
Note: Books are available for purchase at Labyrinth Books. Please read the Bowlin assignment before the first session.

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Description
This seminar will examine modern accounts of value, with special attention to the topics of religion, virtue, power, freedom, equality, and democracy. Writers include Machiavelli, Milton, Hume, Emerson, Heyrick, Nietzsche, Dewey, Addams, Berlin, and Wolin.

Requirements
Responsible preparation for, and participation in, the seminar discussions. A term paper (15-20 pages, double-spaced), due on Dean’s Date. At least one turn as co-leader of the seminar. A co-leader initiates discussion of selected passages in the required reading, helps guide the discussion, and stands ready to raise questions about additional passages.

Readings
Items marked with an asterisk will be made available on Blackboard.

1. February 6: Virtues and Their Semblances
John R. Bowlin, Tolerance among the Virtues.

Professor Bowlin will join us for a discussion of his book, which takes a Thomistic approach to tolerance. Our main purpose in discussing it will be to get the gist of classical and medieval thinking about virtue and vice. Machiavelli, Hume, and Emerson depart from Thomas in various ways, but still employ the traditional vocabulary, not least when discussing religion.

2. February 13: Machiavelli: Emancipatory Leadership
Niccolò Machiavelli, The Prince.
http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1972/04/06/an-exchange-on-machiavelli/
Erica Benner, *The Prince: A New Reading*, esp. xix-lii, 22, 69-73, 111-122, 149-154, 161-162, 173-246, 279-282, 288-290, 292-293, 305-328. This book, like Benner’s earlier volume *Machiavelli’s Ethics*, argues that Machiavelli was closer to Aristotelian and Christian ethics than he has often been taken to be. Regardless whether one agrees with her about that, there is much to be learned from her about Machiavelli’s use of rhetoric.

**Recommended secondary sources:**
Leo Strauss, *Thoughts on Machiavelli*, chapters 1 and 2.
Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, Part IV.
Bonnie Honig, *Emergency Politics*. Chapters 3 and 4 use Louis Post and Franz Rosenzweig, respectively, to counter Schmitt and Agamben on the exception.
Mikael Hornqvist, *Machiavelli and Empire*. Early modern republicanism favored liberty (for some) at home, imperial domination abroad.
James Hankins, “Exclusivist Republicanism and the Non-Monarchical Republic,” *Political Theory* 38 (2010): 452-482. Hankins explains how the term republic came to designate a non-monarchical regime, and points out that many early-modern “ republicans” saw princely rule as legitimate in some cases.

3. **February 20: Machiavelli: Republics**
Machiavelli, *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Livy’s History of Rome*, esp. Greeting, Preface; Book I, discourses 1-21, 37, 40-45; Book II, discourses 1-5; Book III, discourses 1-3, 7-9, 30, 33, 41, 49.

**Recommended secondary sources:**
Skinner, “A Third Concept of Liberty.”*  
Benner, *Machiavelli’s Ethics*.  
John McCormick, “Machiavelli against Republicanism.”**  
Maurizio Viroli, *Machiavelli’s God*.  
Mansfield, *Machiavelli’s Virtue*.  
Paul A. Rahe, *Republics Ancient and Modern*, 3 vols. This is a conservative alternative to Skinner’s interpretation of republicanism, classical and modern.  
Frank Lovett, *Domination and Justice*. The precise analysis of domination offered in this book differs in a number of details from Pettit’s.  
Melvin Rogers, “Republican Confusion and Liberal Clarification,” *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 34.7 (2008): 799–824. Rogers argues that Skinner and others mischaracterize the differences between republicanism and liberalism—first, by overemphasizing
the link between Hobbes and latter-day liberalism and, second, by abstracting the liberal notion of freedom from a broader liberal framework that includes commitments to consent, publicity, and the rule of law.

Note:
Machiavelli assumed freedom to be the condition of persons living in a community that provides them with security from domination. The opposite of freedom in this sense is being at someone’s mercy, as a slave is when subject to a master’s arbitrary power. In Leviathan, chapter 21,* Hobbes redefined freedom. For interpretations of this move, see Philip Pettit, “Liberty and Leviathan”* and Skinner’s book, Hobbes and Republican Liberty.

4. February 27: Hume: Religion, Race, and Liberty
Hume, Natural History of Religion.
James Beattie, “On Slavery.”*

Recommended primary sources:

Recommended secondary sources:
Gordon Graham, “Hume and Smith on Natural Religion.”*
Baier, The Pursuits of Philosophy: An Introduction to the Life and Thought of David Hume.
Baier, A Progress of Sentiments, chapters 7-12.
Baier, Moral Prejudices, esp. chapter 4: “Hume, the Women’s Moral Theorist?”
Christopher J. Finlay, Hume’s Social Philosophy, chapters 7-8. Finlay is helpful on Hume’s trade-offs between liberty and other values, a bit less so on Hume’s relation to republicanism.
Jennifer A. Herdt, Religion and Faction in Hume’s Moral Philosophy. This book includes an excellent account of Hume’s ethics of sympathy.
Silvia Sebastiani, The Scottish Enlightenment: Race, Gender, and the Limits of Progress.

5. March 6: Hume: Reason, Faith, and Skepticism
Hume, *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion.*
Hume, “Of Miracles”* and “The Sceptic.”**

Recommended secondary sources:
Andre C. Willis, *Toward a Humean True Religion,* esp. 18-43.
Willem Lemmens, “The ‘True Religion’ of the Sceptic.”*
Renato Lessa, “The Ways of Scepticism (Then and Now).”*
Jeffrey R. Tiel, “A Pyrrhonist Interpretation of Hume’s *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion.*”*

Note: We will focus mainly on Milton’s “Ready and Easy Way,” Emerson’s “Divinity School Address,” and “Self-Reliance,” simply because they are harder than the other required readings.
Gerrard Winstanley et al., “The True Levellers Standard Advanced.”* This egalitarian manifesto was written in 1649 in resistance to the enclosure of formerly common lands (thus depriving the poor of squatting opportunities) and in support of the “Diggers” gathered on [St.] George’s Hill to scratch out a living for themselves. See especially the highlighted passages on pp. 10-12, which anticipate Hegel, Marx, Thoreau, Beauvoir, and Fanon on reversal of relations of domination.
John Milton, “The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth.”* This rejection of kingship as essentially a form of bondage was written in 1660, when the monarchy was about to be restored. The most important passages, for our purposes, are about what makes a relationship qualify as an instance of domination and how being at someone else’s mercy gives rise to temptations of slavishness, servility, or conformity.
William Hazlitt, “On the Clerical Character.”* This essay on the dangers of clerical dress and the servility of established clergy was originally published in a journal in 1818 and then collected in Hazlitt’s *Political Essays* a year later. Notice the quotations from Romans 12:2, Milton, and Marvell. Hazlitt’s father was one of the dissenting ministers praised in the essay.
Elizabeth Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition.* * A British Quaker who opposed the gradualist approach to abolition advocated by Wilberforce and Burke, Heyrick here addresses the pivotal issue of
complicity, and recommends a boycott on grounds similar to those later advanced by Thoreau, Gandhi, King, and Chavez.

Henry Highland Garnet, “An Address to the Slaves of the United States.”* A call for resistance, rooted in the early modern covenant theology from which Milton was also drawing. Garnet was a Presbyterian.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The Divinity School Address”, “Man the Reformer,” “Self-Reliance,” and “New England Reformers” in Essays and Lectures.

Recommended primary sources:

Ralph Sandiford, A Brief Examination of the Practice of the Times (1729).* The first Quaker to criticize scriptural arguments for taking Africans to be living under the “curse of Cain.” Notice his use of the categories of “arbitrary” power and “oppressive tyranny.”

David L. Crosby (ed.), The Complete Antislavery Writings of Anthony Benezet. Benezet, who was born in France, was the most effective organizer among the early Quaker abolitionists.

Thomas Clarkson, An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species.* Clarkson was an Anglican recruited to the abolitionist cause by the Quakers who started the movement. He was a great organizer. Emerson credits him with being the Luther of abolitionism. Emerson read Clarkson’s History of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade* when preparing to write the Address on Emancipation of 1 August 1844.

William Wilberforce, Speech on Abolition of the Slave Trade (1789).* An evangelical Anglican and a Member of Parliament, recruited to the movement in part by Clarkson.

David Walker, “Our Wretchedness in Consequence of the Preachers of the Religion of Jesus Christ,” Article III in Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World (1829).*

Abraham Lincoln, Address at the Lyceum in Springfield.* This is the first of Lincoln’s speeches to be published. He recommends a “political religion” as a remedy for lynching, mobocracy, and idolatry of strongmen.

Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America.

Mary Wollstonecraft, Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), 47-56.
Recommended secondary sources:
Myles Lavan, “Slavishness in Britain and Rome in Tacitus’ *Agricola.*”*
Nigel Smith, *Is Milton Better Than Shakespeare?* The best popular introduction to Milton; has additional bibliographical suggestions.
The Milton Reading Room, link.
David Armitage et al. (eds.), *Milton and Republicanism.*
Jeffrey Stout, “Lincoln’s Religion,” “Callings,” and “Emerson’s Spiritual Hermaphrodite.”*
Len Gougeon, “Emerson and Abolition: The Silent Years.”*
Stanley Cavell, *Emerson’s Transcendental Etudes.*
Patrick Keane, *Emerson, Romanticism, and Intuitive Reason.*

**March 20: Spring Break**

**7. March 27: Emerson: The Transformation of Ideals into Practical Power**

Emerson, “Experience,” “Politics,” “Uses of Great Men,” and two pieces entitled “Worship” (one from *English Traits*, the other from *The Conduct of Life*) in *Essays and Lectures.*

Emerson, “Address on the Emancipation of the Negroes in the British West Indies” and “Fortune of the Republic.”*

Recommended primary sources:
Emerson, “Fate” and “Power” in *Essays and Lectures.*
*Representative Men* is Emerson’s democratic response to this.
Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, chapters 9, 10, Appendix.* Douglass followed Emerson to the stage in Concord on 1 August 1844. In *Narrative* and many speeches, Douglass vehemently criticizes slaveholding Christianity but explicitly refrains from criticizing Christianity itself. See especially the following report of a speech he delivered in Concord, N.H., on 11 February 1844—which probably led Emerson in Douglass’s direction not long before the event of August 1st:

[http://frederickdouglass.infoset.io/islandora/object/islandora%3A112#page/1/mode/1up](http://frederickdouglass.infoset.io/islandora/object/islandora%3A112#page/1/mode/1up)
Henry Highland Garland, “Let the Monster Perish.”
http://www.blackpast.org/1865-henry-highland-garnet-let-monster-perish

Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address.*
Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “Worship of God in Man”* and “The Degradation of Disfranchisement.”* These essays apply a conception of ethical religion to the matter of patriarchy.
Margaret Fuller, Woman in the Nineteenth Century.
Henry David Thoreau, Walden.
Walt Whitman, Democratic Vistas.
William Mackintire Salter, Ethical Religion (1889).* This book is the most important link between Emerson and Gandhi, apart from Emerson’s essays. Gandhi had an abridged version of Salter translated and published in India.

Recommended secondary sources:
Jeffrey Stout, “The Transformation of Genius into Practical Power: A Reading of Emerson’s ‘Experience.’”*
Nell Irvin Painter, The History of White People, chapters 10-12.
David M. Robinson, Emerson and the Conduct of Life. This book is an excellent overview of the increasingly social and pragmatic orientation of Emerson’s later writings, following the lead of West’s American Evasion.
Daniel Koch, Ralph Waldo Emerson in Europe: Class, Race, and Revolution in the Making of an American Thinker. This important recent study focuses on Emerson’s trip to Europe in 1847-48 and his evolving attitudes about race, the English, Americans as a people indebted to the English (for good and for ill), Chartism, and the revolutionary moment he witnessed in Paris in March 1848.
Stanley Cavell, Senses of Walden, expanded edition.
Elise Lemire, Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts.
Alex Gourevitch, From Slavery to the Cooperative Commonwealth: Labor and Republican Liberty in the Nineteenth Century. This book includes valuable discussions of: Lincoln’s speech to Wisconsin farmers in 1859, ancient republicanism’s “paradox of slavery,” labor republicanism’s transformation of virtue ethics, and the strengths
and weaknesses of the recent revival of republicanism in political theory. Unfortunately, it includes no discussion of Emerson’s connection to labor republicanism, and mentions religion only in passing.

8. April 3: Nietzsche: Variations on Emersonian Themes
Nietzsche, Untimely Meditations, second and third pieces.
Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil.

Recommended primary source:
Nietzsche, The Wanderer and His Shadow.

Recommended secondary sources:
Hugo Drochon, Nietzsche’s Great Politics.
Tamsin Shaw, Nietzsche’s Political Skepticism.
Irena S. Makarushka, Religious Imagination and Language in Emerson and Nietzsche.

9. April 10: Nietzsche: Slave Morality and Genealogy
Nietzsche, Genealogy of Morals.

Recommended secondary sources:
Raymond Geuss, “Nietzsche and Genealogy.”*
Robert Brandom, “Reason, Genealogy, and the Hermeneutics of Magnanimity.”*
Brian Leiter, Nietzsche on Morality, chapters 5-8.
Alasdair MacIntyre, Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry, esp. chapters 2 and 9.

10. April 17: Dewey and Addams: The Ethics and Religion of Democracy
Jane Addams, “A Modern Lear,”* # “The Thirst for Righteousness,”* # and “Religious Education and Contemporary Social Conditions.”* #

Note: Professor Beth Eddy will be leading our discussion of Addams.

Recommended primary sources:
Dewey, Ethics.

Recommended secondary sources:
West, American Evasion, chapters 2-3.

Beth Eddy, “The Cathedral of Humanity on Halsted Street: Jane Addams, Auguste Comte, and Edward Caird” and “Struggle for Mutual Aid.” See also Eddy, *Evolutionary Pragmatism and Ethics.*

Charlene Haddock Seigfried, “Socializing Democracy: Jane Addams and John Dewey.”

Melvin L. Rogers, *The Undiscovered Dewey.*


Rogers, “Dewey and His Vision of Democracy.”

Hilary Putnam, “A Reconsideration of Deweyan Democracy.”

Richard Rorty, “Feminism and Pragmatism.”

Axel Honneth, “Democracy as Reflexive Cooperation.”

Eddie Glaude Jr., *In a Shade of Blue.*

11. April 24: Berlin: Liberty, Realism, and the Plurality of Values

Note: We are still deciding on which readings to require for this week. The following list is tentative:


Berlin, “Disraeli, Marx, and the Search for Identity.”

Recommended primary sources by Berlin or influenced by him:


Walzer, *Spheres of Justice.*


Margalit, *The Decent Society.*

Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age.*

Recommended secondary sources:
Skinner, “A Third Concept of Liberty.”
Michael Ignatieff, *Isaiah Berlin*.
John Gray, *Isaiah Berlin: An Interpretation of His Thought*.
Joshua Cherniss, *A Mind and Its Time: The Development of Isaiah Berlin's Political Thought*.

**12. May 1: Wolin: Democracy and Vocation**
Sheldon S. Wolin, *Fugitive Democracy and Other Essays*, chapters 1, 2, 5, 14-25.

Note: Professor West will be leading this session. Professor Stout will be in Edinburgh.

**Recommended primary sources:**

**Recommended secondary source:**
David Marcus, “Into the Cave: Sheldon Wolin’s Search for Democracy,” *Dissent* (November 2, 2015):