

Tufts University
Spring 2013
Mon./Wed., 4:30-5:45
Lane 100A

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Office hours: Mon./Wed., 3:00-4:00
Packard Hall 109

PS 154 – Romanticism and Revolution: The Political Philosophy of Rousseau

“The world has not seen more than once or twice in all the course of history a literature which has exercised such prodigious influence over the minds of men, over every cast and shade of intellect, as that which emanated from Rousseau between 1749 and 1762.”

– Henry Sumner Maine

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was one of the deepest and most influential critics of the Enlightenment, and of the liberalism and capitalism that we have inherited from it. He is also one of the most complex thinkers of the modern age, standing at once on both the left and the right of the political spectrum, appealing to ancient thought and practice while at the same time paving the way toward postmodernism, and appearing to be both a profound champion of democracy and a precursor to totalitarianism. This course will examine this intriguing thinker through a study of the *First and Second Discourses*, *The Social Contract*, *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, and *Emile*. We will also read John Locke’s *Second Treatise of Government*, one of the founding texts of liberalism by one of Rousseau’s most important predecessors.

Course Format and Requirements:

By far the most important requirement of the course is that you complete all assigned readings *carefully* and *before class*. Rousseau’s writings are as powerful and inspiring as any works of philosophy, but many of them are also – by design – difficult to penetrate and to see as a whole. For that reason, you should take the time to read the material slowly and carefully, taking notes about what seems important or intriguing and about what you don’t fully understand. These notes will also help immensely in generating useful and stimulating class discussion.

The class will be conducted mostly in discussion format. I may have to lecture a bit on some days, but every class will involve a good deal of discussion, and you should plan on participating every day. High-level participation requires that you grapple with the central ideas and arguments of the readings ahead of time, and bring to class any questions or confusions you might have.

Attendance is required; more than two absences will affect your participation grade, and absence from more than a third of the classes will automatically result in a failing grade. Students arriving late will generally be counted as absent.

The written assignments include one medium-length midterm paper (6-8 pages) and one longer final paper (12-15 pages). Both papers will be analytical in nature, and neither will require any research beyond the course readings. For the midterm paper, topics and guidelines will be handed out several classes in advance of the due date. For the final paper, you will be

responsible for devising your own topic; you must submit a short (1 page) paper proposal by April 22, and meet with me to discuss it. Late papers will be penalized by 5 percentage points for each day they are late.

Papers will be given a numerical grade on the following scale:

A	93-100	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	63-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	D-	60-62
B	83-86	C-	70-72	F	59 and below

Grades will be determined as follows:

Class participation	20 %
Midterm paper	35 %
Final paper	45 %

The university's policy on academic honesty will be strictly adhered to. For more information on plagiarism and the proper citing of sources, see:

<http://uss.tufts.edu/arc/writingresources/plagiarism.asp>

Required Texts:

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (Hackett, 1980).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, trans. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings*, trans. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, trans. Charles Butterworth (Hackett, 1992).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*, trans. Allan Bloom (Basic Books, 1979).

These books are available at the bookstore; please buy the editions listed here. All other readings will be made available on Trunk.

Course Schedule and Readings:

- 1/16 Introduction
- 1/21 No class – Martin Luther King Day
- 1/23 John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chapters 2-5 (pp. 8-30)
- 1/28 John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chapters 7 (§87-94), 8 (§95-101, 113-22), 10-13, 19 (§221-31) (pp. 46-54, 61-65, 68-83, 111-16)
- 1/30 *First Discourse* and “Preface to *Narcissus*” (pp. 2-28, 92-106)
- 2/4 *Second Discourse*, Preface, first half of Part 1, and Notes 9, 16 (pp. 124-44, 197-204, 218-21)
- 2/6 *Second Discourse*, second half of Part 1 and Note 15 (pp. 144-60, 218)
- 2/11 *Second Discourse*, Part 2 (pp. 161-88)
- 2/13 *Social Contract*, Book 1 (pp. 39-56)
- 2/18 No class – President’s Day
- 2/20 *Social Contract*, Book 2, chapters 1-6, and Book 4, chapters 1-2 (pp. 57-68, 121-25)
- 2/21 *Social Contract*, Book 2, chapters 7-12 (pp. 68-81)
(Thursday)
- 2/25 *Social Contract*, Book 3, chapter 15, and Book 4, chapter 8 (pp. 113-16, 142-51)
- 2/27 *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, walks 1, 5 (pp. 1-11, 62-73)
- 3/4 *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, walks 6, 8 (pp. 74-88, 110-21)
Midterm paper topics handed out
- 3/6 *Emile*, Preface and beginning of Book 1 (pp. 31-41)
- 3/8 **Individual meetings with me about midterm papers; bring thesis and/or outline**
(Friday)
- 3/11 *Emile*, remainder of Book 1 (pp. 41-74)
- 3/13 *Emile*, first half of Book 2 (pp. 76-124)
- 3/15 **Midterm paper due by noon (in my box in Packard Hall)**
(Friday)

Spring break

- 3/25 *Emile*, second half of Book 2 (pp. 124-63)
- 3/27 *Emile*, Book 3 (pp. 164-208)
- 4/1 *Emile*, first section of Book 4 (pp. 211-55)
- 4/3 *Emile*, middle section of Book 4 (pp. 255-315)
- 4/8 *Emile*, end of Book 4 (pp. 315-55)
- 4/10 *Emile*, first section of Book 5 (pp. 356-406)
- 4/15 No class – Patriot’s Day
- 4/17 *Emile*, middle section of Book 5 (pp. 406-50)
- 4/22 *Emile*, end of Book 5 (pp. 450-80)
Final paper proposals due in class
- 4/24 “Emile and Sophie; or, The Solitaries” (Trunk, pp. 685-721)
- 4/26 **Individual meetings with me about final papers**
(Friday)
- 4/29 Review
- 5/8 **Final paper due by noon (in my box in Packard Hall)**
(Wednesday)