

Politics 9503a/Philosophy 9121a (Fall2017)

Political Theory: Toleration and Political Disagreement

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In this course we shall examine the emergence of toleration as a political topic, in the debate between John Locke and Jonas Proast (1689-1704); consider the contemporary significance of toleration and the moral and/or epistemological premises on which it can be based; and finally consider three alternative approaches to disagreement that may replace toleration: “agonism”, the ethics of compromise, and the idea of “recognition.”

Topics and readings are listed below. Readings will be posted on OWL or made available for photocopy. The only required text is *Locke on Toleration* (Cambridge UP 2010, available in UWO bookstore and Weldon).

Evaluation: a final essay, due April 15, worth 70%; class participation, 30%. The essay (15-20 pages is expected) will critically explore one of the week’s topics, while also showing an appreciation of its place in the overall theme of the class. I am open to proposals for essay topics that will span two or more weeks’ readings.

Sept 11– introduction to the course

Sept 18– Locke’s toleration (1)– was it Protestant, fallibilist, or egalitarian? Let’s discuss it: *Locke on Toleration* pp 1-66.

Sept 25 – Locke’s toleration (2) – was it Protestant, fallibilist, or egalitarian? Let’s discuss it some more: *Locke on Toleration*, remainder of book

Oct 2– Interpretations: Vernon, *Locke on Toleration*, Introduction; Jeremy Waldron “Locke, Toleration and the Rationality of Persecution” in Susan Mendus ed, *Toleration*, Adam Wolfson *Persecution or Toleration?* chapter 4

Oct 16 – Toleration today (?): Bernard Williams “Toleration: A Moral or Political Question?” *Diogenes* 44 (1996), George Fletcher “The Instability of Tolerance”, in David Heyd ed. *Toleration: An Elusive Virtue*, T.M.Scanlon *The Difficulty of Tolerance* chapter 10

Oct 23– Mill *On Liberty* (1): *On Liberty* chapters 1, 4 and 5; Sarah Conly, *Against Autonomy*, chapters 1 and 2.

Oct 30 Mill *On Liberty* (2): *On Liberty* chapters 2 and 3, David Dyzenhaus “Mill and the Harm of Pornography” *Ethics* 1992, Robert Skipper “Mill and Pornography” *Ethics* 1993.

Nov 6– Explaining conflict (1) – we are all fallible: David Christensen “Disagreement as Evidence”, *Philosophy Compass* 4/5 (2009), Thomas Kelly “The Epistemic

Significance of Disagreement and the Burdens of Judgment” in Gendler and Hawthorne eds. *Oxford Studies in Epistemology*, John Horton, “Reasonable Disagreement” in M. Dimova-Cookson and P. Stirk eds., *Multiculturalism and Moral Conflict*

Nov 13 – Explaining conflict (2) -- the moral-pluralist case: Isaiah Berlin *The Crooked Timber of Humanity* chapter 2, Joseph Raz “Autonomy, Toleration and the Harm Principle” in Mendus ed. *Toleration*, Susan Wolf “Two Levels of Pluralism” *Ethics* 102 (1992).

Nov 20 – alternatives to toleration (1) – “agonism”: W.B. Gallie “Essentially Contested Concepts”, *Proceedings of the Aristotelean Society* 1956, Stuart Hampshire, *Justice as Conflict* chapter 1.

Nov 27 – alternatives to toleration (2) -- the ethics of compromise: Simon C. May “Principled Compromise and the Abortion Controversy” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 33 (2005), Daniel Weinstock “On the Possibility of Principled Compromise” *CRISPP* 16 (2013), Chiara Lapora and Robert Goodin *On Complicity and Compromise* chapter 2

Dec 4– alternatives to toleration (3) – “recognition”: Anna E. Galeotti *Toleration as Recognition* chapters 3 &4, Peter Jones “Toleration, Recognition and Identity” *Journal of Political Philosophy* 14 (2006), John Horton “Why the traditional concept of toleration still matters” *CRISPP* 2011