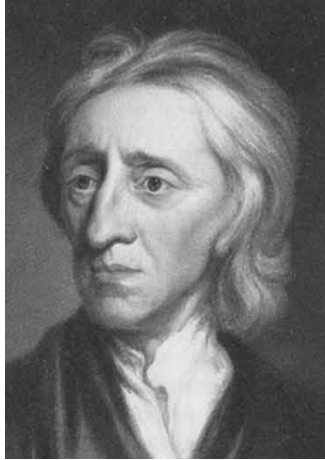


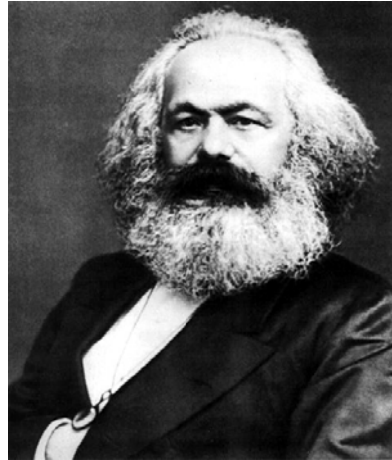
## Introduction to Social and Political Philosophy

Dr. Carl Sachs, csachs@unt.edu  
Tu-Th 3:30-4:50  
ENV 190

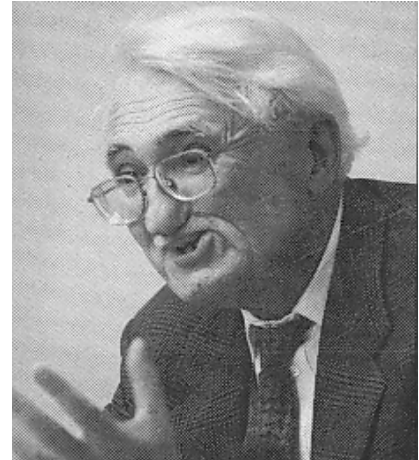
940-565-2256  
MWF 1-2  
ENV 320-F



*John Locke (1632 - 1704)*



*Karl Marx (1818 - 1883)*



*Jürgen Habermas (1929 - )*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course introduces students to the primary themes, texts, and thinkers in social and political philosophy in the Western tradition. Problems to be examined include: how should we prioritize or reconcile our commitment to equality and to liberty? What is the nature and origin of each commitment? What makes a functioning social order possible? What is the relation between “society” and “the individual”? What is the origin of our obligations to social norms? Are we always obligated?

Though the emphasis will be on “classical liberalism,” some attention will also be given to traditions critical of liberalism, such as Marxism, critical theory, communitarianism and feminism as time permits. We will conclude the course with a close reading of responses by Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida to 9/11.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

*Social and Political Philosophy*, ed. Somerville and Santoni

*Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*, ed. Borradori

Additional readings, both required *and* recommended, will be available on the Philosophy Department website, and will be announced in class and over EagleMail when they are posted.

**COURSE POLICIES:**

1) *Attendance*: There is no formal attendance policy in this class. However, there is a class participation component of the grade, and you will find that participation without attendance is exceedingly difficult. I also like to think that my lectures are helpful in your understanding of the material. You will not be able to get a B or higher in the class without regular attendance.

2) *Plagiarism/Cheating*: No form will be tolerated. This includes copying in part or in whole the work of another, copying anything off the Internet without proper citation, or any instance of using the ideas of others without proper acknowledgement. If you are found guilty of plagiarism, you will receive an “F” for the course and be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Furthermore, you are responsible for asking me if something counts as plagiarism or not. If you end up plagiarizing unintentionally, I will be as harsh with you as if you had plagiarized intentionally.

3) *Classroom Behavior*: I prohibit the use of cell phones, i-pods, and all other electronic devices, with the exception of those that have an exclusively educational function (e.g. recorders, lap-tops for notes). These are wholly disruptive to the class. Additionally, perpetual tardiness, talking, sleeping or any other behavior I or others deem disruptive will not be tolerated. Punishments will be swift and creative.

4) *Conversational Etiquette*: In this class we will be discussing complicated issues that may arouse strong passions, as they should. Contributions to class discussions should be aimed at increasing your own understanding and at assisting the collective understanding of the class as whole. Talking simply in order to show off your knowledge or eloquence is thereby strongly discouraged. A level of minimal basic respect must be maintained towards your fellow classmates at all times.

5) *Late Policy*: All work turned in after the due date, (if there is no legitimate excuse), or if no arrangements have been made with me beforehand, will be subject to the following late policy: *up to one week* after due-date: the essay will be marked down one-third of a grade, to reflect the fact that you had more time to work on it and will be therefore be graded more severely than your classmates; *later than one week* after the due-date: the essay will not be accepted and you will receive a zero on the assignment.

6) *Disability Accommodation*: Anyone requiring special accommodations should contact me at their discretion during the first week of class. Any special accommodations approved by the ODA will be fully granted to the extent specified by the policies of the ODA and UNT.

#### ASSESSMENT:

Your grade will be determined by your class participation and by the quality of three papers, as follows:

- a) The first two papers are short (1500-2000 words) and are devoted to close reading and textual analysis with a minimum of outside research.

- b) The third paper is longer (3500-4000 words) and is “synoptic” – it will examine broad themes which range over several texts and will also require significant independent research on your part.

Breakdown of grades as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> Paper:	15%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Paper:	25%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Paper:	45%
Class Participation:	15%

Essay prompts for each assignment will be distributed in class two weeks before the paper is due for the first two papers, and three weeks before the final paper is due.

*What is Class Participation?*

- (1) A substantial part of your intellectual development requires taking on the risks and rewards of speaking up in class, with respect to both asking questions about what you don't understand, and with respect to challenging the text, the professor, or another student, as appropriate.
- (2) Should there be sufficient interest, I will set up an on-line discussion group using WebCT. However, participation in that group will not substitute *entirely* for participation in class.
- (3) In a class this large, it will not be possible for everyone to speak in class. Therefore, each of you is required to email me *once* a week with a question or comment on that week's reading or lecture. Failure to do so will result in points deducted from the class participation component of your grade. This shows me that you are engaged, paying attention, and thinking hard about the material. I will do my level best to respond to your email either in lecture or through an emailed response. In some cases I will ask you to come to office hours to further discuss the issues raised in your email.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS:

Week 1: The Problem of “Justice”

Reading: *Crito* (SAPP 46-58); *Republic* (SAPP 1-45)

Week 2: Morality and Politics

Reading: The Sermon on the Mount; Machiavelli, *The Prince* (SAPP 101-126)

Week 3: Social Contract Theory

Reading: Hobbes, *Leviathan* (SAPP 139-168)

Recommended: excerpts from *The Stillborn God* (on-line PDF)

Week 4-5: Classical Liberalism

Reading: Locke, *The Second Treatise* (SAPP 169-204); Jefferson, “Religious Freedom” and “Letters” (SAPP 247-274)

*1<sup>st</sup> Paper Due*

Week 6: Victorian Liberalism

Reading: Mill, *On Liberty* (SAPP 302-341)

Week 7: Social Contract Revisited

Readings: Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (SAPP 205-238)

Week 8: Marx and Marxism

Readings: Marx, *Communist Manifesto* (SAPP 342-356; 379-380)

Lenin, *State and Revolution* (SAPP 381-395; 407-423)

Week 9: Pragmatism

Readings: Dewey (SAPP 463-499)

Week 10: Civil Disobedience

Thoreau, Gandhi, and King

*2<sup>nd</sup> Paper Due*

Week 11: The Critique of Fascism & Totalitarianism

Readings: Marcuse and Horkheimer, TBA; Arendt, TBA

Week 12: Feminism and Communitarianism

Readings: TBA

Week 13-14: Habermas

Readings: *PTT* 1-81

Week 14-15: Derrida

Readings: *PTT* 85-172

*Final Paper is Due on the Last Day of Class. There is no final exam.*