

Fall 2016 / HRNS 2030 "States of Nature" / September 18, 2016

John Protevi / MW 4:30-5:50 / 218 French House

Office hours MTWTh 3:00 – 4:20 / 416 Hodges / protevi@lsu.edu

DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the notion of "nature" more broadly, and "state of nature" more specifically, in the social contract tradition. As the tradition claims that life in states is superior to life in non-state societies (that is, in the "state of nature") we'll begin by a look at non-state life as portrayed by Michel de Montaigne and Marshall Sahlins. We'll then look at the classic works from the 17th and 18th centuries in the contract tradition by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. We'll then read critical works from the late 18th through 19th centuries: Mary Wollstonecraft, Friedrich Engels, and Friedrich Nietzsche. We'll conclude by reading contemporary critical works on the contract tradition by CB Macpherson, Carole Pateman, and Charles Mills, and a contemporary historical critique of actual state formation by James C Scott.

SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION

M 22 August: Introduction

W 24 August: Marshall Sahlins, "The Original Affluent Society" (Mathewson visit)

M 29 August: Michel de Montaigne, "Of Cannibals."

W 31 August: Sterelny, "Cooperation, Culture, and Conflict"

M 5 September: NO CLASS: LABOR DAY

W 7 September: Protevi, "Darwin, Disaster, and Prosociality"

THE CLASSIC WORKS

M 12 September: Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*

W 14 September: Hobbes, *Leviathan*

M 19 September: John Locke, *Second Treatise on Civil Government*

W 21 September: John Locke *Second Treatise*

M 26 September: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*

W 28 September: Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*

M 3 October: Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*

W 5 October: Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality* / MIDTERM ESSAY DUE

EARLY CRITIQUES

M 10 October: Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*

W 12 October: Wollstonecraft, *Vindication*

M 17 October: Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*

W 19 October: NO CLASS

M 24 October: Nietzsche, *Genealogy*

W 26 October: Nietzsche and Graeber's *Debt*

CONTEMPORARY WORKS

M 31 October: CB Macpherson, *Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*

W 2 November: Macpherson, *Individualism* / THESIS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

M 7 November: Carol Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*

W 9 November: Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*

M 14 November: Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract*

W 16 November: Mills, *The Racial Contract*

M 21 November: / ROUGH DRAFT DUE

W 23 November: NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

M 28 November: Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed* (video lecture)

W 30 November: Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed* (discussion)

Friday 9 December: final draft of term paper due

ASSIGNMENTS

10%: collaborative writing and editing.

We will form groups of three people each. Each Monday by noon one person will send by email a 1-2 page (between 250 and 500 words) paper in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) analyzing the reading and class discussion for the sessions of the preceding week to the other two people. The other two will comment on the paper using Word (and "track changes" if you make edits) and send their comments / edits to the author by Tuesday noon. The author will then make revisions and send the final version of the paper to me by email (CC to the others) by Wednesday midnight (preserving the edits and comments of the others). Each person will thus get to be lead author for 4 short papers throughout the semester, and also edit 8 short papers.

5%: class participation

We will often break into small groups for discussion and / or brief writing assignments. You're expected to have done the reading and to participate in these small groups and in general class discussion.

35% midterm take home essay (topic assigned)

This will be 5 pages (1250 words), tightly focused on the assigned topic. Frequent and accurate citation of the reading material is required.

50% term paper

We will agree on a topic and thesis of your paper in independent discussion. You will need to hand in a thesis statement and bibliography prior to a rough draft. You will need to do a draft before the final paper is accepted.

GRADING SCALE

A+ 100 - 97; A = 96.9 - 93; A- = 92.9 - 90
B+ 89.9 - 87; B = 86.9 - 83; B- 82.9 - 80
C+ 79.9 - 77; C = 76.9 - 73; C- 72.9 - 70
D+ 69.9 - 67; D = 66.9 - 63; D- 62.9 - 60
F = 59.9 -

BOOKS

Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Penguin), 9780140431957
Locke, *Second Treatise* (Hackett), 9780915144860
Rousseau, *Major Political Writings* (Chicago), 9780226151311
Wollstonecraft, *Vindication* (Hackett), 9781603849388
Engels, *Origin* (Penguin), 9780141191119
Nietzsche, *Genealogy* (Oxford), 9780199537082
Macpherson, *Political Theory* (Oxford), 9780195444018
Pateman, *Sexual Contract* (Stanford), 9780804714778
Mills, *Racial Contract* (Cornell), 9780801484636
Scott, *Art of Not Being Governed* (Yale), 9780300169171

GENERAL EDUCATION CREDIT:

Honors 2030 is approved for 3 hours of General Education credit in the English Composition **or** Humanities areas. As such, the course will address the criteria of both General Education areas.

English Composition: General Education courses in the English Composition Area are centered on writing pedagogy and developing basic skills in written communication. In these courses students will: demonstrate Ability in written analysis and synthesis; undertake writing as a recursive process that develops and transforms thought; learn how to conduct basic research and use it effectively in written works; learn how to use the resources of the LSU library; interpret, evaluate, integrate, and document information gathered from print and online sources; understand a research assignment as a series of tasks that include finding, analyzing, and synthesizing information from primary and secondary sources; integrate information from sources into writing, and document this information appropriately; respond appropriately to different kinds of rhetorical situations, with a focus on purpose and the needs of various audiences, using appropriate genre conventions; adopt appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality; and apply knowledge of structure and organization, paragraphing, and mechanics.

Humanities: General Education courses in the Humanities Area should give students an understanding of their own cultural traditions and those of other cultures, locally, nationally, and internationally; lead students to reflect on fundamental questions that human beings have faced, whatever their diverse backgrounds and cultures; and introduce students to the humanities disciplines, such as literature, history, philosophy, religious studies, and language.

Hints for success: <http://www.protevi.com/john/honorshints.html>

LSU and Title IX: http://www.lsu.edu/hrm/policies_and_procedures/Title_IX_item71081.php

LSU Cares: <http://students.lsu.edu/saa/lsu-cares>

LSU Disability Services: <http://students.lsu.edu/disability>

LSU Statement on Academic Integrity: <http://students.lsu.edu/saa/faculty/academicintegrity>

LSU Student Advocacy: Understanding Plagiarism
<http://students.lsu.edu/saa/students/plagiarism>