

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Political Science 200A
Foundations of Political Science

Fall Quarter 2011
Philip G. Roeder

- I. What is Empirical Political Theory?
- II. Four Alternative Axiomatic Foundations for Empirical Political Theory
 - A. Political Realism
 - B. Political Sociology
 - C. Marxian (Structural) Political Economy
 - D. Positive Political Economy
- III. Some Conceptual Tools for Building Empirical Theories
 - A. Analysis of Strategic Interaction
 - B. Bargaining, Signaling, and Credible Commitments
 - C. Social Dilemmas in Horizontal Relationships
 - D. Hierarchy: Principal-Agent and Relational-Contracting Models

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Office Hours: Mondays, 1:30-3:00 p.m. and by appointment.

Readings. All assigned readings are available on the closed course web-site. The web-site address will be provided in class.

Participation. Please come prepared to contribute to each week's discussion. If you do not volunteer, I will call on you, so please come prepared to discuss all of the readings.

Writing Assignment. You should complete a ten-page paper that represents the first half of a prospectus, sketching the theoretical development that supports an empirical research project. This assignment is described in a separate document. You should present verbally a ten-minute overview of the paper during the tenth-week meeting of the seminar. The paper is due on the Friday of finals week.

Week 1. What is Empirical Political Theory?

Karl R. Popper. 1968. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, 2d ed. New York: Harper & Row. Chapters 1.0-1.1, 1-3-1.8, 3.0, 3.12, and 3.16.

Thomas S. Kuhn. 1970. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 2, 4, 6-8, 12.

Imre Lakatos. 1970. "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes." In *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, edited by Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, 91-195. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Parts 1, 3.0, 3a-b, 3d.0, 3d.4, and 4.

In your reading for week 1, look for the following: inductive vs. deductive theory; structure of a scientific theory (axioms; deductive rigor; hypotheses); falsifiability; scientific paradigms, normal science, anomalies and paradigm shift; research programmes, auxiliary hypotheses and progressive problem shift.

Week 2. Political Realism

Thomas Hobbes. 1651. *The Leviathan: Or the Matter, Forme, and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil*. London. Chapters 10 ¶1-16; 11 ¶1-2; 13 entire; 14 ¶1-9, 27-33; 17 entire; 18 ¶1.

Conflict and cooperation

David R. Mayhew. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Pp. 1-7, 13-19, 81-105.

Stephen M. Walt. 1987. *The Origins of Alliances*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Chapter 2 ("Explaining Alliance Formation"), particularly pp. 17-40.

Origins of the modern state and democracy

Brian M. Downing. 1992. *The Military Revolution and Political Change: Origins of Democracy and Autocracy in Early Modern Europe*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1 ("Introduction"), entire, and 10 ("Conclusions"), particularly pp. 239-242, 246-251.

Political institutions

James Madison. 1787-8. *Federalist Papers*, No. 10 and 51.

William H. Riker. 1964. *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. Chapter 2 ("The Origins and Purposes of Federalism"), particularly pp. 11-16.

In your reading for week 2, look for the following: definitions of power; the pursuit-of-power postulate; security dilemma ("diffidence"); anarchy and war; contractual basis of government; Leviathan as a legal person; the survival (re-election) postulate; balancing vs. bandwagoning; dangers of faction; tyranny of the majority; federalism; checks and balances; federalism as a bargain.

Week 3. Political Sociology

Harry Eckstein. "A Culturalist Theory of Political Change." *American Political Science Review* 82 (September 1988), 789-804.

Conflict and cooperation

James C. Scott. 1976. *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapter 1 ("Introduction").

Robert Putnam. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 6 ("Social Capital and Institutional Success"), particularly pp. 167-185.

Samuel P. Huntington. 1996. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster. Chapter 1 §1-2 ("The New Era in World Politics"); Chapter 2 §1 ("Civilizations in History and Today"); and Chapter 6 entire ("The Cultural Reconfiguration of Global Politics").

Origins of the modern state and democracy

Alexis deTocqueville. 1835. *Democracy in America*. Chapter 17 ("The Principal Causes Tending to Maintain a Democratic Republic in the United States"), § 2-9.

Max Weber. 1918. "Politics as a Vocation." In particular, ¶¶1-55.

Political institutions

Samuel P. Huntington. 1968. *Political Order in Changing Societies*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapter 1 ("Political Order and Political Decay"). In particular, pp. 1-59, 78-92.

In your reading for week 3, look for the following: definitions of culture; normative bases of politics; subsistence ethic; social capital, civic community, and social trust; mores; traditional, charismatic, and rational-legal legitimacy; functional differentiation in institutions; politics as a vocation; civic vs. praetorian politics; institutionalization; modernization; social mobilization.

Week 4. Marxian (Structural) Political Economy

Friedrich Engels. 1880. "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific." Part III.

Friedrich Engels. 1884. "The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State." Part IX §3-4.

Conflict and cooperation

Michael Hechter. 1999. *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers. Chapters 1 ("Introduction") and 2 ("Towards a Theory of Ethnic Change").

Immanuel Wallerstein. 1976. *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. New York: Academic Press. Chapter 7 ("Theoretical Reprise").

Origins of the modern state and democracy

Barrington Moore, Jr. 1966. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1967. Chapters 1 ("England and the Contributions of Violence to Gradualism"), 7 ("The Democratic Route to Modern Society"), 8 ("Revolution from Above and Fascism"), and 9 ("The Peasants and Revolution").

In your reading for week 4, look for the following: base and superstructure; means of production and the mode of production and exchange; historical epochs (primitive communism, slave-owning societies, feudalism, capitalism, socialism/communism); classes; class consciousness and false consciousness; class bases of democracy, fascism, and communism; cultural division of labor; world-empire vs. world-economy.

Week 5. Positive Political Economy

Jeremy Bentham. 1789. *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. Oxford. Chapters 1 ("Of the Principle of Utility"), particularly §§1-13, and 4 ("Value of a Lot of Pleasure or Pain, How to be Measured"), entire.

Adam Smith. 1776. *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. Book I, Chapters 1 (particularly ¶1-4, 10-11) and 2, and Book IV, Chapter 2 (particularly ¶1-15).

Conflict and cooperation

Partha Dasgupta. 1988. "Trust as a Commodity." In *Trust: Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations*, edited by Diego Gambetta, 49-72. New York: Basil Blackwell.

Samuel Popkin. 1979. *The Rational Peasant: The Political Economy of Rural Society in Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter 2 ("The Political Economy of Peasant Society"), particularly pp. 35-72 ("Villages").

Origins of the modern state and democracy

- Douglass C. North. 1981. *Structure and Change in Economic History*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. Chapter 3 (“A Neoclassical Theory of the State”).
- Margaret Levi. 1988. *Of Rule and Revenue*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter 2 (“The Theory of Predatory Rule”).
- Douglass C. North and Barry Weingast. 1989. “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Government Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England.” *Journal of Economic History* 49 (December), 803-32.

In your reading for week 5, look for the following: utility and utilitarianism; felicific or utility calculus; propensity to truck, barter, and exchange; division of labor; invisible hand; trust based on expectations of others’ interests; wealth- or revenue-maximizing rulers; rulers as discriminating monopolists; property rights and economic efficiency.

Week 6. The Analysis of Strategic Interaction

Ken Binmore. 1990. *Essays on the Foundations of Game Theory*. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell. Pp. 1-3.

Elements of a game

Eric Rasmusen. 1994. *Games and Information: An Introduction to Game Theory*, 2d edition. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell. Chapter 1.1 (“Basic Definitions”).

The Nash equilibrium and dominance

- David M. Kreps. 1990. *Game Theory and Economic Modelling*. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 26-36 (“Dominance” and “Nash Equilibrium”).
- Avinash K. Dixit and Barry J. Nalebuff. 1991. *Thinking Strategically: The Competitive Edge in Business, Politics, and Everyday Life*. New York: Norton. Chapter 2.4 (“Equilibrium Strategies”).
- Eric Rasmusen. 1994. *Games and Information: An Introduction to Game Theory*, 2d edition. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell. Chapter 1.2-1.4 (“Dominant Strategies: The Prisoner’s Dilemma,” “Iterated Dominance: Battle of the Bismarck Sea,” and “Nash Equilibrium: Boxed Pigs, Battle of the Sexes, and Ranked Coordination”).

In your reading for week 6, do not attempt to master fine details of game theory, but seek to understand the logic or world view that informs this approach. You will have much more exposure to game theory in PS 204C. Nevertheless, be on the lookout for the following: definition of “a game”; completeness and transitivity in preferences; rules of a game (players, actions, payoffs); zero-sum games, variable-sum games, and games of pure coordination; cooperative games (with binding commitments) vs. non-cooperative games; order of play (game tree); information; expected utility; and equilibria (dominant-strategy equilibrium, iterated-dominance equilibrium, Nash equilibrium).

Week 7. Bargaining, Signaling, and Credible Commitments

- Thomas Schelling. 1960. *The Strategy of Conflict*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 2 (“An Essay on Bargaining”), particularly pp. 21-46.
- George Akerlof. 1970. “The Market for Lemons: Quality Uncertainty and the Market Mechanism.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 84 (August), 488-500. In particular, 488-92, 499-500.
- James D. Fearon. 1995. “Rationalist Explanations for War.” *International Organization* 49 (Summer), 379-414.

Barbara F. Walter. 2002. *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1 (“Introduction”) and 2 (“Theory and Hypotheses”).

Read *two* of the following:

- [1] Paul R. Milgrom, Douglass C. North, and Barry R. Weingast. 1990. “The Role of Institutions in the Revival of Trade: The Law Merchant, Private Judges, and the Champagne Fairs.” *Economics and Politics* 2 (March), 1-23.
- [2] Avner Greif. 1993. “Contract Enforceability and Economic Institutions in Early Trade: The Maghribi Traders’ Coalition.” *American Economic Review* 83 (June), 525-548.
- [3] Avner Greif, Paul Milgrom, and Barry R. Weingast. 1994. “Coordination, Commitment, and Enforcement: The Case of the Merchant Guild.” *Journal of Political Economy* 102: 745-776.

In your reading for week 7, look for the following: bargaining as a particular type of game; explicit vs. tacit bargaining; bargaining by words and by deeds; bargaining over ends and over means; threats and promises; cheap talk and credible commitments; asymmetrical information.

Week 8. Social Dilemmas

Aggregating individual preferences: Condorcet’s paradox and McKelvey’s chaos theorem

Kenneth A. Shepsle and Mark S. Bonchek. 1997. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. New York: W. W. Norton. Chapters 4 (“Group Choice and Majority Rule”) and 5 (“Spatial models of Majority Rule”). In particular, pp. 49-69, 82-123.

Collective action and public goods

Dennis Mueller. 2003. *Public Choice III*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2.1-2.3.

Armen A. Alchian and Harold Demsetz. 1973. “The Property Rights Paradigm.” *The Journal of Economic History* 33 (March), 16-27.

Elinor Ostrom. 1988. “Institutional Arrangements and the Commons Dilemma.” Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis. Indiana University.

Kenneth A. Shepsle and Mark S. Bonchek. 1997. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. New York: W. W. Norton. Chapters 9 (“Collective Action”) and 10 (“Public Goods, Externalities, and the Commons”).

Coordination

Avinash K. Dixit and Susan Skeath. 1999. *Games of Strategy*. New York: W. W. Norton. Pp. 107-14.

Read one of the following three articles:

- [1] David D. Laitin. 1994. “The Tower of Babel as a Coordination Game: Political Linguistics in Ghana.” *American Political Science Review* 88 (September), 622-34.
- [2] Gerry Mackie. 1996. “Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account.” *American Sociological Review* 61 (December), 999-1017.
- [3] Thomas C. Schelling. 1960. *The Strategy of Conflict*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Chapter 3 (“Bargaining, Communication and Limited War”).

In your reading for week 8, look for the following: Condorcet’s paradox, voter’s paradox, cycling in voting, and social-choice instability; Arrow’s impossibility theorem, agenda control, and institutions; collective action; definition of a “public good”; prisoner’s dilemma, free-rider, and sucker’s payoff; Axelrod’s “tit-for-tat” strategy; iterative games; selective incentives; tragedy of the commons; externalities; property rights; battle of the sexes or battle of the two cultures; focal points as conspicuous or prominent solutions; stag hunt or assurance games; and games of chicken.

Week 9. Hierarchy: Principal-Agent and Relational-Contracting Models

Kaare Strom. 2000. "Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies." *European Journal of Political Research* 37 (May), 261-89.

D. Roderick Kiewiet and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1991. *The Logic of Delegation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 2 ("Delegation and Agency Problems"). In particular, pp. 22-34.

Mathew McCubbins and Thomas Schwartz. 1984. "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms." *American Journal of Political Science* 28 (February), 165-79.

Oliver Williamson. 1981. "The Economics of Organization: The Transaction Cost Approach." *American Journal of Sociology* 87 (November), 548-77.

David Lake. 1999. *Entangling Relations: American Foreign Relations in Its Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 2 ("Security Relationships") and 3 ("A Theory of Relational Contracting").

In your reading for week 9, look for the following: delegation; principal and agent; accountability; agency losses; asymmetrical information (hidden action, moral hazard, shirking); screening and adverse selection; signals; incomplete contracts; monitoring and sanctioning; fire alarms and police patrols; multiple principals and multiple agents; Coase theorem; transaction costs; governance costs; asset specificity (site specificity, physical-asset specificity, human-asset specificity); and vulnerability to opportunism.

Week 10. Presentations of Projects