

Charles Larmore, "Pluralism and Reasonable Disagreement," in E.F.Paul et al eds., *Cultural Pluralism and Moral Knowledge*, Cambridge University Press 1994.

John Horton, "Reasonable Disagreement", in Maria Dimova-Cookson & Peter M. Stirk eds., *Multiculturalism and Moral Conflict*, London: Routledge, 2010.

11. Deliberative Democracy and Public Reason

John Rawls, "The Idea of Public Reason Revisited", in *The Law of Peoples*, Harvard University Press, 1999.

Amy Gutmann & Dennis Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement*, Harvard University Press, 1996, chapter 2

Jeremy Waldron, "Religious Contributions in Public Debate", *San Diego Law Review* 30 (1993), 817-48.

12. "Essential Contestability".

W.B. Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 1956.

Paul Collier et al., "Essentially Contested Concepts: Debates and Applications", *Journal of Political Ideologies* 11 (2006), 211-46.

(Graduate) Statement of Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf