

# PY4658

## Timely Topics in Political Philosophy

### DRAFT SYLLABUS

#### WEEK 1 - BURKEAN CONSERVATISM

- (1) Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1790/2014) [Selections]

#### Supplementary Reading

- (a) Jeremy Waldron, *'Nonsense Upon Stilts': Bentham, Burke, and Marx on the Rights of Man* (New York: Routledge, 2014)

#### WEEK 2 – THE “TYRRANY OF THE MAJORITY”

- (1) Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1835) [Selections]  
(2) James Madison, *The Federalist Papers, No. 51* (1788)

#### Supplementary Reading

- (a) John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (1859), “Introduction”

#### WEEK 3 – NEO-FASCISM?

- (1) Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) [Selections]  
(2) Martha Nussbaum, *The New Religious Intolerance: Overcoming the Politics of Fear in an Anxious Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012) [Selections]

#### Supplementary Reading

- (a) James Q. Whitman, “On Nazi ‘Honour’ and the New European ‘Dignity’” in *Darker Legacies of Law in Europe: The Shadow of National Socialism and Fascism over Europe and its Legal Traditions* (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2003), eds. C. Joerges & N.S. Galeigh, pp. 243-266.  
(b) Gerald L. Neuman, “On Fascist Honour and Human Dignity: A Sceptical Response” in *Darker Legacies of Law in Europe: The Shadow of National Socialism and Fascism over Europe and its Legal Traditions* (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2003), eds. C. Joerges & N.S. Galeigh, pp. 267-274.

#### WEEK 4 - POPULISM

- (1) Jan-Werner Müller, *What is Populism?* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016) [selections]

#### WEEK 5 – BIAS & PARTISANSHIP

- (1) Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion* (New York: Penguin, 2013) [Selections]
- (2) Dan Sperber & Hugo Mercier, *The Enigma of Reason: A New Theory of Human Understanding* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017) [Selections]

#### WEEK 6 – IDENTITY POLITICS

- (1) Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1968) [Selections]
- (2) Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990) [Selections]

#### Supplementary Reading

- (a) Susan Bickford, “Anti-Anti-Identity Politics: Feminism, Democracy, and the Complexities of Citizenship” in *Hypatia* (1997), Vol. 12, No. 4, pp. 111-131.
- (b) Linda Alcoff, *Identity Politics Reconsidered* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006)

#### WEEK 7 – THE ALT-RIGHT

- (1) Angela Nagle, *Kill All Normies: Online Culture Wars from 4Chan and Tumblr to Trump and the Alt-Right* (London: Zero Books, 2017) [Selections]
- (2) Milo Yiannopoulos, “An Establishment Conservative’s Guide to the Alt-Right” *Breitbart News*, March 29, 2016

#### Supplementary Reading

- (a) Mark Fisher, “Exiting the Vampire Castle” *Open Democracy UK*, 29 November 2013

#### WEEK 8 – DEMOCRACY AND THE INTERNET

- (1) Cass Sunstein, *#Republic: Divided Democracy in the Age of Social Media* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017) [Selections]

#### WEEK 9 – IS DEMOCRACY WORTH IT?

- (1) Jason Brennan, *Against Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016) [Selections]

Supplementary Reading

- (a) Tom Christiano, "Review: Against Democracy" *Notre Dame Philosophical Review* (2017) [and following replies]

WEEK 10 - SCAPEGOATING

- (1) Rene Girard, *The Scapegoat* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982) [Selections]

WEEK 11 – REACTIONARY POLITICS

- (1) Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1962) [Selections]  
(2) Mark Lilla, *The Shipwrecked Mind: On Political Reaction* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2017) [Selections]