

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

Political Science 374: Late Modern Political Theory  
Fall 2005  
MW 1:00-2:15 p.m., CBC C235

Professor David Fott  
Office: WRI B217; 895-4187

Hours: MW 2:45-4:45 p.m., or by appointment  
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The main focus of this course is the conflicting interpretations of the French Revolution given by Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine. Are inalienable human rights a standard that all political authority must respect, or are they abstractions that hinder governments from promoting the common good? Should we prize the liberty of the individual person as highly as the French did in 1789, and as highly as we do today? A study of John Stuart Mill will help us to explore that question.

**Required Readings:**

Edmund Burke. *Select Works of Edmund Burke*. Volume 2, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Liberty Fund, 1999.  
Thomas Paine. *Rights of Man*. Edited by Gregory Claeys. Hackett, 1992.  
Edmund Burke. *Further Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Edited by Daniel E. Ritchie. Liberty Fund, 1992.  
John Stuart Mill. *On Liberty and Other Essays*. Edited by John Gray. Oxford Univ. Press, 1991.

**Schedule of Readings:**

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| M Aug 29 | Introduction   |
| W Aug 31 | Burke, <i>Reflections</i> (from <i>Select Works</i> , vol. 2), pp. 85-123                            |
| M Sep 5  | No class (Labor Day recess)  |
| W Sep 7  | Burke, <i>Reflections</i> , pp. 123-55   |
| M Sep 12 | Burke, <i>Reflections</i> , pp. 155-87   |
| W Sep 14 | Burke, <i>Reflections</i> , pp. 187-223  |
| M Sep 19 | Burke, <i>Reflections</i> , pp. 223-69   |
| W Sep 21 | Burke, <i>Reflections</i> , pp. 269-309  |
| M Sep 26 | Burke, <i>Reflections</i> , pp. 309-40   |
| W Sep 28 | Burke, <i>Reflections</i> , pp. 340-65   |
| M Oct 3  | Paine, pp. 1-36; <b>short paper due</b>  |
| W Oct 5  | Paine, pp. 36-77   |
| M Oct 10 | Paine, pp. 78-112  |
| W Oct 12 | Burke, <i>An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs</i> (from <i>Further Reflections</i> ), pp. 73-109 |
| M Oct 17 | Burke, <i>An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs</i> , pp. 109-46                                   |
| W Oct 19 | Burke, <i>An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs</i> , pp. 146-75                                   |
| M Oct 24 | Burke, <i>An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs</i> , pp. 175-201                                  |
| W Oct 26 | Paine, pp. 113-46; <b>essay #1 due</b>   |
| M Oct 31 | Paine, pp. 147-69  |
| W Nov 2  | Paine, pp. 170-203   |
| M Nov 7  | Paine, pp. 203-32  |
| W Nov 9  | Burke, <i>A Letter to a Noble Lord</i> (from <i>Further Reflections</i> ), pp. 277-300               |
| M Nov 14 | Burke, <i>A Letter to a Noble Lord</i> , pp. 300-326   |
| W Nov 16 | Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , chap. 1; <b>essay #2 due</b>   |
| M Nov 21 | Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , chap. 2  |
| W Nov 23 | Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , chap. 3  |

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| M Nov 28 | Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , chap. 4                                     |
| W Nov 30 | Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , chap. 5                                     |
| M Dec 5  | Mill, <i>Considerations on Representative Government</i> , chaps. 1-4 |
| W Dec 7  | Mill, <i>Considerations on Representative Government</i> , chaps. 5-7 |

**Final examination: M Dec 12, 1:00-3:00 p.m.**

**Format:**

Sessions will combine lecture and discussion. It is imperative, therefore, that you come to class having done the assigned reading for that day. A superior method of preparation is to read the material twice: first fairly quickly in order to grasp the direction of the argument, then slowly and thoroughly, taking notes as you go.

**Assignments:**

Written assignments include:

1. A short paper of 2 pages on a topic to be assigned, which will count for 15% of your final grade.
2. Two interpretive, analytical essays concerning the assigned readings (not primarily research papers) of 5 to 7 pages each. Topics will be assigned. Whichever of those essays receives the higher grade will count for 30% of your final grade; the other essay will count for 20%. The short paper and essays will be due at the beginning of class on the dates specified.
3. A final examination, which will count for 35% of your final grade. The examination will consist primarily or exclusively of essay questions. One week before the examination you will receive details about it to guide your study.

You must complete all written assignments in order to pass the course. Your contribution in class may increase your final grade by one increment (e.g., from B to B+). Your grade will be reduced if you have more than two unexcused absences; lateness normally counts as an absence.

Extensions for submitting papers will be granted only in cases of emergency (e.g., personal illness, preferably with a note from a doctor; serious illness in one's family). The grade on a paper will be reduced by one increment on the scale for each day the paper is late without an approved extension (e.g., a paper of B+ quality will receive a B if it is one day late; a paper of B quality will receive a B-/C+ if it is two days late). No alternate arrangements for the final examination will be made except in case of illness.

**Other Information:**

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If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you will need to contact Disability Services for coordination in your academic accommodations. Disability Services is located within Learning Enhancement Services, in the Reynolds Student Services Complex (SSC), room 137. The telephone number is 895-0866 (TTD 895-0652).