Politics 9506b/Philosophy 9122b (Winter 2020)

Toleration

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In this course we shall examine the emergence of toleration as a political topic, in the debate between John Locke and Jonas Proast (1689-1704), consider the contemporary significance of toleration and the moral and/or epistemological premises on which it can be based, and finally discuss three case studies – the place of religion in public life, cultural accommodation, and the regulation of hate speech.

Topics and readings are listed below. Readings will be posted on OWL. The only required text is Locke on Toleration (Cambridge University Press 2010, available in UWO bookstore and Weldon). It is assumed that students will have access to a personal or library copy of Mill On Liberty.

Evaluation: a final essay, due April 15, worth 70%: class participation, 30%. The essay (15-20 pages is expected) will critically explore one of the week's topics, while also showing an appreciation of its place in the overall theme of the class. I am open to proposals for essay topics that will span two or more weeks' readings.

Topics and readings:

1. Locke's toleration – was it Protestant, fallibilist, or egalitarian? Let's discuss it: Locke on Toleration pp 1-66.

2. Locke's toleration – was it Protestant, fallibilist, or egalitarian? Let's discuss it some more: Locke on Toleration, remainder of book

3. Interpretations:

Vernon, Locke on Toleration, Introduction


Adam Wolfson Persecution or Toleration? Lexington Books 2010, chapter 4 (59-78)

4. Toleration today (?):


6. Epistemic modesty:


7. The moral-pluralist case:


Susan Wolf "Two Levels of Pluralism" *Ethics* 102 (1992), 785-98.

8. Agonism:


9. Autonomy:

J.S. Mill, *On Liberty* chapter 3 [personal or library copy]

Sarah Conly *Against Autonomy* Cambridge University Press 2013, chapters 1 and 2 (16-46)

10. Religion in public life:


11. Cultural Accommodation:


12. Hate Speech:

J.S.Mill *On Liberty*, chapter 2 [personal or library copy]
