

Bleeding Heart Libertarianism, Fall 2020

POLS1150

Friday 3-5:30 pm
Friedman Hall 201

PROFESSOR JOHN TOMASI

Office Hours: Monday 1 - 3pm

Political Theory Project, 25 George Street, Room #202

Content:

What is libertarianism? In what sense can libertarians claim to combine the best of the “right” with the best of the “left?” Why do libertarians emphasize private property? Why are they skeptical of political agency? Are libertarians anti-democratic? Can they care about social justice? How do libertarians approach problems such as racism, sexism, militarism, state surveillance, global inequality, and environmental sustainability? This course will explore such questions, as illuminated by a variety of texts in the libertarian tradition, classical and contemporary. Students will read a book manuscript on these topics, co-authored by Prof Tomasi and Prof Matt Zwolinski (founder of the blog, BleedingHeartLibertarians.com).

Learning Goals

This course aims to provide students with a strong foundation about the libertarian intellectual tradition. Students will learn to think independently about controversial political and social issues, with special attention to defenses of individualism and capitalism. They will develop analytical skills through reading, discussing, and writing about complex philosophical problems.

Required Books:

Libertarianism: What Everyone Needs to Know by Jason Brennan

Capitalism & Freedom by Milton Friedman

For a New Liberty: The Libertarian Manifesto by Murray Rothbard

Bleeding Heart Libertarianism: An Intellectual History, John Tomasi and Matt Zwolinski (forthcoming Princeton University Press; chapters of the working ms will be available on Canvas, as they are written).

Blogs of Interest:

Center for a Stateless Society (C4SS.org)

BleedingHeartLibertarians.com

Cato-Unbound.org

The Freeman (FEE.org)

Mises Institute (Mises.org)

Institute for Justice (ij.org)

Course Time Allocation:

Over 11 weeks, students will spend 2.5 hours per week in class (27.5 hours total). Required reading for the seminar meetings is expected to take up approximately 7 hours per week (77 hours). In addition, writing and researching two short term papers and the final paper is estimated at a total of approximately 40 hours over the course of the term.

Your Grade:

Class participation, including class-leadership: 50%

Two Short Papers (800 words max): 10%

Term paper (4,000 words max): 40%

Requirements:

Careful attention to the readings and active participation in class discussion.

Lead at least one class discussion, typically with a partner.

Short Paper #1: Mandatory: due Saturday, September 26th by midnight

Short Paper #2: Students' choice: paper for Saturday, October 24th or Saturday, November 21st due by midnight

Term Paper: due Wednesday, December 9th by midnight

Hybrid Course Meetings During AY20-21

For students meeting in-person in a hybrid course, please remember that you signed an attestation that you will follow required public health practices. These practices include wearing a face mask at all times in university facilities, maintaining social distancing from others, and refraining from eating or drinking during class. If you do not have a mask, I will ask you to leave so that you can retrieve one before rejoining class. Disregard of these practices is a Student Code of Conduct violation that could result in removal from campus. Please note that instructors are required to abide by the same guidelines, and I look forward to working with you together this term to keep our community safe and healthy.

Books, Supplies, and Materials

If your Brown undergraduate financial aid package includes the Book/Course Material Support Pilot Program (BCMS), concerns or questions about the cost of books and course materials for this or any other Brown course (including RISD courses via cross-registration) can be addressed to bcms@brown.edu. For all other concerns related to non-tuition course-related expenses, whether or not your Brown undergraduate financial aid package includes BCMS, please visit the Academic Emergency Fund in E-GAP (within the umbrella of "E-Gap Funds" in [UFunds](#)) to determine options for financing these costs, while ensuring your privacy.

Accessibility and Accommodations Statement

Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform me early in the term if you may require accommodations or modification of any of course procedures. You may speak with me after class, during office hours, or by appointment. If you need accommodations around online learning or in classroom accommodations, please be sure to reach out to [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) for their assistance (seas@brown.edu, 401-863-9588). Students in need of short-term academic advice or support can [contact one of the academic deans in the College](#).

Schedule:

Friday, September 11th: Week 1

[The World's Smallest Political Quiz](#)
Karl Hess "[The Left Right Spectrum](#)"

Friday, September 18th: Week 2

Jason Brennan *Libertarianism: What Everybody Needs to Know*.

Friday, September 25th: Week 3

Murray Rothbard *For a New Liberty: The Libertarian Manifesto*, Ch 1 - 5

***Saturday, September 26th:** Paper #1: due by midnight. Please e-mail it to me and CC my assistant, katherine_bonadies@brown.edu.

Friday, October 2nd: Week 4

Rothbard, Ch 6 - 8, 12 - 14

Friday, October 9th: Week 5

Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, Ch 1 - 2, 6 - 13

Friday, October 16th: Week 6

John Tomasi and Matt Zwolinski, ms *Bleeding Heart Libertarianism: An Intellectual History*, Ch 1, "What is Libertarianism" and Ch 2, "Property"

Friday, October 23rd: Week 7

Tomasi and Zwolinski, Ch 3, "Anarchism" and Ch 4, "Big Business"

***Saturday, October 24th:** Paper #2: First option: due by midnight.

Friday, October 30th: Week 8

Tomasi and Zwolinski, Ch 5, "Poverty"

Friday, November 6th: Week 9

Tomasi and Zwolinski, Ch 6, "Racism"

Friday, November 13th: Week 10

Tomasi and Zwolinski, Ch 7, "International Justice"

Friday, November 20th: Week 11

Libertarian Environmentalism, readings t.b.d.

***Saturday, November 21st:** Paper #2: Second option: due by midnight.

Thanksgiving Recess: Wednesday, November 25th - Sunday, November 29th, 2020

Remote Reading Period: Monday, November 30th - Sunday, December 5th, 2020

Remote Exam Period: Monday, December 5th - Friday, December 11th, 2020

****Wednesday, December 9th:** Term paper due by midnight.