

Political Science 383/583: Culture and Politics □ Spring Term 2001
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Office Hours: Thursday 1:30-2:30 & By Appointment

This is a course in social and political theory. It starts from two premises. First, it presumes that culture and politics are related in complex, seemingly ubiquitous, but very poorly understood ways. Second, it presumes that the primary deficiencies in our understanding are in the first instance theoretical rather than empirical. The readings for the course reflect these premises and are intended to clarify the explanatory and normative issues at stake in how we understand the relations between culture and politics. However, given the lamentable state of our understanding of the relevant issues we will be directly engaged in the act of theorizing. By that I mean that we will not simply be concerned with what this or that author has to say, but with the more constructive task of elaborating a plausible theory to aid in exploring the explanatory and normative issues that arise at the intersection of culture and politics.

The course will be run as a seminar. That means that I expect students to read assigned materials in advance, to read the readings critically, to come to class prepared with questions, thoughts, objections, etcetera, and to be willing to voice those questions, thoughts, objections and so on in class discussions. Please note that there is a *lot* of reading and that that reading is both unfamiliar and sometimes quite difficult.

Your grade for the course will depend heavily on class participation. It also will depend on two written assignments. The first (due at the end of week 10) will address questions of explanation, the second (due May 10) will take up normative issues. These papers will be roughly ten typed pages. I will give more precise instructions as the deadlines draw near. The precise topics are negotiable - that means you will need to discuss them with me in advance! So start thinking.

Readings

Books, marked *, are on order at the UofR Bookstore. They also are available via Amazon - all are in print and readily accessible.

Items marked # can be obtained on JSTOR via the UofR Library web page. Go to that page - <http://groucho.lib.rochester.edu/> - click "Electronic Journals," scroll down to "Major Collections," click JSTOR then follow the search directions.

I will set up a process by which you can obtain and copy the remaining readings. Some will be available in the PSC department, some will be on reserve in the Library.



Week 1 - Introduction - The Current Impasse and a Road Map.

“Cultural Explanations” *The Economist* (9 November 1996) 23-26.
James Johnson, James. 1997. "Symbol and Strategy in Comparative Political Analysis," *APSA-CP: Newsletter of the APSA Organized Section in Comparative Politics* (Summer) 6-9.

Week 2 - Raising Issues

David Kertzer. 1988. *Ritual, Politics, and Power*. Yale

Week 3 - Classical Views

Karl Marx. “Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy”
Alexis de Tocqueville. *Democracy in America* -- 1.II.9
Max Weber *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* -- Introduction, Chs. 2,4
Emil Durkheim *Selected Writings* pp. 219-250.

Week 4 - On the Wrong Track - Contemporary Approaches to “Political Culture”

Verba, Sidney. 1965. "Comparative Political Culture." In *Political Culture and Political Development*, Ed. L. Pye and S. Verba. Princeton University Press.
Almond, Gabriel. 1982. "The Intellectual History of the Civic Culture Concept." In *The Civic Culture Revisited*, Ed. G. Almond and S. Verba. Boston: Little Brown.
Ronald Inglehart. 1988. "The Renaissance of Political Culture," *American Political Science Review* 82:1203-1230.
Harry Eckstein. 1988. "A Culturalist Theory of Political Change," *American Political Science Review* 82:789-804.
Robert Putnam. 1993. *Making Democracy Work*. Princeton. Chs. 2,4,-6
James Johnson. 1999. “Notes on ‘Political Culture’”

Week 5-6 - Interpretation

* Clifford Geertz. 1972. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Basic
Charles Taylor. 1985. *Philosophy and the Human Sciences*.
Cambridge University Press. Ch. 1.
Sherry Ortner. 1984. "Theory in Anthropology Since the Sixties," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26:126-166.
Sherry Ortner. 1990. “Patterns of History” In *Culture Through Time* ed. E. Ohnuki-Tierney. Stanford University Press.
Steven Lukes. 1982. “Relativism in Its Place.” In *Rationality and Relativism* ed. M. Hollis and S. Lukes. MIT Press.

Week 7 - Down to Cases? Or Theoretical Disagreements About Mechanisms? The Symbolic Aftermath of Communism, East & West

- * Katherine Verdery. 1999. *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies*. Columbia.
- * David Kertzer. 1996. *Politics and Symbols*. Yale.

Week 8 - Interpretation and Rationality

- Gananath Obeyesekere. 1992. *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*. Princeton University Press. I, III-VI, Afterword
- Marshall Sahlins. 1995. *How 'Natives' Think*. University of Chicago Press. 1-85,148-89,203-5
- Clifford Geertz.. 1995. "Culture War," *New York Review of Books* (30 November) 4-6.
- Steven Lukes. 2000. "Different Cultures, Different Rationalities?" *History of the Human Sciences* 13:3-18.
- Clifford Geertz. 1983. *Local Knowledge*. Basic Books. Ch. 4

Week 9 - Strategic Interaction in a Culturally Austere World

- Michael Taylor. 1987. *The Possibility of Cooperation*. Cambridge. Chs. 1-3
- Thomas Schelling. 1960. *The Strategy of Conflict*. Harvard. Chs. 1-6.
- Calvert, Randall. 1992. "Leadership and Its Basis in Problems of Social Coordination," *International Political Science Review* 13:7-24.
- Amelie Rorty. 1983. "Imagination and Power," *Social Science Information* 22:801-16.

Week 10 - Strategy - Some Wrong Turns

- Robert Nozick. 1993. *The Nature of Rationality*. Princeton University Press. pp. 3-64,133-39,172-74.
- David Kreps. 1990. "Corporate Culture and Economic Theory. In *Perspectives on Positive Political Economy* ed. J. Alt and K. Shepsle. Cambridge University Press.
- Avner Greif. 1994. "Cultural Beliefs and the Organization of Society." *Journal of Political Economy* 102:912-50.
- Robert Bates, Rui de Figueiredo, and Barry Weingast. 1998. "The Politics of Interpretation" (corrected version) *Politics and Society* 26:603-42.

Week 11 -The Poverty of Primordialism

- Clifford Geertz. 1993. "Ethnic Conflict" *Common Knowledge* 2:54-65
- Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger. Eds. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press. Chs. 1,4,7.
- Arjun Appadurai. 1996. *Modernity at Large*. University of Minnesota Press. Ch.7-9.

Robert Haydon. 1999. *Blueprints for a House Divided*. University of Michigan. Chs. 2-4
James Johnson. 1999. "Inventing Constitutional Traditions" (Ms.)

Week 12 - Communitarians & Liberals on The Value of Cultural Membership

Charles Taylor. 1994. "The Politics of Recognition" In *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition*. ed. A.Gutmann. Princeton University Press.
Charles Taylor. 1995. *Philosophical Arguments*. Harvard University Press. Ch. 7
Will Kymlicka. 1995. *Multicultural Citizenship*. Oxford. Chs. 1-6.
Joseph Raz. 1994. *Ethics in the Public Domain*. Oxford Chs. 6,8.

Week 13 - Women

* Susan Okin. 1999. *Is Multiculturalism Bad For Women?* Princeton.
Yael Tamir. "Hands Off Clitoridectomy" *Boston Review* 21(3) (Summer 1996) at
<http://bostonreview.mit.edu/BR21.3/Tamir.html>
Comments by Nussbaum, George, Kamm, and Neuwirth and a Reply by Tamir. *Boston Review* Volume 21 (5) (November 1996) at <http://bostonreview.mit.edu/BR21.5/>
Nancy Hirschmann. 1997. "Eastern Veiling, Western Freedom?" *Review of Politics* 59:461-88.

Week 14 - Skeptics

Chandran Kukathas. 1992. "Are There Any Cultural Rights?" *Political Theory* 20:105-39.
Jeremy Waldron. 1992. "Minority Cultures and the Cosmopolitan Alternative," *University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform* 25:751-93.
Leslie Green. 1998. "Rights of Exit," *Legal Theory* 4:165-85.
Amartya Sen. 1997. "Human Rights and Asian Values" *The New Republic* (14 & 21 July) 33-40
Brian Barry. 1998. "The Limits of Cultural Politics," *Review of International Studies* 24:307-19.
James Johnson. 2000. "Why Respect Culture?" *American Journal of Political Science* 44:405-18