

## Jepson School of Leadership Studies, University of Richmond

Spring 2006

### **LDST 205: Justice and Civil Society**

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Office hours: Wednesdays, 2:15-4:30 p.m. or by appointment.

The purpose of this course is to enable students to think about contemporary social problems in systemic terms, both with respect to normative theories of justice and with respect to the organization of our social, economic, and political institutions.

Thinking systemically about social justice involves (at least) four central components, each of which will be addressed in some substance in this course.

The first component is *normative*. What is justice? Should we regard justice as a personal virtue, an attribute of an entire society, or both? What specific qualities characterize a just society? What is the concrete meaning of terms like “fairness,” “equal opportunity,” and “liberty”? What (if anything) does society owe its citizens? How do our conceptions of justice relate to our conceptions of the good life?

The second component is *cognitive* and *empirical*. What are the causes of observed instances of social dysfunction, poverty, and suffering? To what extent are such problems products of individual choices and behavior, and to what extent are they products of larger social forces, or larger political-economic trends? How do multiple social stressors interact with one another to produce social pain? To what degree are our perceptions of poverty and of the excluded informed by our own social locations and assumptions?

The third component is *experiential*. What is the day-to-day reality of life in deprived communities, or on society’s margins? How can efforts to ameliorate social pain be most effective? What can one learn from spending time in poor communities?

The fourth component is *ethical*. What does it mean to try to “do justice” in a society such as the United States? Do we have a responsibility to make “doing justice” a central part of our daily lives? How should I personally come to terms with the inequities and injustices characteristic of contemporary U.S. society?

All four of these components are connected with one another; while some parts of the course will emphasize one component more than others, each set of questions will remain “on the table” throughout the course; as we go along we will want to constantly re-evaluate our assumptions and provisional judgments in light of new information or new perspectives.

## Course Requirements:

1. Attendance at each class session and active participation.
2. Completion of 26 hours of service in an approved site within the city of Richmond or the immediate surroundings. Failure to complete this service by Friday May 12 will result in a failing grade for the course; no excuses. Additionally, at least 8 hours of service should be completed by Monday February 20 and 16 hours completed by Monday March 27, so plan accordingly. On Monday January 30, you should turn in a brief (150-200 words) synopsis describing your site location, your supervisor, what your role will be, and any initial impressions. This is an important check-in as if there are substantial problems or obstacles we would like to identify them as soon as possible. Periodically throughout the semester we will set aside time in class to discuss your experiences at the sites.
3. Four additional hours of social observation. The recommended activity is participation in the Richmond police department's citizen ride-along program. To sign up, please notify Cassie King (cking@richmond.edu) of your intention to participate by Monday January 30, along with a list of times during the week you will be available. The ride-along will take place in the first few weeks after spring break; we will discuss the ride-along experience in class on April 15. You will be required to sign a consent form prior to your ride-along.

**Important note: during the police ride-along there is a possibility you may be exposed to volatile and potentially dangerous situations.** Students in previous classes who have been on a ride-along often describe the experience as one of the most intense and interesting they have had since being in college, but you should be aware of the possibility that a dangerous situation may emerge. If you are uncomfortable with this, you can participate in the alternative social observation activity, attendance at a session of juvenile court. If you choose this option, you should notify Cassie King by email, also by January 30 so that we can work on making arrangements for you.

Whether you go on the police ride-along or to juvenile court, you should compile and submit a brief write-up of your experience (this is a required but not graded exercise).

4. Completion of four short response papers, totaling 800-900 words, reflecting on the substance of the course readings assigned for the week you turn your paper in. Response papers should take the following form: answer one of these questions: "What did I learn from this set of readings?" or "What did this reading cause me to think about?" Alternatively, you may pose and answer your own specific question. You are free to draw upon class discussions and your own service experiences, or to relate the reading to those experiences. (Keeping a journal or diary of your experiences in the field is highly recommended for this purpose.) These papers are due at the beginning of class each Friday. The ideal response paper will consist of three or four well-thought out paragraphs expressing one or two trains of thought. Do not attempt to summarize the readings or content yourself with bland, generalized rehashing of the main points, but try to develop and express your own response

and point of view in a way that shows you have engaged seriously with the readings.

There are 12 weeks during the semester; it is up to you to ensure that you complete all three papers. At least one of the papers must be submitted by Friday February 3. No late or after-the-fact response papers can be accepted. Response papers will generally be returned the Monday after they are submitted.

You are allowed (but not required) to substitute the following exercise for one of the response papers: going through a weekend on-campus while only spending a very limited amount of cash. (Details on this will be announced later). In addition, from time to time I will make you aware of lectures or other events on campus of direct relevance to the course; if you attend such an event, you will be permitted to discuss the event in *one* response paper (or two, if you choose not to do the no-spending weekend), provided you relate the event in a substantial way to our course reading or discussions. At least two of the response papers must be *solely* about assigned course readings.

5. Three very short, in-class quizzes. These short quizzes will be focused on basic comprehension of the assigned readings, and will consist of multiple choice, short answer and true/false questions. No additional preparation beyond having done the reading will be necessary. The dates of the quizzes are Feb. 17, April 1, and April 22.

6. Completion of two longer papers.

The first paper (5-6 double-spaced, 1" margin pages), due in-class Monday February 27, will focus on a normative question raised during the first half of the course; you will be asked to make an argument or take a position drawing on both the reading and your own experience and thinking. The paper topic will be assigned on Friday Feb.17.

The second paper (9-11 double-spaced, 1" margin pages), due Monday May 8 at 5 p.m., will be more empirical: you will be asked to develop a systemic analysis of the specific social problem your service work has been addressing. For sources, you should draw on your own experience (including journals); an interview (when possible) with your site supervisor; the assigned course reading; and at least three additional published sources (either books or periodicals) of direct relevance to your specific topic. We will discuss the mechanics of this paper in more detail in class in April.

It is also highly recommended (but not required) that you submit an outline of this final paper by Friday April 30. I will schedule appointments during reading period with those students who've submitted outlines to go over your paper plans. You are of course welcome (indeed, encouraged) to submit an outline and meet with me earlier.

Late papers are penalized one-third of a grade for each day they are late. Barring exceptional circumstances, there are no paper extensions. However, if you find yourself in a situation where you simply cannot complete the assignment in an acceptable manner on time, you should notify me *before* turning in an incomplete or plainly substandard paper so that we can

discuss the situation. Usually you will be better off turning in a decent paper a little late (and accepting a grade penalty) than turning in mush (pardon the phrase) just to have it in on time.

## **Course Grading**

Completion of the 26 hours of service + 4 hours of social observation is a requirement of any passing grade in the course.

Beyond this requirement, students will be graded as follows:

15% Participation in Class

20% Response Papers

15% In Class Quizzes

50% Longer Analytical Papers (20% first paper, 30% second paper)

There is no final exam for this class.

## **General grading standards:**

**A** range grades are given for truly outstanding written work which not only meets the basic requirements of the given assignment but also demonstrates exceptional insight, clarity, and depth of thought. For instance, an A-range paper will not simply forward and defend an argument, but also anticipate and attempt to meet likely objections to the argument, and/or acknowledge points at which one's argument might be vulnerable. Such papers will also be very well-organized and well-written, and gracefully presented.

**B** range grades are given for good and very good written work which amply meets all the basic requirements of the given assignment and reflects substantial effort and engagement with the material. Such work is generally well-written and well-organized, shows good understanding of the course material, and avoids major substantive or logical errors. *B is a good grade for any assignment in this course, and B+ is a very good grade.*

**C** range grades are given for work which attempts to fulfill the requirements of the assignment but which falls short in some substantial way, with respect to organization, writing quality, understanding of the material, or argumentative logic.

**D and F** grades are reserved for work which comes nowhere close to meeting the requirements of the assignment.

Your class participation grade is based on attendance, attentiveness, evidence of preparation (i.e. doing the readings), making the effort to verbally participate, and quality of such participation. If you attend every class and pay attention to what is going on but rarely say anything unless called upon, your participation grade will be roughly a B-minus (12/15). However, talking a lot does not necessarily guarantee you a very high participation grade; contributions to class that advance

the class discussion are valued more than sheer quantity of participation. Advancing the class discussion can take several forms, from calling attention to something important in the reading we haven't talked about yet, to answering a question posed by the instructor, to asking a factual or interpretive question of relevance to the discussion, to stating (and giving reasons) why you think you disagree with another student or the instructor.

Excessive unexcused absences (greater than 3 over the semester) will lead to severe penalties in this part of the grade.

## **Class Schedule and Assigned Readings**

Required books, available at the University Bookstore

J.S. Mill, *The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill*

Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*

David K. Shipler, *The Working Poor*

Glenn Loury, *The Anatomy of Racial Discrimination*

\* Readings available online via the library reserve system, on both e-reserves and paper reserves.

\*\* Newspaper/magazine articles linked directly from the syllabus (electronic version)

## **Mon. January 16. Introduction and Guest Lecture**

Dr. Debyii Thomas, Howard University

## **I. Sources of the Idea of Justice**

### **Wednesday January 18. Overview of the Course; Why Injustice is Difficult to Confront; The Circumstances of Justice**

Introduction; review of syllabus and requirements; overview of site selection process with Cassie King.

Melvin Lerner, *Just World Thinking*, 9-30 \*

David Hume, "Of Justice," in *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, 15-25 \*

### **Friday January 20. Is Justice Just a Word We Use to Justify the Status Quo?**

Plato, *The Republic*, Book I, Thrasymachus's opening speech, 17-28\*

C.D.C. Reeve, *Philosopher Kings: The Argument of Plato's Republic*, 9-22.\*

Karl Marx, "The German Ideology," 172-174 (To be handed out in class)

Robert Solomon, *A Passion for Justice*, 67-94.\*

### **Monday January 23. The Biblical Tradition**

Abraham J. Heschel; *The Prophets* ix.-xiii; 27-38; 198-221\*

### **Wednesday January 25. The Origins of Inequality**

Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality*, Prologue, Excerpt of Part I and all of Part II; 131-133, 157-188\*

### **Friday January 27. The Impartial Spectator**

Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 9-16, 50-66, 82-91, 179-193.\*

## **Contemporary Conceptions of Social Justice**

### **Monday January 30. Justice as Utility Maximization**

Initial discussion of service site experiences.

J.S. Mill, *Utilitarianism*

### **Wednesday February 1. Utilitarianism Applied, II: The Utilitarian Case for Liberty**

Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapter III, "On Individuality"  
Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol. II, 482-488, 661-665.\*  
Solomon, *A Passion for Justice*, 94-101 \*

### **Friday February 3. Utilitarianism Applied: Redistribution and World Poverty**

Peter Singer, "The Singer Solution to World Poverty," *New York Times Magazine*, Sep. 5, 1999  
\* (article to be emailed)  
Jeffrey Sachs, *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*, 288-328 \*  
Douglas Hicks, "Bono Made Me Do It: Global Poverty and Christian Response", *The Christian Century* (article to be emailed)

### **Monday February 6: No Class**

### **Wednesday February 8. The Limits of Utilitarianism; Justice as Fairness**

Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, 30-39 (Warning: this is difficult.)  
John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* 19-24  
Rawls, *Justice as Fairness*, 1-12

### **Friday February 10. The Original Position; Two Principles of Justice**

Rawls, *Justice as Fairness*, 39-79

### **Monday February 13: Contemporary Rawlsianism**

Rawls, *Justice as Fairness*, 135-139; 176-179  
Joshua Cohen, "Taking People as They Are," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (To be distributed via email)

Recommended secondary text if still having trouble understanding Rawls:  
Joshua Cohen, "For a Democratic Society," in *The Cambridge Companion to Rawls*, 86-131

### **Wednesday Feb. 15. Libertarian Critiques of Rawls and Redistribution**

Robert Nozick, "Moral Constraints and Distributive Justice," excerpted from *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, 100-118.\*  
Richard Epstein, "Against Redress," *Daedalus*, 39-48

Recommended:

Joshua Cohen, "Lecture on Nozick" (To be distributed via email)

### **Friday February 17. Class Debate: Meritocracy Pro and Con; In-Class Quiz**

Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 91-93 \*  
Joseph Schumpeter, "Aptitude and Social Mobility," 22-32 \*  
David Brooks, "Learning," from *On Paradise Drive*, 153-185 \*  
Jonathan Kozol, "Still Separate, Still Unequal," *Harper's*, September 2005, 41-54 \*

### **Monday Feb. 20. Communitarian and Civic Republican Critiques of Rawls**

Michael Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, 66-81, 95-108 \*  
Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, 3-30, 95-108; \*

### **Wednesday Feb. 22. Equality of What? The Capability Approach**

Martha Nussbaum, *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, 59-96.  
Guest speaker: Dr. Douglas A. Hicks, Jepson School

### **Friday Feb. 24: Class Debate: Universal Stakeholding, Pro and Con;**

Bruce Ackerman and Amy Alstott, *The Stakeholder Society*, 21-45 \*

### **FIRST ANALYTICAL PAPER DUE FEBRUARY 27**

## **III. Class, Work, and Poverty in the United States**

### **Monday February 27. Guest Speaker: Dr. John Moeser, VCU**

Dr. Moeser will speak on the demographics and history of race and class in Richmond

No reading

### **Wednesday March 1. Inequality in the U.S.: An Overview**

"Class in America: Shadowy Lines That Still Divide," *New York Times*, May 15, 2005 (Article to be emailed)

Samuel Bowles, Richard Edwards & Frank Roosevelt, *Understanding Capitalism*, 343-374 \*

### **Friday March 3: The Experience of Work, I**

Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*, Chapter 1  
David Shipler, *The Working Poor*, 39-76

### **SPRING BREAK**

### **Monday March 13: Class Discussion Day**

Coles, *The Call of Service*, 40-61\*

### **Wednesday March 17: The Organization of Work and the Labor Market**

Samuel Bowles, Richard Edwards, & Frank Roosevelt, *Understanding Capitalism*, 183-212 \*  
Ehrenreich, Chapter 2

### **Friday March 19: The Experience of Work, II**

Ehrenreich, Chapter 3  
Shipler, *The Working Poor*, 121-141

### **Monday March 20: Poverty, I**

Shipler, *The Working Poor*, 1-38, 77-95

### **Wednesday March 22: The Role of Parenting**

Annette Lareau, *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, & Family Life*, 107-164;  
Shipler, 142-173

### **Friday March 24: U.S. Social Policy**

Shipler, *The Working Poor*, 201-253

Guest speaker (half class period): Dr. Amy Howard, Center for Civic Engagement

In-Class Handouts

### **Monday March 27: European Social Policy**

Jeremy Rifkin, *The European Dream*, 37-52, 70-83\*  
Rick Fantasia and Kim Voss, *Hard Work: Remaking the American Labor Movement*, 7-27 \*

In-class Handouts

### **Wednesday 29: Concluding Discussion on Poverty and Social Policy**

Shipler, *The Working Poor*, 254-300

Richard B. Freeman, "Solving the New Inequality," 11-30 \*

### **Friday April 1. Class Discussion Day; In-Class Quiz**

No reading

## **IV. Race, Gender, & Sexuality**

### **Monday April 4: Theorizing Privilege and Oppression**

Iris M. Young, "Five Faces of Oppression" in *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 39-65 \*

Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege," 147-159 \*

### **Wednesday April 6: Racial Stigma in the United States: Analysis**

Glenn Loury, *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality*; first read the statistical appendix in the back of book, then 1-53;

### **Friday April 8: Racial Stigma in the United States: Experience**

Nathan McCall, *Makes Me Wanna Holler: A Young Black Man in America*, 3-49, 60-88\*

Cornel West, "Nihilism in Black America," in *Race Matters*, 17-31\*

### **Monday April 11: Justice and the Family Structure**

Susan M. Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family*, 110-186\*

### **Wednesday April 13: Sexuality, Marriage, and Fairness**

Warren J. Blumenfeld, "How Homophobia Hurts Everyone," 267-275 \*

Josh C. Meiner, "Reflections of a Gay Fraternity Brother," 299-301 \*

Robin West, "Universalism and Gay Marriage", *Florida State University Law Review*, 705-711, 726-730 \*

Susan M. Schell, "The Liberal Case Against Gay Marriage," *The Public Interest*, 2004 (see <http://www.thepublicinterest.com/archives/2004summer/article1.html>) \*

### **Friday April 15: Class Discussion Day**

Discussion of police ridearound and juvenile court experiences.

## **V. Justice, Politics, and Power**

### **Monday April 18. Justice, Democracy & Power: Theory**

Iris M. Young, *Inclusion and Democracy*, 16-36 \*

John Gaventa, *Power & Powerlessness*, 3-25 \*

### **Wednesday April 20. Justice, Democracy and Power: Two Examples**

John Gaventa, *Power & Powerlessness*, 137-165 \*

David Cay Johnston, *Perfectly Legal*, 5-19, 117-144\*

(Class will divide into two groups: half will read the Gaventa carefully, half will read the Johnston.)

## **VI. Personal Responsibility, Agency and Social Justice**

### **Friday April 22: Reacting to Injustice: Constructive Anger; In-Class Quiz**

Robert Solomon, *A Passion for Justice*, 242-272; 287-298 \*

### **Monday April 25: Service as a Response to Injustice**

Robert Coles, *The Call of Service*, 68-94, 126-144.\*

### **Wednesday April 27: Organizing as a Response to Injustice**

Edward Chambers, *Roots for Radicals*; 21-44, 124-141 \*

### **Friday April 29: Asset-Building as a Response to Injustice**

Steve Dubb, *Building Wealth: The New Asset-Based Approach to Solving Social and Economic Problems*, 3-11\*

Bill Shore, *The Cathedral Within*, 124-143. \*

### **FINAL PAPER DUE MONDAY MAY 8, 5 p.m.**

**Turn hard copies of your final paper into my office, Jepson Hall 135.**