



BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY UNIT OUTLINE

GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN THEOLOGY MASTER OF THEOLOGY MASTER OF MINISTRY

UNIT TITLE	SOCIAL & POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY ISSUES
UNIT CODES	H74069
UNIT STATUS	Elective
HOST FIELD	H
PREREQUISITE/S	Unit in Christian Social Ethics (at least as co-requisite)
INCOMPATIBLES	H52069 /H73069 Social & Political Philosophy
CREDIT POINTS	10cp
REQUIREMENTS	3 hours per week contact and 7 hours per week study over 13 weeks semester
FREQUENCY OF OFFERING	Every three years, in a cycle with two other Field H units
PREPARED BY	Revd Dr Gregory J. Moses
UNIT COORDINATOR	Revd Dr Gregory J. Moses
TEACHING STAFF	Dr Richard Colledge
DATE PREPARED	20 February 2004

Rationale

This unit contributes to the development of a contemporary intellectually credible Christian social ethics and political theology. It does this by giving postgraduate students the opportunity to engage critically with selected classics and significant contemporary writings in social and political philosophy. While the Christian Gospel and Christian theology has its own critical focus, a mutually critical dialogue with more philosophical social theory cannot but be conducive to its message being taken seriously by the people to whom it is directed.

Relation to Course

This unit provides postgraduate students with the opportunity to refine the skills identified in the rationales for the Master of Theology and the Graduate Diploma in Theology, including engagement with contemporary scholarly thinking about Christianity and the Church and their interpretation within the broader contexts of culture and society and formulation of carefully conceived, clearly argued personal responses to significant new ideas. In particular, the unit seeks to provide postgraduate students with the knowledge and skills to make an effective Christian contribution to contemporary social and political debates and contemporary practices.

Aim

To acquaint postgraduate students with important determinants of social and political thought in contemporary culture, including classic texts presumed by contemporary theorists, thereby to provide philosophical background for the development of a credible Christian social ethics and social theology.

Learning Outcomes

By the conclusion of this unit, the participant will have:

1. Developed a critical understanding of some of the key classics in political philosophy that are of particular relevance for the formation of modern political theory and practice as well as some of the key contemporary theorists.
2. By dialogue with these classic works and with some of the contemporary discussion be seriously working towards a more critical understanding of the individual in society, the nature and possibilities of government and the development of better theoretical resources for contemporary Christian involvement.
3. Thereby developed some of the tools necessary for reflecting critically on our own contemporary social and political situation in a Christian perspective.

Content

1. Accessing the presumed background in classics of Western political and social theory

Weeks 1- 2

Plato: *The Republic*: ##368-376, 427-457, 543-592, = Penguin edition, pp. 100-112, 174-211 and pp. 312-369.

Aristotle: *Politics*: Book I, and esp. Book III. Loeb Classical Library (Greek and English translation), pp. 3-67, 172-275.

Thomas Aquinas: *Summa Theologiae*, Vol. 29, ST 1a2ae Questions 95-97, plus Appendices 4-8. and Volume 35, ST 2a2ae Q. 40 on War and Q. 42 on Sedition, plus Appendices 2 and 3.

Weeks 3-4

Machiavelli, *The Prince*, at least Chs 1-11 and Ch. 18.

John Locke, *Two Treatises of Civil Government*, selections to be specified.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourses*, selections to be specified.

Weeks 5-6

J. S. Mill, *Of Liberty. Utilitarianism*. Selections to be specified.

Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace*.

Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, selections to be specified, *Preface to a Critique of Political Economy* and *Communist Manifesto*.

2. Weeks 7-13: Dialogue with some contemporary texts in Social and Political Theory, from:

Weeks 7- 9

John Rawls: from *Theory of Justice, Political Liberalism*.

Critique of Rawls: Hayek, Norzick, the Communitarians, and some Christian response.

Contemporary Liberalism, the Ideology of the New Right, and the emergence of the Neo-Conservatives from: From Lessnoff and Archard and other sources.

"Third Way" advocates: Tony Blair, Anthony Giddens, (Mark Latham). Is this any more than warmed up Thatcherism?? Is there a Fourth Way?: Frank Stilwell.

Weeks 10-11

Critical Theory, Jürgen Habermas and Michael Pusey, for example Pusey's book Habermas, and Robert Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, selections to be specified..

Feminist Political Writing: essays from Pateman, Carole, and Elizabeth Gross, editors, *Feminist Challenges: social and political theory*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1986. Plus selections from Eve Browning Cole and Virginia Hall.

Recent Green and Process-Relational Social and Political Theory. Arran Gare and John Cobb.

Weeks 12-13

The tradition of Catholic Social Ethics, and Karol Wojtyła, for example Pope John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*.

Other Contributions from recent Christian theology: John Cobb, Hans Kung, Oakley and Russett.

Readings from Week 7 onwards will be dominated by texts which strive to make the bridge with Christian social ethics.

Organisation and Teaching Strategies

The three hours contact per week will be divided between lectures introducing important theorists and key texts (2 hours per week) and seminars, mostly student-led, on set readings from the Book of Readings provided (1 hour per week). The purpose of the seminars is to sharpen awareness of contemporary Christian

social theory for the sake of effective and more credible Christian involvement, with mutually critical co-relation and learning going both ways. Students will write and deliver papers for the sake of a collective contribution to Christian involvement in the local and national political scene.

Assessment

	Type of assessment	No of words	Weighting %	Due date	Learning Outcomes covered
	Assessment will be graded according to the requirements of assessment level 4 and will be based on the following work				
1.	Either an exam (2 hours) or a critical philosophical journal (2500 words) covering the content of the unit as a whole: This will set out to provide broad-coverage assessment of understanding and critical appreciation of classic works and contemporary discussion in political philosophy, in accordance with Objective 1	2500	35%	Tba	1
2.	A seminar paper on the contribution of a specific text to the development of a more credible and effective Christian social theory.	2000	25%	Tba	2 and 3
3.	A major essay, topic-based rather than text-based, also for delivery in summary form to the postgraduate tutorial group towards the end of semester.	3000	40%	Tba	2 and 3

The seminar paper and the essay provide for in-depth testing of critical understanding and ability to apply the ideas in the direction of credible Christian Social Theory and relate particularly to the achievement of Objectives 2 and 3.

Generic Skills

- Consolidation and adaptation of undergraduate skills related to critical reasoning, evaluation of scholarly opinions, independent learning, and the ability to collect, analyse and organise ideas and present a persuasive argument of a scholarly position regarding a topic;
- Understanding of how other disciplines relate to the discipline of theology.
- Possession of a sense of social and civic responsibility.
- Knowledge and respect of ethics and moral values in relation to Christian ministry and mission.
- Appreciation of differences in gender, culture and customs.

Bibliography

Required

Nil. A “Book of Readings” is supplied, including a selection from recent editions of classics in social and political philosophy (or else, preferably, web access), plus selections from the following (sample only).

Recommended

Kraynak, Robert P., Glenn Tinder, editors. *In defence of human dignity: essays for our times*. University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 2003.

Hollenbach, David. *The global face of public faith: politics, human rights, and Christian ethics*. Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 2003.

Lessnoff, Michael H. *Political Philosophers of the Twentieth Century*. Blackwell, Oxford, 1999.

Simon, Robert G. *Competing Gospels: Public Theology and Economic Theory*. E. J. Dwyer, Alexandria, N.S.W., Australia, 1995.

Oakley, Francis, and Bruce Russett, Editors. *Governance, Accountability and the Future of the Catholic Church*. Continuum, N.Y., 2004.

Academic & General Resource Requirements

References – Books

- Beilharz, Peter, editor. *Social Theory: A Guide to Central Thinkers*. Allen and Unwin, North Sydney, 1991.
- Bellamy, Richard. *Liberalism and Modern Society: An Historical Argument*. Polity Press/Blackwell, Cambridge and Oxford, 1992.
- Cobb, John B., Jr. *Sustaining the Common Good: A Christian Perspective on the Global Economy*. The Pilgrim Press, Cleveland, Ohio, 1994.
- Dombrowski, Daniel A. *Rawls and Religion: the case for political pluralism*. State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 2001.
- Doran, Robert. *Theology and the Dialectics of History*. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1990.
- Foucault, Michel. *Politics, Philosophy, Culture*. Trans. Alan Sheridan et al. C.U.P., 1988.
- Gare, Arran E. *Postmodernism and the Environmental Crisis*. Routledge, London, 1995.
- Giddens, Anthony. *The Third Way*. Polity Press, Blackwells, 1998.
- Goodin, Robert E., and Pettit, Philip, editors. *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*. Blackwell, Oxford, 1993.
- Habermas, Jurgen. *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. M.I.T. Press, Cambridge Mass. 1987.
- Hayek, F.A. *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas*. Routledge, 1985.
- Kung, Hans. *A Global Ethic for Global Politics and Economics*. O.U.P., Oxford, 1998.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1988.
- McBride, William L. *Social and Political Philosophy*. Paragon House, N.Y., 1994.
- Naess, Arne. *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*. Trans. David Rottenberg. C.U.P, 1989.
- Norzik, Robert. *Anarchy, State and Utopia*. Basic Books, N.Y., 1974.
- Pateman, Carole, and Elizabeth Gross, editors. *Feminist Challenges: social and political theory*. Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1986.
- Pusey, Michael. *Jurgen Habermas*. Tavistock, London, 1987.
- Rawls, John. *Justice as fairness: a restatement*. Edited by Erin Kelly. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2001.
- Rawls, John. *Political Liberalism*. Columbia University Press, N.Y., 1993.
- Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1971, Clarendon Press, 1972.
- Rorty, Richard. *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*. C.U.P.1989.
- Simpson, Gary. M. *Critical Social Theory: prophetic reason, civil society, and the Christian imagination*. Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN., 2002.
- The Blackwell Dictionary of Twentieth-Century Social Thought*. Editors William Outhwaite and Tom Bottomore. Blackwell, Oxford, 1993.
- The Cambridge Companion to Habermas*. Edited Stephen K. White. C.U.P., 1995.
- Vincent, Andrew. *Political Theory: Tradition and Diversity*. C.U.P., 1997.

References – Journal Articles

- De Wijze, Stephen, “The Family and Political Justice: The Case for Political Liberalisms”, *Journal of Ethics*. July 2000; 4(3): 257-281.
- Hester, Marcus, “Aristotle on Change in Justice in the Nicomachean Ethics, 8th”. *Skepsis*. 2001; 12: 181-192.
- Rao, A. P, “Distributive Justice: A Third World Response to Recent American Thought (Part II)”. *Manuscrito*. Apr 1993; 16(1): 63-127.
- Rosenfeld, Michel, “Restitution, Retribution, Political Justice and the Rule of Law”. *Constellations*. Jan 1996; 2(3): 309-332.

References – Online and Other IT Resources

Students will be assisted and guided in accessing appropriate websites. All the classic literature is available online in multiple versions, as are important documents in Christian social ethics; and there are also reasonable resources online for accessing contemporary lines of thought. www.epistemelinks.com is as good a starting site as any, and Google searches often give satisfactory results. Resources are such that the Book of Readings can reasonably be restricted to contemporary copyrighted material.