

PHILOSOPHY 267
Richard Arneson

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY
FALL, 2004 Thursdays 1-4

This course surveys some issues in global justice. What do people in distant lands owe one another? What, if anything, should rich countries or affluent people in well-off countries do to alleviate the plight of the global poor? Do local ties and national borders alter generic justice duties? Global justice issues are used as a window for viewing unsettled current issues in the theory of social justice. (Here "justice" just names core duties that specify what we owe each other and that are thought to trump any other moral considerations.) The questions that arise include these:

What is the appropriate basis of interpersonal comparison for a theory of justice? (If justice dictates special concern for the worse off, what renders someone better off or worse off?)

If we have a reasonable standard for measuring people's condition, does justice require us to equalize people's condition, maximin it, maximize aggregate advantage, sustain all at a decent threshold level, prioritize, or something else entirely?

At the level of fundamental principle, is justice concerned with opportunities or outcomes? Freedom or achievements? Does justice look beyond the uses that persons make of the freedoms and opportunities available to them in order to measure, and then improve, the satisfactions they achieve?

Is there some decent threshold quality of life that all people are owed, so far as is feasible, independently of how they conduct their lives? If so, how do we specify the threshold? If not, how might the quality of an individual's choices amplify or dampen what the rest of us owe to her?

Does justice treat "natural" and "social" misfortune differently or respond in the same way to both?

Do citizens of a nation making political choices have special duties to alleviate the burdens of fellow citizens? Or do national borders not matter in this way? If it is acceptable for friends to favor each other, is it acceptable for compatriots to favor each other?

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Enrolled students will make one or more seminar presentations and write a term essay at the end of the course. Your term essay may expand your seminar presentation. Auditors are welcome.

Students should come to each seminar meeting prepared to discuss the readings for that week. The "further readings" listed are not required reading. They are intended as suggestions for those who want to delve further into the topic or write a term paper on some aspect of it.

The seminar discussions will not presuppose any background knowledge of political philosophy beyond the assigned readings.

Topics and readings.

Week 1. September 23.

A liberal morality of international relations.

Reading: J. Rawls, *The Law of Peoples*, Parts 1 and 2 (available in Dept. Library).

Week 2. October 2.

A liberal morality of international relations & some criticisms.

Reading: J. Rawls, *The Law of Peoples*, Parts 3 and 4; plus critical essays by Chales Beitz and Allen Buchanan, *Ethics*.

Week 3. October 9.

Beneficence and global justice.

Reading: P. Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1972); L. Murphy, "The Demands of Beneficence," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (1993); Garrett Cullity, "Asking Too Much," *The Monist* (2003).

Further reading: P. Singer, "Outsiders: Our Obligations to Those beyond Our Borders," in *The Ethics of Assistance*, D. Chatterjee, ed.; F. Kamm, "The New Problem of Distance in Morality," in *The Ethics of Assistance*; R. Arneson, "Moral Limits on the Demands of Beneficence?," in *The Ethics of Assistance*; T. Pogge, "Assisting' the Global Poor", in *The Ethics of Assistance*.

Week 4. October 16.

Special ties.

Reading: S. Scheffler, "The Conflict between Justice and Responsibility" and "Relationships and Responsibilities," both in Scheffler, *Boundaries and allegiances*.

Further reading: S. Scheffler, "Conceptions of Cosmopolitanism," also SSScheffler, "Families, Nations, and Strangers," both in *Boundaries and Allegiances*; R. Arneson, "Consequentialism vs. Special-Ties Partiality," *The Monist* (2003), T. Hurka, "The Justification of National Partiality," in J. McMahan and R. McKim, eds., *The Morality of Nationalism*.

Week 5. October 23.

Priority to compatriots.

Reading: R. Miller, "Cosmopolitan Respect and Patriotic Concern," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1998); R. Miller, "Moral Closeness and World Community," in *The Ethics of Assistance*

Further reading: M. Blake, "Distributive Justice, State Coercion, and Autonomy," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (2001); R. Arneson, "Do Patriotic Ties Limit Global Justice Duties?" (ms); R. Miller, "Beneficence" (ms).

Week 6. October 30.

Against welfarism.

Reading: R. Dworkin, "Equality of Welfare," in Dworkin, *Sovereign Virtue*.

Further reading: R. Arneson, "Welfare Should Be the Currency of Justice," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* (2000).

Week 7. November 5.

Resourcist justice and luck egalitarianism.

Reading: R. Dworkin, "Equality of Resources," in Dworkin, *Sovereign Virtue*.

Further reading: G. Cohen, "On the Currency of Egalitarian Justice," *Ethics* (1989); Dworkin, *Sovereign Virtue*, chapters 6 & 7; Symposium on *Sovereign Virtue* in *Ethics* (2003); essays in *Dworkin and His Critics*, ed. J. Burley.

Week 8. November 11. VETERANS DAY HOLIDAY

[Class to be rescheduled.]

Equality, priority, desert.

Reading: Derek Parfit, "Equality or Priority?," in M. Clayton and A. Williams, eds, *The Ideal of Equality*; L. Temkin, "Equality, Priority, and the Levelling Down Objection," in *The Ideal of Equality*; S. Kagan, "Equality and Desert," in L. Pojman, ed., *What Do We Deserve?*

Further reading: R. Crisp, "Equality, Priority, and Compassion" *Ethics* (2003).

Week 9. November 18.

More on luck egalitarianism.

Reading: J. Roemer, "Equality of Opportunity," *Boston Review* (1995), R.

Arneson, "Equality and Equal Opportunity for Welfare," *Philosophical Studies* (1989), M. Fleurbaey, "Equal Opportunity or Equal Social Outcome?," *Economics and Philosophy* (1995).

Further reading: S. Hurley, *Justice, Luck, and Knowledge*, chapters 6-8; Peter Vallentyne, "Of Mice and Men" (ms). A. Williams, "Contractualism and the Egalitarian Trilemma," (ms).

Week 10. November 25. THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week 11. December 2.

Critics of luck egalitarianism; the doctrine of sufficiency.

Reading: E. Anderson, "What Is the point of Equality?," *Ethics* (1999); S.

Scheffler, "What Is Egalitarianism?," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (2003);

Scheffler, "Choice, Circumstance, and the Value of Equality," (ms.).

Further reading: R. Arneson, "Luck Egalitarianism and Prioritarianism," *Ethics* (2000); H. Frankfurt, "Equality as a Moral ideal," *Ethics* (1987).