

Contemporary Democratic Theory

Graduate Course Syllabus
Professor Gerry Mackie
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University of California, San Diego
Wed., 6-8:50 PM
Spring, 2010

The course will selectively survey contemporary democratic theory. Most such theory falls in the category of deliberative democracy, directly or indirectly influenced by Habermas. In part, that is because political theorists have wrongly accepted the pessimistic accounts of democratic voting offered by allegedly positivist theorists. I will instead emphasize philosophical approaches to the conceptualization and evaluation of democracy that consider topics beyond deliberation, including problems of democratic voting. Voting, deliberation, and delegation are the three major mechanisms of political democracy. Delegation is treated well by UCSD institutionalists and by political theorists of representation such as Pitkin and Manin; I have taught it in other courses and will neglect it here.

Just to keep everyone awake, I will ask students to write about one 3-page *critical* response (not tedious summaries) per week to a single reading and to be prepared to teach and criticize the reading to the class. Presentations will not be mechanical, I will actively intervene to keep discussion interesting. That will be 40% of the grade. A final paper will be 60% of the grade. I am willing to entertain an alternative assessment scheme for all, bring it up at the first class if anyone is interested. Absence requires permission. P/NP is fine on the condition of meaningful participation in discussion and no unexcused absences.

Except for some technical presentations on my part, I hope we can vigorously debate most of the readings. If you're put off by technical material, don't worry, it will be presented in a friendly fashion.

Books

Books to Obtain

- David Held, *Models of Democracy*, 3rd edition (buy)
- Charles Beitz, *Political Equality*
- Thomas Christiano, *Constitution of Equality* (too expensive!)
- David Estlund, *Democratic Authority*

Optional Books

- Robert Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics* (four short chapters)
- Gerry Mackie, *Democracy Defended* (a few excerpts in course)

The above books are on library reserve (Held only in its second edition). You are responsible for obtaining all texts. However, texts marked with an * below may be available from instructor.

Further references: PhilPapers

Schedule

Week 1. Introduction.

- Held, *Models of Democracy*, 3rd edition, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9; look at all diagrams; remaining chapters are recommended. **Read before quarter begins.** This text fills in historical background, and will allow us to proceed immediately to contemporary theory in week 2.

History of democracy, for your future reference:

- Bernard Manin, *Principles of Representative Government*
- Josep Colomer, *Political Institutions* (ignore his Rikerian framework)
- John Dunn, ed. *Democracy: The Unfinished Journey*
- John Dunn, *Setting the People Free: The Story of Democracy* (UK title, different title in U.S.)
- Paul Foot, *The Vote*

Week 2. The Value of Democracy

- *Hyland, *Democratic Theory: The Philosophical Foundations*, 180-192.
- Beitz, *Political Equality*, Preface, Intro, and Part I, ix-119

Student presentations: Hyland, Beitz Intro, Beitz 1, Beitz 2, Beitz 3, Beitz 4, Beitz 5

Week 3. Arneson, Waldron, Dahl

- Arneson, Democracy is Not Intrinsically Just
<http://philosophy.ucsd.edu/faculty/rarneson/democracyandjustice1.pdf>
- Griffin, Democracy as an Non-instrumentally Just Procedure,
<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/118847762/abstract>

- Richard J. Arneson, Defending the Purely Instrumental Account of Democratic Legitimacy
<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/118847763/abstract>
- Christiano on Waldron, *Law and Philosophy* **19**: 513–543, 2000.
<http://www.springerlink.com/content/t423242443x451q2/fulltext.pdf>
- JEREMY WALDRON, The Core of the Case Against Judicial Review, , 115 Yale L.J. 1346, via UC Library Lexis-Nexis
- Robert Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics*, chs. 6, 7, 8, 13.

Student Presentations: Arneson and Arneson, Griffin, Christiano on Waldron, Waldron, Dahl 6 and 7, Dahl 8 and 13.

Week 4. Social Choice Theory

- *Mackie, *Democracy Defended*, pp.5-9
- *Mackie, Reception of Social Choice Theory by Democratic Theory, pp. 36-46, Social Choice Theory is Not Indubitable
- May Theorem, SKIM, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1913856>
- Tideman, SKIM, A Majority-Rule Characterization with Multiple Extensions, <http://www.springerlink.com/content/k0u4x2t30514625l/fulltext.pdf>
- *Anthony McGann, *The Logic of Democracy*, 60-76
- *Mackie, Reception of Social Choice Theory, pp. 6-13, The Pluralist Response
- *Mackie on Arrow theorem, *Democracy Defended* , 72-82, 92-94, and Ch. 6
- *Davies and Shah, Intuitive Preference Aggregation (just focus on their empirical results)
- Lehtinen, Farewell to IIA, <http://philsci-archive.pitt.edu/archive/00003429/01/fia.pdf>

Student Presentations: Instructor will present all.

Further Reading

- Tideman, *Collective Decisions and Voting* (please don't recall it from me). Best. Comprehensive and realistic evaluations of social choice.
- Anything popular by Donald Saari: *Disposing Dictators. Chaotic Elections. Decisions and Elections*. He is now the giant in social choice theory. Spectacular, but not sufficiently realistic, and better at mathematics than argument.
- Brams, *Mathematics and Democracy*. Good, but approach is too formal (i.e., does not consider rules in behavioral practice by humans).
- Michel Regenwetter, *Behavioral Social Choice Theory*. No cycles in population's preferences, among other things.
- Wikipedia on voting rules (beware of fanaticism)

Week 5. Risse on Majority Voting

- *Mackie on alternative voting rules, *Democracy Defended*, Ch. 3
- Regenwetter, Behavioral Social Choice, <http://rstb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/364/1518/833.abstract> (just glance at sections 2 and 5)
- **Mathias Risse** (2004). [Arguing for Majority Rule.](#) *Journal of Political Philosophy* 12 (1):41–64.
- **Mathias Risse** (2009). [On the Philosophy of Group Decision Methods I: The Nonobviousness of Majority Rule.](#) *Philosophy Compass* 4 (5):793-802.
- **Mathias Risse** (2009). [On the Philosophy of Group Decision Methods II: Alternatives to Majority Rule.](#) *Philosophy Compass* 4 (5):803-812.
- Brams, Fair Division http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics/faculty/brams/fd_handbook.pdf

Optional!!! Controversy between Risse and Saari on Condorcet vs. Borda rules

- **Mathias Risse** (2001). [Arrow's Theorem, Indeterminacy, and Multiplicity Reconsidered.](#) *Ethics* 111 (4).
- **Donald G. Saari** (2003). [Capturing the "Will of the People".](#) *Ethics* 113 (2).
- **Mathias Risse**, [Why the Count De Borda Cannot Beat the Marquis De Condorcet.](#)
- **Donald G. Saari**, [Which is better: the Condorcet or Borda winner?](#)

Student Presentations: Mackie, Risse 2004, Risse 2009-1, Risse 2009-2, Brams. If someone is interested, they could present on the Risse-Saari controversy, but it is not required of anybody.

Week 6. Information Aggregation; Condorcet Jury Theorem

- Grofman and Feld, Rousseau's General Will: A Condorcetian Perspective. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1957401>
- *Scott Page, The Difference, Chs. 7-8
- List and Goodin, Epistemic Democracy, <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/118998837/PDFSTART>
- *Landemore, Democratic Reason
- Estlund, *Democratic Authority*, Ch. 12.
- List and others, Bees, Independence, and Interdependence <http://www.ma.rhbnc.ac.uk/~elsholtz/WWW/papers/papers28listelsholtzeeley.pdf>
- The Doctrinal Paradox <http://personal.lse.ac.uk/LIST/doctrinalparadox.htm>

Optional!

- List, Discursive Dilemma, <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdf/10.1086/498466>
- **Franz Dietrich** (2008). [The Premises of Condorcet's Jury Theorem Are Not Simultaneously Justified.](#) *Episteme* 5 (1):pp. 56-73

- Elizabeth Anderson, *The Epistemology of Democracy*; Sen, Ethics, and Democracy; Review of Estlund; at PhilPapers. Worth consideration.
- Peyton Young, Condorcet's Theory of Voting. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1961757> Kemeny rule and Borda rule are a) good truth-trackers; b) fair compromisers

Student Presentations: Page, List and Goodin, Landemore, Estlund, List, Doctrinal Paradox

Week 7. Tom Christiano, *The Constitution of Equality*

- SKIM, chs. 1, 2, 4
- Read chs. 3, 6, 7

Student Presentations: Chs. 1-2, 3, 4, 6, 7

Week 8. Deliberation

- *Mackie, Deliberation but Voting Too
- *Mark Warren, Deliberative Democracy (Habermasian)
- *Cohen, Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy (Rawls meets Habermas)
- Dennis Thompson, Deliberative Democratic Theory and Empirical Political Science
<http://arjournals.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev.polisci.11.081306.070555>
- Diane Mutz, Is Deliberative Democracy a Falsifiable Theory?
<http://arjournals.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev.polisci.11.081306.070308>
- JPP 2010, Toward More Realistic Models of Deliberative Democracy
<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122421558/PDFSTART>
- JPP 2010, Self-Interest and Power in Deliberative Democracy
<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122663020/PDFSTART>

Optional

- Ask instructor for further material on public deliberation.
- Christiano, *Constitution of Equality*, Ch. 5

Student Presentations: Warren, Cohen, Thompson, Mutz, JPPa, JPPb

Week 9. David Estlund, *Democratic Authority*

- Read chs. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
- Other chapters optional

Student Presentations: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Week 10. Student Choice

Class choice of one of the following topics for the tenth week.

- Confucian Democracy
- Constitutionalism and Judicial Review
- Democratic Minimalism (Descriptive and Justificatory)
- Global Democracy
- Representation

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