

Democratic Political Philosophy
Wednesday 9:50 – 12:50
Campbell A-5

Professor Bathory
Spring 2020

This course will be conducted as a seminar focusing on Democratic Political Philosophy as it emerged in ancient Athens and ancient Rome and examining the ways in which these ancient sources found their way into American democratic thought and practice. We will begin by examining the democratic culture and politics of ancient Athens through work of the great playwright and statesman, Aeschylus, and his great trilogy the *Oresteia*. The goals of Athenian democracy thus established we will turn to a study of Athenian democratic institutions and thought about those institutions. Plato's critical examination of those institutions will be supplemented by a series of contemporary essays on democratic Athens and the place of that democracy in our world. Turning to Rome, its political and legal institutions, and its political and legal thought, we will look at the creation of its "composite state," its unique mixture of democracy, aristocracy and monarchy that loomed so large in the minds of the American founders. Cicero's understanding of Roman law will guide our discussion of Roman Republic, as will a recent essay on the nature of Rome and Roman political thought. Shakespeare's analysis of the founding and the collapse of the Republic via his dramatic representations of these events in his plays *Coriolanus* and *Julius Caesar* will conclude our examination of Rome.

We will then follow the themes established in our study of ancient politics and political thought with a view of the American founding, the development of 19th Century American Populism, the Progressive Response to Populism and, finally, to the post-WWII politics of mass society and the responses of President Eisenhower and Martin Luther King, Jr. to that politics -- responses which forecast the democratic politics of the 21st century America.

Office Hours: Wednesday 1:00 pm-2:00pm after class and by appointment in Hickman 506.

Email: bathory@polisci.rutgers.edu

CLASS ACTIVITIES:

Each class will begin with a brief lecture outlining the topic for the day. We will then engage in general discussion based on the lecture and assigned reading and discussion questions. Finally, we will break up into groups to discuss in detail a designated reading for the day.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS:

1. Regular attendance at all class meetings.
2. Completion of reading and discussion questions for each week.
3. Participation in class activities, both general and group discussion
4. You must review and abide by the University's Policy on Academic Integrity. This can be found online at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>.
5. Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008, and Sections 504 and 508 that mandate that reasonable accommodations be provided for

qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please register with the Office of Disability Services for Students, which is dedicated to providing services and administering exams with accommodations for students with disabilities. **The Office of Disability Services for Students can be contacted by calling 848.445.6800 and is located on the Livingston campus at the following address: 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Suite A145, Piscataway, NJ 08854. <https://ods.rutgers.edu>**

LEARNING GOALS:

1. Expose students to the philosophical and practical problems of political organization, action, and governance.
2. Spur critical thinking about the nature of citizenship, rights, and duties.
3. A solid foundational understanding of the critical theoretical issues underlying political life: the individual and community; political obligation and civil disobedience; stability, revolution, and change; legitimacy and justice; and freedom and power.

REQUIRED TEXTS: Available at Rutgers Bookstore/Barnes and Noble

Aeschylus, Oresteia, Robert Fagles tr, paperback, ISBN-13: 978-0140443332; ISBN-10: 0140443339

Plato, Gorgias, Hackett Classics, paperback, ISBN-13:978-0-87220-016-6

Shakespeare, Coriolanus, Pelican Shakespeare, paperback, ISBN-13: 978-0140714739; ISBN-10: 9780140714739

Shakespeare, Julius Caesar, paperback, ISBN-13: 978-1981029877; ISBN-10: 1981029877

Gordon Wood, The American Revolution, paperback, ISBN-13: 978-0812970418; ISBN-10: 0812970411

Lawrence Goodwyn, The Populist Moment, paperback, ISBN-13: 978-0195024173
ISBN-10: 0195024176

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Discussion Questions and class participation: 30%

Midterm Exam: 30%

Final Paper: 40%

INTRODUCTION:

January 22nd : **The Nature of Democracy**

The following are a few of the questions that will recur as we examine democracy across historical time and geographical space. As we view snapshots of these times and spaces it will be important for us to bring a common set of questions to our study. Other questions will, no doubt, occur as we talk in class and exchange ideas but here are a few with which to begin.

What is democracy?

Is it a form of government?

Is it a social order and/or cultural form?

Is it both?

What are the “rights” associated with democracy?

**Human rights?
Political rights?
Legal rights?
Economic rights?**

Are there necessary prerequisites to the rights and/or opportunities in democratic regimes?

**Education?
Health?
Housing?
Work?**

What are the public and private aspects of democracy?

Is there a difference between individual and collective democratic goods?

Is “individualism” different from “individuality”?

What is the “common good”?

Are individuals in a democracy “parts of a whole”?

How are the voices of democratic citizens heard?

Participation?

What is participation?

What does it “cost” to participate?

Time? Money? Opportunity?

How does the internet influence participation?

Representation?

Who represents?

Who is represented?

What are the costs of representation?

Political?

Economic?

Social?

What kind of liberty is necessary to democracy?

Legal?

Political?

Economic?

Negative?

Positive?

What kind of equality is necessary to democracy?

Legal?

Political?

Economic?

Are liberty and equality compatible with one another?

PART I: ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY

January 29th: **The Birth of Athenian Democracy in Aeschylus' Tragedy**

Reading Aeschylus, *The Eumenides*
Historical Context for the *Oresteia* (*sakai*)
The *Oresteia* Reader (*sakai*)
The Development of Athenian Democracy (*sakai*)
Josiah Ober, "The Original Meaning of Democracy" (*sakai*)
Video homework: *Agamemnon* and the *Libation Bearers* (*sakai*, video steaming)
Discussion Questions #1 due in Drop Box

Film in class: *The Eumenides*

February 5th: **Athens' Democracy and Ours**

Reading: Athenian Democracy: An Overview
Josiah Ober, "Public Speech and the Power of the People" (*sakai*)
Sheldon Wolin, "Democracy, Electoral and Athenian" (*sakai*)
Peter Euben, "Democracy, Ancient and Modern" (*sakai*)
Rebecca Goldstein, *Making Athens Great Again*, (*sakai*)
Discussion Questions #2 due in Drop Box

February 12th : **The Decline of Athenian Democracy** **GROUP DISCUSSION: "Making Athens Great Again"**

Reading: Plato, the *Gorgias*
Peter Euben, "Democracy: Ancient and Modern"
Discussion Questions #3 due in Drop Box

Part II: THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

February 19th: **The "Composite State" and the Roman "Public"**

Reading: Mary Beard, "Why Ancient Rome Matters..." (*sakai*)
Edward Watts, *The Mortal Republic* (chs 1,2, 4-10), (*sakai*)
Edward Watts, "The Fall of Rome and Lessons for America" (*sakai*)
Krugman, How Republics End
Discussion Questions #4 due in Drop Box

February 26th: **Roman Law and Roman Politics**

Reading: Michael Fontaine, "What Rome Can Teach Us Today" (*sakai*)
Mary Beard *SPQR* (pp. 15-52, *sakai*)
Cicero: *On the Law*, Book III, (*sakai*)
Sheldon Wolin: *Politics and Vision*, ch. 3, Rome (*sakai*)

“8 Parallels Between the Roman Empire and Us” (*sakai*)
Discussion Questions #5 due in Drop Box

March 4th: **Shakespearean Politics and the Fall of the Republic**

Reading: Shakespeare, *Coriolanus* + Film of play on *sakai*

Bathory, “Shakespeare’s Roman Hero” (*sakai*)

“The Rome We Have Lost” (*sakai*)

Film: *Coriolanus*

Discussion Questions #6 due in Drop Box

March 11th :

MIDTERM EXAM

Part III: THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC: DEMOCRATIC OR NOT???

March 25th: The “Founding Moment”

Reading: Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, (excerpts, *sakai*,
USA #1, #3, #4, #5)

Gordon Wood, “Republicanism” (*sakai* USA #1A)

Gordon Wood, “Democracy and the American Revolution” (*sakai*
USA #1B)

David Brooks, “The Localist Revolution”

Discussion Questions as assigned for March 25th due in Drop Box

April 1st: Founding Principles: Liberty and Equality or Liberty vs. Equality

Reading: Gordon Wood, “Democracy and the Constitution” (*sakai* USA #2)

John D. Lewis, *Federalist and Anti-Federalist* (excerpts, *sakai*,
USA #10, 10A, 10B, 10C)

Tocqueville, “Honor in Democracies,” (*sakai* USA #6)

“Democratic Despotism” (*sakai* USA #8)

“Why Great Revolutions will become More Rare”
(both *sakai*, USA #9)

Wilson Carey McWilliams, “Democracy and the Citizen” (*sakai*
USA #11)

Discussion Questions #7

PAPER TOPICS DUE: APRIL 1st

April 8th: The Populist Revolt and a New Democratic Politics

Reading: Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Populist Moment* (POPULISM
#2, #3 [*sakai*])

Commentary on Goodwyn (*sakai*, POPULISM #1 & #7)

Discussion Questions #8 due in Drop Box

Group Work: Paper Topics

PAPER PROPOSALS AND OUTLINES DUE APRIL 17TH

April 15th: The Populist Revolt and the Seeds of Progressivism

Reading: Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Populist Moment* (*sakai*, POPULISM #4 & #5)

Bathory, *Leadership in America* (*sakai*, POPULISM #6)

Jan-Michael Werner, "False Flags" (*sakai* POPULISM #8)

Discussion Questions #9 due in Drop Box

GROUP WORK ON PROPOSALS AND OUTLINES

April 22nd: The Progressive Response and the Crisis of Democracy

Reading: TR and WW Selected Speeches (*sakai*)

Film: *The Grapes of Wrath*

April 29th : Eisenhower and MLK: Two Responses to the 1950s and Beyond

FINAL PAPERS DUE IN DROP BOX MAY14TH

Finding Support at Rutgers Rutgers Health Services

- <http://health.rutgers.edu>
- Medical <http://rhsmedical.rutgers.edu>
- Counseling, Alcohol & Other Drug Assistance Program & Psychiatric Services (CAPS) <http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu>
- Pharmacy <http://rhspharmacy.rutgers.edu>
- Health Outreach, Promotion & Education (H.O.P.E.) <http://rhshope.rutgers.edu>
- Scarlet Listeners: Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space. (732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Academic Deans and the Office of Academic Services

- <http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu>
- <https://sebs.rutgers.edu/academics/>
- <http://www.business.rutgers.edu/>
- <http://www.masongross.rutgers.edu/content/undergraduate-academic-advisors>

- http://pharmacy.rutgers.edu/content/academic_services
- <http://soe.rutgers.edu/oas/advising>

Dean of Students

- <http://deanofstudents.rutgers.edu>
- <https://undergraduate.rutgers.edu/for-students/student-resources/campus-deans>

Writing Centers

- <http://wp.rutgers.edu/tutoring/writingcenters>

Office of Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance

- <http://vpva.rutgers.edu>

Center for Social Justice & LGBTQ Communities

- <http://socialjustice.rutgers.edu/>

Public Safety

- RUPD <http://publicsafety.rutgers.edu/rupd/>
- Department of Transportation Services <http://rudots.rutgers.edu/>