

# Democracy's Discontents: Challenges to Liberal Democracy in Europe

HIST 487RW / POLS 490RW

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Office: 120 Bowden Hall

Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00pm-4:00pm

Classroom: 124 Candler Library

Class Time: Monday 4:00-6:30pm

Class Webpage: [www.rhiannonevangelista.com/dd](http://www.rhiannonevangelista.com/dd)

Spring 2014

## Course Overview

With the institution of universal manhood suffrage, the years leading up to the First World War seemed to be a golden age of liberal democracy in Western and Central Europe. By the Second World War, however, dictatorships dotted the continental map. Why had so many Europeans lost faith in democracy? This course will explore the intellectual and political atmosphere that contributed to a growing skepticism about democracy around the turn of the twentieth century. From revolutionary socialists to aristocrats, from sociologists to psychologists, we will examine many thinkers and movements that questioned whether the “people” (*demos*) had the capacity to govern effectively. In doing so, we will ask such questions as “how was the ‘demos’ in democracy defined (as rational individuals, a mob, the ‘masses’, the ‘crowd’)?” and “what does it mean to be ‘ready for democracy’?” In light of the recent Arab Spring, these questions still resonate today.

## Required Texts

Besides readings available through Reserves Direct, the following books are required:

1. Hughes, H. Stuart. *Consciousness and Society*.

ISBN: 9780765809186

2. Le Bon, Gustave. *The Crowd*.

ISBN: 9781560007883

3. Michels, Robert. *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*.

ISBN: 9780765804693

4. Pareto, Vilfredo. *The Rise and Fall of Elites: An Application of Theoretical Sociology*.

ISBN: 9780887388729

5. Sorel, Georges. *Reflections on Violence*.

ISBN: 9780486437071

The following book is recommended:

1. Aschheim, Steven E. *The Nietzsche legacy in Germany, 1890-1990*.

ISBN: 9780520085558

## Course Evaluation

Assignment/Exam	Details	% of Total Grade
Short Paper	1-2 page research paper prospectus and bibliography.	10%
Research Paper	Based, at least partially, on primary sources. 16-20 pages.	35%
Presentation 1	Brief introduction to the week's readings.	5%
Presentation 2	Presentation based on student's final paper.	15%
Participation	Participation in class discussions.	15%
Attendance		10%
Reading Responses	Reading responses posted each week to Blackboard	10%

## Assignments

All assignments MUST be handed in at the time indicated by the instructor. For each twenty-four hour period after that point, a full letter grade will be deducted from the assignment.

In addition, students must read the assigned discussion readings for each class (look under "Class Schedule" to find the readings) and post a brief **READING RESPONSE** (about half a page in length) on our Blackboard site. In preparing reading responses students should not simply give their opinion of the reading but should critically discuss one or more aspects of the reading that they find particularly significant and/or relevant to that day's discussion. The reading responses must be posted to the Blackboard site by 3pm on the day the reading response is due. The instructor **WILL NOT** read any reading responses posted after that time.

Each week the instructor will feature one particularly insightful reading response on the class webpage, if the author of said reading response gives her/his consent.

## Attendance and Participation

This is a discussion-based class. Therefore attendance and active participation are both expected and required. Come to class prepared with questions to guide discussion. Bring the day's assigned reading to class!

Since attendance is so critical to your success in this course, for every absence you incur over two, one percentage point will be deducted from your attendance grade. All absences will be counted---there are no excused absences!

## **Academic Honesty**

All students are expected to uphold the Emory HONOR CODE. Please be especially mindful that you provide the proper citation for any use of a direct quote, paraphrase or idea from someone else. PLAGIARISM will not be tolerated. Note that this also applies to reading responses. DO NOT copy a friend's reading response. Doing so is an act of plagiarism.

## **Classroom Etiquette**

The following are the class etiquette regulations: cell phones must be turned OFF before class begins, no texting, no IMing, no doing homework, no eating in class. In addition, showing up more than five minutes late for class will result in a half absence.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, because this is a discussion-based class, there will be no laptop use during class. Please keep laptops closed. Bring a pen and paper to class for taking notes.

## **Class Schedule**

### **Nineteenth-Century Liberalism and Democracy**

January 27, 2014

- Alan S. Kahan, "Introduction: Defining Liberalism," *Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, pp. 1-17.
- Colin Heywood, "Learning Democracy in France: Popular Politics in Troyes, c.1830-1900," *The Historical Journal* 47:4 (2004): 921-939.

### **The Intellectual Environment**

February 3, 2014

- H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society*, pp. 33-66.
- Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, pp. 1-17.
- Stephen P. Thornton, "Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)," (read until the end of "3. The Theory of the Unconscious") *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/freud/#H3>.

### **Le Bon and Crowd Psychology**

February 10, 2014

- Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd*, pp. 4-79.

### **The Revision of Marxism**

February 17, 2014

- H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society*, pp. 67-74.
- Edouard Bernstein, "Evolutionary Socialism," *Modern History Sourcebook*, <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/bernstein-revsoc.asp>
- Vladimir Lenin, "What is to be Done," *Modern History Sourcebook*, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1902lenin.asp>

\*\*\*Prospectus Due

### **Sorel and the Myth of the General Strike**

February 24, 2014

- H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society*, pp. 90-96.
- Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence*, pp. 80-98, 119-150.

### **Sorel and The Neo-Machiavellians**

March 3, 2014

- H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society*, pp. 161-182, 249-274.

### **Pareto and the Circulation of Elites**

March 17, 2014

- Vilfredo Pareto, *The Rise and Fall of Elites*, pp. 2-41, 72-89.

### **Class Presentations**

March 24, 2014

### **Class Presentations**

March 31, 2014

### **Michels and the “Iron Law of Oligarchy”**

April 7, 2014

- Robert Michels, *Political Parties*, pp. 15-51, 61-77, 364-371, 85-97, 205-223.

### **Consequences**

April 14, 2014

- Benito Mussolini, “Political and Social Doctrine,” *Fascism: Doctrines and Institutions*, pp. 15-31.
- Other readings TBA

April 21, 2014

- Readings TBA

### **Conclusions**

April 28, 2014

\*\*\* Final Paper Due. No readings.

**This syllabus is subject to change.**