

Department of Government
Skidmore College
Spring 1994

Dennis McEnnerney
Office: 306A Ladd
Phone: extension 2355

Government 351

TOPICS IN POLITICAL THOUGHT:

"Public" and "Private" in Modern Political Thought

207 Ladd

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:30-7:50 pm

Office hours: Wednesdays 9:30-11:30 am, and by appointment

This course will investigate notions of "public" and "private" and their analogues, primarily in modern and contemporary European political thought. We will first consider how notions of publicity and privacy both structure and make problematic our understanding of what is or is not political, using as a starting point a comparison between the ways present-day American judges and eighteenth-century French aristocrats have addressed power relations in intimate settings. Next we will examine the social contract theories of early modern Europe, with an eye to their innovative attempts to distinguish public and private spheres. Then we will investigate nineteenth-century socialist and liberal attempts to explain market societies in terms of (in part) an historical dynamism between public and private life. Finally, having developed a sensitivity to the philosophic and historic dimensions of modern politics, we will turn to twentieth-century discussions of public and private life, examining how those discussions deepen our understanding of the possibilities and the difficulties of political life in large, diverse democratic states.

The course, for the most part, will be conducted as a seminar. Students will be expected to keep up with the reading, attend class regularly, and participate actively in discussion. To that end, students will from time to time be expected to formulate questions about the readings for the class, and perhaps to deliver informal presentations on occasion. Grades will be given for participation. When possible, texts are to be brought to class so that they may be referred to in discussion. A few meetings will be given over to lecture, as indicated on the following schedule. In addition, three films will be shown; on those days, class may meet for two and one-half hours.

The written requirements for the course may vary somewhat, depending upon the background, preparation, and interests of the students. Option 1: three short papers (4-5 pages, 5-6 pages and 6-7 pages) on assigned topics. This option is available to all students. Option 2: for students who have already taken courses on modern thought, a more specialized paper of approximately 20 pages, perhaps drawing on independent research, on a topic of the student's choosing. Students wishing to choose this option must negotiate an agreement with the instructor by 10 February. All papers are to be typewritten, double-spaced, and annotated in accordance with accepted norms of scholarship. Late papers will be downgraded one step per day.

Grades will be assigned on an 100-point scale and weighted in the following manner for option 1 students: 1st paper--25% (4-5 pages); 2nd paper--30% (5-6 pages); 3rd paper--35% (6-7 pages); and participation--10%. For option 2 students: semester paper (20 pages)--85%; and participation--15%.

The following books, available at The Skidmore Shop, contain most of the required readings. Discussion will be easier with the specific translations and editions listed below, but if you already own a different translation or edition, buying another is not necessary.

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, ed. C.B. Macpherson (Hackett, 1980)
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Basic Political Writings*, tr. Donald A. Cress (Hackett, 1987)
Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Cornell, 1988)
John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty: with The Subjection of Women and Chapters on Socialism* (Cambridge, 1989)
Walter Lippmann, *The Public Philosophy* (Transaction Publishers, 1989)
Carole Pateman, *The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Feminism and Political Theory* (Stanford, 1990)
Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (MIT, 1991)

In addition to these books, multiple copies of other required readings, marked by asterisks (*) on the following schedule, have been

placed on reserve in the Library.

SCHEDULE OF COURSE MEETINGS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

* Indicates readings on reserve at the Library

I. PROBLEMS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

- Tues., 25 Jan. Introduction
No reading assigned.
- Thurs., 27 Jan. A Contemporary Problem: Abortion and Privacy
**Documents from American Constitutional and Legal History*, vol. 2: "Bradwell v. Illinois," "Griswold v. Connecticut," "Roe v. Wade," and "Bowers v. Hardwick," pp. 389-404 and 431-436.
*Catharine MacKinnon, "Privacy v. Equality: Beyond Roe v. Wade (1983)," in *Feminism Unmodified: Discourses on Life and Law*, ch. 8, pp. 93-102.
**New York Times*, Excerpts from "Planned Parenthood v. Casey," 30 June 1992, pp. A16-A17.
- Tues., 1 Feb. The Old and New Regimes (1) [lecture]
Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, pp. 1-56.
- Thurs., 3 Feb. The Old and the New Regimes (2)
Film: "Dangerous Liaisons" (discussion to follow class).
Recommended: *Pierre Choderlos de Laclos, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*

II. THE FIRST MODERN EUROPEAN THEORIES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

- Tues., 8 Feb. Persons, Property, and Patriarchy
John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, preface and chs. I-IX, pp. 3-68.
- Thurs., 10 Feb. Of Powers and Consent
Locke, chs. X-XIX, pp. 68-124.
Recommended: Habermas, pp. 57-88.
- Tues., 15 Feb. Savagery and Civilization
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men," in *The Basic Political Writings*, pp. 25-81.

- Thurs., 17 Feb. The Other Contract
Rousseau, *On the Social Contract, or Principles of Political Right*, Books I and II, in *Political Writings*, pp. 141-172.
- Tues., 22 Feb. Of Government and Theory
Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Books III and IV, in *Political Writings*, pp. 173-227.
Recommended: Habermas, pp. 89-102.
First option 1 paper topics distributed
- Thurs., 24 Feb. Women and the Public Sphere
Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*, pp. 17-89.

II. REVOLUTIONIZING AND HISTORICIZING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

- Tues., 1 Mar. The French Revolution and Gender (1) [lecture]
Landes, pp. 93-168.
First option 1 papers due in class
- Thurs., 3 Mar. The French Revolution and Gender (2)
Film: "La nuit de Varennes" (discussion to follow class)
- Tues., 8 Mar. The Bourgeois Revolution
*Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Robert C. Tucker, ed., pp. 24-51.
- Thurs., 10 Mar. Capitalist Property and Domesticity
*Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, in Tucker, pp. 734-759.
- Spring Break--
- Tues., 22 Mar. The Liberal Public Order
John Stuart Mill [and Harriet Taylor], *On Liberty*, chs. 1-3, in *On Liberty: with The Subjection of Women and Chapters on Socialism*, pp. 5-74.
- Thurs., 24 Mar. Individualism and Progress
Mill [and Taylor], *On Liberty*, chs. 4-5, & *The Subjection of Women*, chs. 1-2, pp. 75-115 and 119-165.
- Tues., 29 Mar. Liberalism and the Woman Question (1)
Mill, *The Subjection of Women*, chs. 3-4, pp. 166-217.
Habermas, pp. 129-140.
Second option 1 paper topics distributed
- Thurs., 31 March Liberalism and the Woman Question (2)
Film: "Howard's End" (discussion to follow class)

III. THE MODERN PUBLIC AND THE POST-MODERN HOUSEHOLD

Tues., 5 Apr.	<u>Transformation of the Public Sphere (1) [lecture]</u> Habermas, pp. 141-180. **Second option 1 papers due in class**
Thurs., 7 Apr.	<u>Transformation of the Public Sphere (2)</u> Habermas, pp. 181-235.
Tues., 12 Apr.	<u>The Problem of Public Opinion and the Crises of Twentieth-Century Democracy</u> Walter Lippmann, <i>The Public Philosophy</i> , pp. 3-87.
Thurs., 14 Apr.	<u>Beyond the Public: A Conservative Vision</u> Lippmann, pp. 91-181.
Tues., 19 Apr.	<u>The Walls of Privacy and the Defense of Liberalism</u> *Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in <i>Four Essays on Liberty</i> , pp. 118-172.
Thurs., 21 Apr.	<u>Law, Order, and Women</u> Carole Pateman, <i>The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Feminism and Political Theory</i> , pp. 1-89. **Third option 1 paper topics distributed**
Tues., 26 Apr.	<u>Gender, Diversity, and Democracy</u> Pateman, pp. 118-40 and 210-255.
Thurs., 28 Apr.	<u>Theorizing Public and Private</u> MacKinnon, "Privacy v. Equality," pp. 93-102 (review).
Tues., 3 May	<u>Conclusions</u> No reading assigned.