

Phil 108: Political and Social Philosophy

Tu Th 3:00-4:15 in SH 314
Prof. Brown (karin.brown@sjsu.edu)
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It is possible to define and achieve justice in society? Are human beings basically kind and cooperative? Or are we naturally competitive and adversarial? Considerations of human nature are essential to determine which form of government would best achieve social justice and well-being. Under which economic system would we be happier? What is the significance of individual freedom and the community? What is oppression? What are its causes? Is there a connection between our education system and oppression? We will study very different theories concerning these questions through reading selections from the following texts:

Plato, *The Republic*

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*

Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*

John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*

Virginia Held, "Non-Contractual Society"

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*

Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*

John Dewey, *Individualism Old and New*

Iris Marion Young, "Five Faces of Oppression"

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

E. F. Shumacher, "Buddhist Economics"

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*