

Political Science 302
Spring 2004
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EDUCATION AND POLITICS

Texts to be Purchased:

The Roots of Political Philosophy: Ten Forgotten Socratic Dialogues. Edited by Thomas L. Pangle
(Cornell University Press).

Plato, Symposium. Translated by Seth Benardete. (University of Chicago Press).

Plato Gorgias. Translated by James H. Nichols, Jr. (Cornell University Press).

Machiavelli, The Prince, 2nd edition. Translated by Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr. (University of Chicago Press).

Shakespeare, Richard II, Henry IV, Part I, Henry IV, Part II, Henry V, Measure for Measure

Goals of the Course:

From the execution of Socrates, the founder of political philosophy, for corrupting the youth of Athens, to Machiavelli's notorious teachings concerning politics and morality, to the support of the philosopher and university professor Martin Heidegger for Nazism, the question of the relation between education and politics has been a central theme of political philosophy. In this course we will explore this theme by studying key works by Plato, Machiavelli, and Shakespeare. We will begin by studying Plato's Alcibiades, in which Socrates begins his education of the young Alcibiades, the brilliant future leader of Athens but also the future traitor to Athens and her democracy. We will then consider the mature Alcibiades' praise and criticism of Socrates as a teacher in Plato's Symposium. We will complete our section on Plato by examining the criticisms of Socrates' political education in Plato's Gorgias and Socrates' response to those criticisms. Then, we will study Machiavelli's infamous account of the proper political and moral (or immoral or amoral) education for aspiring leaders or "princes" in The Prince. Finally, we will turn to Shakespeare and consider his dramatic presentation of a series of such rulers and potential rulers as Richard II, Bolingbroke (later Henry IV), Hal (later Henry V), Hotspur, the Duke of Vienna—their strengths and weaknesses, their different educations, their virtues and vices-- in Richard II, Henry IV Parts I and II, Henry V, and Measure for Measure.

As we study these works, we will consider such questions as: What is the proper education for aspiring political leaders? Should their ambition—their desire for glory—be encouraged or discouraged? Should they be taught to be moral and just at all costs, no matter what the political or human price? Or should they be taught how not to be moral in order to succeed in the rough arena of political life? Should future political leaders be taught to be willing to sacrifice their self-interest, even their ambition, for the sake of the common good? Or should they be encouraged to promote the common good for the sake of their political ambition, as the surest path to lasting glory? Should they believe that the good of their country is the highest good? Or should they be taught that there are goods even higher than the good of their country—for example, personal glory, friendship, devotion to God, devotion to philosophy?

Requirements:

There will be two short (5-7 page) papers (worth 25% each) and one longer (12-14 page) paper (worth 40-45%). You must do all of the written work in order to pass the course. You will be docked a half of a grade (for example, from A to A-) on a paper which you hand in late unless you either have asked for (and received) my permission beforehand or have a very good excuse. Roughly 5-10% of your grade will be determined by class participation. You will be expected to read the assigned texts carefully before we discuss them in class. Regular attendance is expected.

Assignments:

January 13	Introduction.
January 15	Plato, <u>Alcibiades I</u> 103a-135e.
January 20	Alcibiades' Speech in the <u>Symposium</u> (212c-end).
January 22	Alcibiades' Speech in the <u>Symposium</u> .
January 27	<u>Gorgias</u> 447a-461b.
January 29	<u>Gorgias</u> 461b-481b.
February 3	<u>Gorgias</u> 481b-491d.
February 5	<u>Gorgias</u> 491d-513d.
February 10	<u>Gorgias</u> 513d-527e.
February 12	Machiavelli <u>Prince</u> , Epistle Dedicatory, Chapters 1-3.
February 17	<u>Prince</u> , Chapters 4-7. <u>FIRST PAPER DUE.</u>
February 19	<u>Prince</u> , Chapters 8-11.
February 24	<u>Prince</u> , Chapters 12-15.
February 26	<u>Prince</u> , Chapters 16-17.
March 9	<u>Prince</u> , Chapters 18-19
March 11	<u>Prince</u> , Chapters 20-26. Letter of December 10, 1513.
March 16	Shakespeare, <u>Richard II</u> . <u>2ND PAPER DUE</u>

March 18	<u>Richard II.</u>
March 23	<u>Richard II.</u>
March 25	<u>Henry IV, Part I.</u>
March 30	<u>Henry IV, Part I.</u>
April 1	<u>Henry IV, Part I.</u>
April 6	<u>Henry IV, Part II.</u>
April 8	<u>Henry IV, Part II.</u>
April 15	<u>Henry V.</u>
April 20	<u>Henry V.</u>
April 22	<u>Henry V.</u>
April 27	<u>Measure for Measure.</u>
April 29	<u>Measure for Measure.</u>
May 4	Overview.
May 12	<u>THIRD PAPER DUE</u>