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# Contemporary Political Theory Liberalism And Its Critics

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 An Introduction

*Contemporary Political Theory Liberalism And Its Critics*

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**HARRINGTON BRENDEN**

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## **CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION**

Routledge

Contemporary political theory has experienced a recent revival of an old idea: that of community. In *Liberalism and Community*, Steven Kautz explores the consequences of this renewed interest for liberal politics. Whereas communitarian critics argue that liberalism is both morally and politically deficient because it does not adequately account for equality and virtue, Kautz defends liberalism by

presenting reports of various partisan quarrels among liberals (who love liberty), democrats (who love equality), and republicans (who love virtue). Founded on the classic texts of Locke and Montesquieu, the liberalism that Kautz advocates is cautious and conservative. He defends it against the arguments of important new communitarians—Richard Rorty, Michael Walzer, Benjamin Barber, and Michael Sandel—and contrasts communitarian and liberal views on key questions. He discusses Walzer's account of moral reasoning in a democratic community, engages Barber on the nature and limits of republican community, and takes on Rorty's communitarian account of moral psychology and the nature of the self. Kautz also explores the concepts of virtue, tolerance, and patriotism—issues of particular interest to communitarians which pose special problems for liberal political theory—in an effort to rebuild a new and more tenable interpretation of liberal rationality.

**Paradigms in Political Theory** Manchester University Press

Political realism has recently moved to the centre of debates in contemporary political theory. In this monograph, Matt Sleat presents the first comprehensive overview of the resurgence of interest in realist political theory and develops a unique and original defence of liberal politics in realist terms. Through explorations of the work of a diverse range of thinkers, including Bernard Williams, John Rawls, Raymond Geuss, Judith Shklar, John Gray, Carl Schmitt and Max Weber, the author advances a theory of liberal realism that is consistent with the realist emphasis on disagreement and conflict yet still recognisably liberal in its concern with respecting individuals' freedom and constraining political power. The result is a unique contribution to the ongoing debates surrounding realism and an original and timely re-imagining of liberal theory for the twenty-first century. This provocative work will be of interest to students and all concerned with the possibility of realising liberalism and its moral aspirations in today's world.

*Perspectives in Contemporary Political Thought* Cambridge University Press

Although liberal democratic polities have an important place in contemporary politics, their justification is contentious. Liberalism and democracy are commonly thought to be inconsistent, or at least in tension with one another; and the reality of liberal democracy is perceived as falling far short of the ideal. In *Political Morality*, Richard Vernon sets out to show that liberal democracy can make sense as a single political conception, rather than a trade-off between two different values. He also argues that in conceiving of liberal democracy as proposed, other problems inherent in liberalism and in democracy are eased; liberal democracy is not exposed to the same objections as liberalism and it can avoid some of the paradoxes that are said to plague democratic theory. The book also points to some of the ways in which polities currently termed 'liberal democracies' fall clearly short of the values that might legitimize them.

*Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Liberalism* Rowman & Littlefield

During the past two decades there has been increasing dissatisfaction with established political categories, on the grounds that they no longer fit many of the facts of contemporary life, or adequately express many contemporary political ideals. *Political Theory in Transition* explores the principal reasons for this dissatisfaction and outlines some of the most influential responses to it. Key features of this textbook: \* covers many of the important areas in political theory including: Communitarianism; Identity; Feminism; Liberalism; Citizenship; Democracy; Power; Authority; Legitimacy; Nationalism; Globalization; and the Environment \* includes chapters written by some of the foremost authorities in the field of political theory \* divided into four useful sections, beginning with the concept of the individual, and progressing to beyond the nation-state.

## LIBERALISM

John Wiley & Sons

Recent claims that civic republicanism can better address contemporary political problems than either liberalism or communitarianism are generating an intense debate. This is a sharp insight into this debate, confronting normative theory with historical and comparative analysis. It examines whether republican theory can address contemporary political problems in ways that are both valuable and significantly different in practice from liberalism. These expert authors offer contrasting perspectives on issues raised by the contemporary revival of republicanism and adopt a variety of

methodological approaches to address the practical implications of republican thought within a coherent thematic framework. This book also \*clarifies core themes and contested areas of republican thought, especially the notion of liberty, the specific political institutions needed to realize it, and the nature of solidarity among citizens. \* shows how republicanism continued to influence the development of liberal thought in nineteenth century Britain \* examines the development of alternative republican discourses, including the established political practice and ideology of the French republican tradition \* applies republican perspectives to contemporary political concerns such as the creation of social trust and the expansion of public accountability \* explores the implications of republican theory for policy areas including houses, education and marriage in diverse multicultural societies This book will be of great interest to researchers and students studying republicanism in political science history, social policy and education. In addition, it is a valuable resource for those concerned with citizenship, democratic theory, multiculturalism, nationalism and patriotism, and politics beyond the nation-state.

*Political Morality* A&C Black

*Contemporary Political Theory* A Reader SAGE Publications Limited

*Republicanism in Theory and Practice* Edinburgh University Press

Much contemporary political philosophy has been a debate between utilitarianism on the one hand and Kantian, or rights-based ethic has recently faced a growing challenge from a different direction, from a view that argues for a deeper understanding of citizenship and community than the liberal ethic allows. The writings collected in this volume present leading statements of rights-based liberalism and of the communitarian, or civic republican alternatives to that position. The principle of selection has been to shift the focus from the familiar debate between utilitarians and Kantian liberals in order to consider a more powerful challenge of the rights-based ethic, a challenge indebted, broadly speaking, to Aristotle, Hegel, and the civic republican tradition. Contributors include Isaiah Berlin, John Rawls, Alasdair MacIntyre.

## LIBERALISM AT THE CROSSROADS

Columbia University Press

The revised and updated edition of Goodin and Pettit's highly-acclaimed contemporary political philosophy anthology, bringing together the field's most important readings in a single volume Unparalleled in the breadth and scope of its coverage, this newly-revised third edition traces the evolution of political philosophy as a contemporary practice, and raises important questions about the impact of current political events. Fully updated to include 49 contemporary and classic selections from the most distinguished scholars in political philosophy Offers expanded coverage of international affairs and political oppression Includes essays which represent a diversity of political and ideological positions, and features interdisciplinary voices in politics, law, and economics Edited by two of the field's most highly-respected scholars The ideal collection of primary readings to accompany the *Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy, Second Edition* (Wiley Blackwell, 2012) for coursework in political philosophy

**The Claims of Community in Contemporary Political Theory** SAGE

Since the publication of John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* (1971) - followed up by *Political Liberalism*

(1993) and *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* (2001) - discussions on social justice and redistributive liberalism have taken center stage in contemporary political theory. This book adds to an enormous body of literature. It does not question Rawlsian principles, but it does reject the liberal institutions he advocates. A debate is constructed in which his liberalism is contrasted with a libertarian socialism informed by the English theorist of guild socialism G.D.H. Cole (1889-1959). These two authors visualize alternative macro socio-economic schemes. Although they are set within modern liberal and libertarian socialist frameworks respectively, they share a commitment to reducing vast inequalities in wealth. Central to the Rawlsian scheme is the difference principle - that inequalities are only permitted if they benefit the least well off. Rawls proposes that citizens deliberating without awareness of subjective talents - a collective lack of knowledge captured by the Rawlsian term the veil of ignorance - will be compelled to prioritize a society structured to accommodate this principle to other systems in which inequalities are allowed to concentrate with lesser degrees of regulation. This assertion will not be challenged. However, it is shown how the difference principle will be more easily realized in the left libertarian scheme, in which the author defends. The argument is that Rawlsian premises point to a more radical conclusion than Rawls acknowledges.

#### **An Introduction to Modern Political Theory** Marcel Dekker

Yves Charles Zarka shows you how Hobbes established the framework for modern political thought. Discover the origin of liberalism in the Hobbesian theory of negative liberty; that Hobbesian interest and contract are essential to contemporary discussions of the comportment of economic actors; and how state sovereignty returns anew in the form of the servility of the state. At the same time, Zarka controversially argues against received readings claiming that Hobbes is a thinker of a state monopoly on legitimate violence.

#### Introduction to Contemporary Political Theory Contemporary Political Theory A Reader

Over the past twenty-five years debate surrounding cultural diversity has become one of the most active areas of contemporary political theory and philosophy. The impact of taking cultural diversity seriously in modern political societies has led to challenges to the dominance of liberal theory and to a more serious engagement of political theory with actual political struggles. This 2007 volume of essays by leading political theorists reviews the development of multiculturalism, surveys the major approaches, addresses the critical questions posed and highlights directions in research. *Multiculturalism and Political Theory* provides an overview for both students and researchers.

### **CONTEMPORARY LIBERALISM AND THE NATION**

#### Polity

This student textbook introduces the concept of political theory from various viewpoints, such as justice and the law, government and the state, and equality and human rights. It analyzes the concepts of power, liberty and a series of political principles.

#### *The Political Theory of Neoliberalism* SAGE

*Liberalism at the Crossroads* offers succinct, accessible, and well-written surveys of the ideas of the leading participants in the contemporary philosophical debate about liberalism. Christopher Wolfe brings together analyses of leading liberal thinkers from across the spectrum as well as influential

critics of liberalism, including John Rawls, Ronald Dworkin, Robert Nozick, Michael Sandel, Richard Rorty, Joseph Raz, and William Galston. For the second edition, each chapter has been thoroughly revised, and new chapters on Susan Moller Okin, Richard Posner, and John Finnis have been added to include representatives of liberal feminism, law and economics, and natural law. The result is an invaluable overview of contemporary political theory, ideal for both students and scholars.

#### *Essays in Contemporary Political Theory* Stanford University Press

What is the status and legitimacy of the nation within the horizon of liberalism today? Surveying three representative, contrasting, recent works in contemporary political philosophy, I argue that the nation loses its status and legitimacy from every side. John Rawls's allegedly status-quo preserving theory in *The Law of Peoples* (Rawls 1999) defends only the shell of sovereignty and in fact points toward cosmopolitan aspirations. Cosmopolitan liberals, and conservative nationalists, therefore, claim with reason that liberalism is not capable of conferring status and legitimacy on the nation's "arbitrary" restrictions of individual autonomy (Nussbaum and Cohen 1996, MacIntyre 2003). But, in doing so, cosmopolitan liberalism creates a grave problem, for liberalism depends upon citizens to uphold freedom and upon limits to freedom to make freedoms meaningful. One would think to turn toward so-called liberal nationalist theories of liberalism, like David Miller's *On Nationality* (Miller 1995). But these, in turn, defend the nation only by depleting it of any content and rendering the very concept of the nation hollow. Neither of these two possible corrections of liberalism solves its problems with particularity and social unity; each only exacerbates them. My work as a whole therefore shows that contemporary liberalism tends to undermine the nation, on which it nevertheless relies. I demonstrate each part of the argument in separate chapters: two on Rawls's liberalism, one on Nussbaum's cosmopolitanism, and two on David Miller's liberal nationalism. These three perspectives represent a fairly complete spectrum of contemporary liberal thinking about the status of the nation.

#### **Liberalism and the Modern Polity** Macmillan International Higher Education

A major new reference volume - *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Liberalism* is the premier collection of material on a comprehensive range of topics in contemporary liberalism. Liberal theory has been caricatured by its critics as an abstract, unworldly, trivial philosophical navel-gazing pursuit. The Companion counters this view by showing how liberalism can tackle wide-ranging practical concerns that urgently demand attention in twenty-first century politics. Rather than presenting contemporary liberalism simply and narrowly as a survey of what its main academic protagonists have said over the past 30 years, the guiding principle of the volume is to conceptualise it primarily as a set of themes and approaches informed by the challenges to the practice of liberal politics. Issues such as human rights, citizenship, nationalism, feminism, international communities, supranational orders, post-communism and ecocentrism take their place alongside the more familiar and well-worked themes of justice and justification as topics for liberal theorising. The reader is vividly shown the ways in which liberalism engages directly with the problems of practical political life today. This wide-ranging account of contemporary liberal thinking places the emphasis on agenda-setting, showing that contemporary liberalism is live - relevant, proactive, continuously engaged and adaptable - and that the problems faced by the liberal order are sufficiently complex and perplexing to demand the serious, rigorous philosophical reflection

offered by contemporary liberal political theory. The Companion allows the reader to explore liberalism's contemporary relevance and to look to its likely future developments. With contributors including Will Kymlicka, Michael Freeden, Richard Bellamy, Rex Martin, Margaret Canovan, Diana T. Meyers, and Kate Soper, this large, definitive edition will be a must-buy for all libraries and a key reference tool for

*Political Theory In Transition* A&C Black

This book continues and revises the ideas of justice as fairness that John Rawls presented in *A Theory of Justice* but changes its philosophical interpretation in a fundamental way. That previous work assumed what Rawls calls a "well-ordered society," one that is stable and relatively homogenous in its basic moral beliefs and in which there is broad agreement about what constitutes the good life. Yet in modern democratic society a plurality of incompatible and irreconcilable doctrines—religious, philosophical, and moral—coexist within the framework of democratic institutions. Recognizing this as a permanent condition of democracy, Rawls asks how a stable and just society of free and equal citizens can live in concord when divided by reasonable but incompatible doctrines? This edition includes the essay "The Idea of Public Reason Revisited," which outlines Rawls' plans to revise *Political Liberalism*, which were cut short by his death. "An extraordinary well-reasoned commentary on *A Theory of Justice*...a decisive turn towards political philosophy." —Times Literary Supplement

### RECONSIDERING AMERICAN LIBERALISM

Iowa State Press

Forty years ago Louis Hartz surveyed American political thought in his classic *The Liberal Tradition in America*. He concluded that American politics was based on a broad liberal consensus made possible by a unique American historical experience, a thesis that seemed to minimize the role of political conflict. Today, with conflict on the rise and with much of liberalism in disarray, James P. Young revisits these questions to reevaluate Hartz's interpretation of American politics. Young's treatment of key movements in our history, especially Puritanism and republicanism's early contribution to the Revolution and the Constitution, demonstrates in the spirit of Dewey and others that the liberal tradition is richer and more complex than Hartz and most contemporary theorists have allowed. The breadth of Young's account is unrivaled. *Reconsidering American Liberalism* gives voice not just to Locke, Jefferson, Hamilton, Madison, Lincoln, and Dewey but also to Rawls, Shklar, Kateb, Wolin, and Walzer. In addition to broad discussions of all the major figures in over 300 years of political thought?with Lincoln looming particularly large?Young touches upon modern feminism and conservatism, multiculturalism, postmodernism, rights-based liberalism, and social democracy. Out

of these contemporary materials Young synthesizes a new position, a smarter and tougher liberalism not just forged from historical materials but reshaped in the rough and tumble of contemporary thought and politics. This exceptionally timely study is both a powerful survey of the whole of U.S. political thought and a trenchant critique of contemporary political debates. At a time of acrimony and confusion in our national politics, Young enables us to see that salvaging a viable future depends upon our understanding how we have reached this point. Never without his own opinions, Young is scrupulously fair to the widest range of thinkers and marvelously clear in getting to the heart of their ideas. Although his book is a substantial contribution to political theory and the history of ideas, it is always accessible and lively enough for the informed general reader. It is essential reading for anyone who cares about the future of U.S. political thought or, indeed, about the future of the country itself.

*Post-Islamist Political Theory* SAGE Publications Limited

Neoliberalism has become a dirty word. In political discourse, it stigmatizes a political opponent as a market fundamentalist; in academia, the concept is also mainly wielded by its critics, while those who might be seen as actual neoliberals deny its very existence. Yet the term remains necessary for understanding the varieties of capitalism across space and time. Arguing that neoliberalism is widely misunderstood when reduced to a doctrine of markets and economics alone, this book shows that it has a political dimension that we can reconstruct and critique. Recognizing the heterogeneities within and between both neoliberal theory and practice, *The Political Theory of Neoliberalism* looks to distinguish between the two as well as to theorize their relationship. By examining the views of state, democracy, science, and politics in the work of six major figures—Eucken, Röpke, Rüstow, Hayek, Friedman, and Buchanan—it offers the first comprehensive account of the varieties of neoliberal political thought. Ordoliberal perspectives, in particular, emerge in a new light. Turning from abstract to concrete, the book also interprets recent neoliberal reforms of the European Union to offer a diagnosis of contemporary capitalism more generally. The latest economic crises hardly brought the neoliberal era to an end. Instead, as Thomas Biebricher shows, we are witnessing an authoritarian liberalism whose reign has only just begun.

*Contemporary Political Theory* Routledge

A thematically-organized reader, this student text introduces key works on major contemporary political theories. It covers egalitarian-liberalism, libertarianism, communitarianism, republicanism, deliberative democracy, feminism and multiculturalism.

*An Introduction* NYU Press

In this text, Gerald F. Gaus provides students with a comprehensive overview of the key tenets of liberalism developed through Hobbes, Locke, Kant and Rawls to present day theories and debates.

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