

POL 373HF: The Emotions and Political Theory

Lectures: Wednesdays 12 to 2 in UC 161

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Course Description:

Despite some renderings of the art of proper political thinking as the search for the supremacy of reason over passion, recent scholarship across the humanities and social sciences has revealed the multiple ways in which emotion can be recognised as a key component of morality and good politics. Revisionist approaches to the history of political thought have come to recognise that many political theorists writing prior to the twentieth century were more receptive to emotion as a positive political force than previously acknowledged. Through deeper exploration of the history of political thought, theorists have found more appealing and sophisticated accounts of the place that emotions play in political life and in normative theories of morals and politics.

In this context, this course has two objectives. The first objective is to explore the work of some important thinkers in the history of political thought with a focus on their conception of emotion and of emotion's place in political life. While thinkers are chosen selectively, a reading of their ideas will provide us with a map of competing ways in which an appreciation of emotion can be understood and integrated into a theory of politics. The first half of the course will allow students to see some of the historical development of competing models of the place of emotion in politics and to give us tools to develop a more sophisticated account of the emotional process and of its place in models of good citizenship.

A second objective of the course is to give an opportunity for students to explore some of the crucial issues that are raised with the new perspectives and appreciation of emotion in collective life. For this purpose, the second half of the course is organised thematically focusing on a number of key debates today for theorists who take the emotions seriously.

Basic outline:

A. The Emotions and the History of Thinking About Politics

Part I (two weeks):

Introduction. What is an emotion and how do we begin to think about the place of emotion in political life?

Part II (two weeks):

The Classics: Two Models of Rational Self-Control (Stoics and Aristotle)

Part III (two weeks):

17th and 18th Century Reflections on Emotions in Politics (clash of emotions, the politics of interest and moral sense)

Part IV (one week):

The Modern Age. Towards the Severing of Emotion and Moral Theory?

B. Second Part. Emotions and Politics in Contemporary Theory

Part I (one week):

Thinking about emotions in contemporary politics. Are there good and bad emotions?

Part II (three weeks):

Exploring the place of courage, shame, empathy and fear in political life and for a theory of politics

Part III (one week):

Should public happiness be the overriding objective of public policy?

Assignments (instructions for each assignment noted below):

Reflection paper, 5 pp. due September 25th 10%

Research essay, c. 10 pp., due November 27th 35%

Exam (during December exam period) 35%

Participation in class and on Blackboard chat group 20%

Reflection Paper: This paper is intended mainly as a reflective and analytic exercise, rather than a research exercise. You have two options.

1) The first is to choose a particular emotion that you deem to be relevant to politics, and then choose two or possibly three issues where this emotion is evident (you may need to consult newspapers and trusted media sources for this, or you can also do so through a fictional account but please cite your sources in proper format). Provide your own analysis of the emotion- what are the cognitive and feeling components involved? Do you consider it a primary or secondary emotion (an emotion about emotions), and in what way? Compare and contrast the way in which your chosen emotion manifested itself in the various contexts. How does the comparison shed light on the structure and nature of the emotion- i.e. what can we learn about the emotion itself by examining it in different social and political settings?

What can these manifestations of the same emotion in different contexts teach us about the place of this emotion in politics and what its place should be?

2) The second option is to choose one political issue (again using a trusted source with appropriate bibliographic references) and to explore the range of emotions that can be seen as linked to or coming from this issue. Provide a brief analysis of the emotions identified. Is it possible to distinguish between public and private emotions in your case? If so, what exactly determines the distinction? How are the emotions identified linked to notions of what socially, politically or legally might be deemed the appropriate emotions for the situation?

Research essay: Your essay should focus on a particular question related to the theme of the course and draw from scholarly sources in political theory and political science (check with me or with the TA if you are in doubt about what constitutes a scholarly source). In addition, it is strongly recommended that you approach this question through the study of the political theory of one or more thinkers, though you are not limited to thinkers on the course syllabus. It is also strongly recommended that you consult with me when determining your paper topic. Your paper should include a standard scholarly format for your references and bibliography (consult [The Chicago Manual of Style](#) for questions with regard to this).

Plagiarism is a serious offence and University policy on plagiarism will be strictly enforced. Materials discussing this policy will be made available on the course's Blackboard site and can also be consulted at <http://writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources>. Please keep all rough and draft work and hard copies of your essay until the final grades are posted. Dates due are noted above. A penalty of 2% a day (out of 100%) will be assigned to all late papers. This includes weekends. I can accept electronic submissions of your essays, but please follow up with a printed copy.

Turnitin.com: Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. This will be available via the Blackboard site for the course (details to follow). In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com website.

Participation: Grades for participation will be determined in three ways, through the handing in of a question based on the reading, through active participation in class discussion and through participation in the chat function set up on Blackboard. The participation grade will reflect the student's quantity and quality of contributions to general class discussion both online and in class. To help facilitate discussion in class, students are asked to prepare a question based on the reading for that week to launch discussion, and that question will also be handed in at the end of class. Please sign up ahead of time for the week that you intend to prepare the question. You can sign up for the week of your choice on Blackboard although each week will be limited to seven students to ensure there will be questions ready to launch discussion throughout the term.

Accessibility Needs:

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact

Accessibility Services as soon as possible: <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/> or accessibility.services@utoronto.ca .

Books and Course Packet:

The following book will be available for purchase at the Bob Miller Bookroom, 180 Bloor Street West (across from the ROM). Their telephone number is 416-922-3557.

R. Kingston and L. Ferry, eds. Bringing the Passions Back In (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008).

In addition there is a packet of course readings. These are available from **Print City** also at 180 Bloor Street West (across from the ROM). Their telephone number is 416-920-3040. The readings in this course packet are identified in the readings below with CP.

Blackboard:

A Blackboard website for this course can be accessed through the university portal at portal.utoronto.ca . You will find there a digital copy of the syllabus, some links to required readings, lecture outlines, chatroom for the course as well as the schedule for signing up for the question assignment noted above. You can also download the Blackboard Mobile Learning App to access all your course information posted to Blackboard through your iphone, ipad and Android devices.

Readings and assignments:

*Please note that this schedule of readings may be subject to some modification over the course of the term. Readings from the course packet are followed by the letters CP in brackets.

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| Week 1 (September 11th) | - I. Introduction to the course. |
| Week 2 (September 18th) | - I. What is an emotion and how do we begin to think about the place of emotion in political life?

- <u>Read:</u>

1) Ronald de Sousa, "Emotion," <u>Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</u> . Available online at http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/emotion . A link to this entry is available on the Blackboard site for the course.

2) Robert C. Solomon, "The Politics of Emotion," In <u>Bringing the Passions Back In</u> , chap. 10, pp. 189-208. |

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| Week 3 (September 25th) | - **** <u>Reflection Paper Due (5 pp.)</u> - see above for details

- II. The Classics. Two models of Rational self-control. #1 The Stoics

- <u>Read:</u> |
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- Cicero On the Emotions, Book 3, parts 1 and 2; Book 4 (CP).
- Week 4 (October 2nd)
- II. The Classics con't. Two models of Rational self-control. #2 Aristotle.
- Read:
- 1) The Art of Rhetoric, sections 1-4 and 6 (CP).
 - 2) Arash Abizadeh, "The Passions of the Wise: phronesis, rhetoric and Aristotle's Passionate Practical Deliberation," In Bringing the Passions Back In, pp. 60-77.
- Week 5 (October 9th)
- III. 17th and 18th Century Reflections on Emotions in Politics. I. Neo-Augustinianism, Descartes, and Mandeville
- Read:
- 1) La Rochefoucauld, Maxims. London: Penguin, 1959, pp. 37-58 (CP).
 - 2) Descartes, The Passions of the Soul. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1989, pp. 33-49 (CP).
 - 3) Mandeville, The Fable of the Bees and Other Writings, ed. E. Hundert, pp. 19-73 (CP).
 - 4) Rebecca Kingston, "The Political Relevance of the Emotions from Descartes to Smith," In Bringing the Passions Back In, pp. 108-125
- Week 6 (October 16th)
- III. 17th and 18th Century Reflections on Emotions in Politics. Enlightenment Responses to the Politics of Interest- Sympathy and Moral Sense.
- Read:
- 1) Shaftesbury, an excerpt from "Sensus Communis," In Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), pp. 48-53 (CP).
 - 2) Sharon Krause, "Passion, Power and Impartiality in Hume," In Bringing the Passions Back In, pp. 126-144.
 - 3) Rousseau, The Origins of Inequality. Use your own copy or access the translation of Ian Johnston available online at:
<http://www.oneeyedman.net/school-archive/classes/fulltext/www.mala.bc.ca/-johnstoi/rousseau/seconddiscourse.htm>

Week 7 (October 23rd)

-IV. Towards the Severing of Emotion and Moral Theory in the Modern Era. Three Strands: affect theory, emotion as an expression of evolutionary adaptation, and the psychopathology of social emotions

-Read:

- 1) Spinoza, Ethics. London: Penguin Books, 1996, pp. 104-112 (CP)
- 2) Charles Darwin, The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals, “Introduction to the First Edition,” and “Concluding Remarks and Summary”, pp. 345-360 (CP).
- 3) Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents. London: Penguin, 2002, chap. 3, pp. 29-44 (CP).

Week 8 (October 30th)

- Second Part. Emotions and politics in contemporary theory. I. Thinking about emotions in contemporary politics. Are there good and bad emotions? Is love better than anger, and hope better than fear?

-Read:

- 1) Adam Potkay, The Story of Joy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, Introduction: What is Joy?, pp. 1-29 (CP).
- 2) Barbara Fredrikson, “The Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotions,” Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London in Biological Sciences 359.1449 (September 2004), 1367-78 to be accessed through UTOR articles at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/pmc/articles/PMC1693418/pdf/15347528.pdf>.
- 3) Lauren Berlant, “Cruel Optimism,” Differences. A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies 17.5(2006), pp. 20-36 to be accessed through UTOR library site at <http://differences.dukejournals.org/content/17/3/20.full.pdf>.

Week 9 (November 6th)

II. Rethinking the normative place of emotions in politics. Shame.

-Read:

- 1) Martha Nussbaum, “Shaming Citizens?” In Hiding from Humanity. Disgust, Shame and the Law (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), chap. 5, p. 222-279 (CP).

2) Michael Cunningham, "The Apology in Politics," In Politics and the Emotions, Ed. S. Thompson and P. Hoggett (London: Continuum, 2012), chap. 8 (CP).

3) Julien Deonna, Raffaele Rodogno and Fabrice Teroni, In Defense of Shame (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), chaps. 4 and 7 (CP).

Week 10 (November 13th)

II. Rethinking the normative place of emotions in politics. Fear.

- Read:

1) George E. Marcus, "Reason, Passion and Democratic Politics: old conceptions- new understandings-new possibilities," in Passions and Emotions, ed. James E. Fleming. New York and London: New York University Press, 2013 (CP)

2) Corey Robin, "Introduction," Fear. The History of a Political Idea (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 1-25 (CP).

Week 11 (November 20th)

II. Rethinking the normative place of emotions in politics. Courage.

- Bring to class the account of a life story of a well-known (or not so well-known) political actor as a case study in political courage. We will raise these examples of political courage in discussion.

- Read:

Jason Scorsza, "The Ambivalence of Political Courage," The Review of Politics 63.4(2001), pp. 637-662 available on the UTOR library site at: <http://www.jstor.org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/stable/pdfplus/1408854.pdf?acceptTC=true>

Week 12 (November 27th)

- *** Final Paper Due- 10 pp- see above for details

- III. Should happiness be the overriding objective of public policy?

- Read:

- J. Helliwel, R. Layard, and J. Sachs, eds. World Happiness Report, New York: Earth Institute, Columbia University, 2012. chaps. 1, 4 and 5.
Access at

<http://www.earth.columbia.edu/sitefiles/file/Sachs%20Writing/2012/Worl...d%20Happiness%20Report.pdf>

Final Exam TBA