

POLITICAL SCIENCE 5242 / 4242 WINTER 2012

POLITICS OF REASON, PASSION, AND BIOLOGY

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Thursday 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm

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Short abstract

This is a course about how people behave politically. Is political behavior driven by reason, passion, biology, or some combination of the three? Does reason or passion drive politicians and citizens to act as they do? Or does the dichotomy between the mind and the heart disguise a more fundamental biological basis to political behavior? Do these approaches leave any room for citizens to exercise their own judgment, or is autonomy lost altogether? Normative questions of justice, equality, and freedom are deeply embedded within each approach and must be confronted as they apply in practice. Although this material is inherently global and comparative, we principally want to investigate how it applies to Canada.

Extended overview:

This is a course about how people behave politically. Is political behavior driven by reason, passion, biology, or some combination of the three? As a first approach, we assume that it is based on rational judgments made through some sort of cost / benefit analysis, and we assume that our calculation of utility is informed by knowledge about public affairs. To test if this assumption operates in practice, we study the question of “culture wars” in North America.

The second approach is modernization theory, which is the intellectual descendent of structural Marxist and Weberian theory. This approach assumes that societies (and the individuals within them) change socially and psychologically in ways that correspond to change in the structure of the economy. These changes are rational, but they are large-scale, predictable, and independent of human volition.

The third approach assumes that political behavior is based principally on passion. When research in psychology is applied to political practice, the result is political marketing which is designed to appeal to voters’ emotions. Election campaigns are the height of applied science in this regard.

The fourth approach assumes that political behavior is driven by biology. Research from primatology indicates that much of what people do politically corresponds to their genetic heritage which has its own rational calculus.

Together, these four approaches enable students to reflect in a more profound way on how their own decision-making processes operate and how they arrive at their own personal loyalties. As a result, they become better equipped to become professional practitioners of politics.

Grading Scheme:

Class presentation, with slides and notes		30%
Term test 1	1 March	20%
Term test 2	5 April	20%
Essay		30%

Oral presentation: You will have access to a classroom computer with powerpoint software and a projector. You must use visual aids, if not slides, then overhead transparencies or dramatic props. Your presentation will be graded on its ability to communicate intellectually interesting and politically astute insights, not its technical artistry.

The *.ppt file is submitted as part of the assignment. Submit written text to accompany presentation. Text need not be in formal essay format; it consists of presentation notes, provided that they are coherent, logical, cleaned up and properly formatted. Most students save the ppt file in “note” format to submit, but it is also possible to submit notes in a separate file.

One hour of class time is given over to your presentation. Be prepared to speak for approximately 30 minutes. You will address questions and comments from the class for the remainder of the time. The instructor chairs all presentations.

A sign-up sheet will be distributed on the first day. The sign-up sheet corresponds to topics on the syllabus, and you choose to present on a topic scheduled for that day. Students are not responsible for presenting all the material assigned for that day, but you are expected to be familiar with the assigned readings, and to be able to address questions as to how they relate to what you present. Much of the material is quite difficult and explaining the concepts and results accurately to your classmates will take time and effort.

The evaluation rubric for the class presentation is appended to this syllabus.

Term tests are written in class. Critical-analysis assignment based on assigned readings. No additional research beyond the syllabus is required. Questions may be posted on BLS beforehand under “assignments.”

The **essay** assignment asks you to pursue a particular topic in greater detail. This is not a massive research project, but it must go beyond the material presented in class. It may be on the same topic as your oral presentation, provided that you build on and expand on that material presented in class.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The synthesis of reason and passion in political speech

5 January

Guest lecture: Kiloran German, strategic communications consultant; political strategist and campaign organizer; speechwriter for federal, provincial and municipal candidates.

See OWL file for url links to video and text for following speeches

- Mark Antony from Shakespeare
- Stephen Lewis, Eulogy for Jack Layton, 2011, 14 minutes
- John F. Kennedy inauguration, 1961, 14 minutes
- Sojourner Truth, Ain't I a woman? 1851, 3 minutes
- Winston Churchill, outbreak of World War 2, May 1940
- Martin Luther King, I have a dream
- Leni Riefenstahl, Triumph of the Will, 1934, part 3, 9 minutes

B. The academic lineage of reason and passion synthesized

12 January

[Watts, Duncan. 2011. "The human paradox that is common sense." *New Scientist Magazine* issue 2821.](#)

[Converse, Philip. 1964. "The nature of belief systems in mass publics." In David Apter, ed. *Ideology and Discontent*. Free Press. 206-261.](#)

Menand, Louise. 2004. "The unpolitical animal: How political science understands voters," *New Yorker*. August 30.
http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/08/30/040830crat_atlarge?printable=true¤tPage=all

Zaller, John. 1998. "Monica Lewinsky's contribution to political science," *Political Science and Politics*. 31:2, pp. 182-189.

II. RATIONAL BEHAVIOR

A. Theory of rational behaviour

19 January

[Tom Flanagan, "The emerging Conservative coalition" *Policy Options* June 2011, 104-108.](#)

KEEP FLANAGAN ABOVE BECAUSE IT UPDATES, AND INTRODUCES MEDIAN THEOREM. NEED TO DO THIS CULTURE WARS MATERIAL ON POLARIZATION.

[Fiorina, Morris and Ian Shapiro. 2000. Political scientists debate theory of rational choice, *New York Times*. 26 February.](#)

[Nau, Robert. Study Guide, Ph.D. Seminar on Choice Theory and political science, Duke University School of Business.](#)

~~Green, Donald and Ian Shapiro. 1994. *Pathologies of rational choice theory: A critique of applications in political science*. New Haven: Yale University Press, chapter 3.~~

Flanagan, Tom. 1998. *Game theory and Canadian politics*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

B. (Ir)Rational culture wars of North America: class dimension

26 January

Brooks, David. 2001. "One nation, slightly divisible," *Atlantic Monthly* Dec.; 288, 5

Dionne, E. J. 2006. "Why the culture war is the wrong war," *Atlantic Monthly*; Jan/Feb, 297:1, 130-135.

Fiorina, Morris, Samuel Abrams, Jeremy Pope. 2010. *Culture war? The myth of a polarized America*. Longman Publishers.

Gelman, Andrew. 2008. *Red state, blue state, rich state, poor state: Why Americans vote the way they do*. Princeton University Press.

Gimpel, James and Kimberly Karnes. 2006. "The rural side of the urban-rural gap" *PS: Political Science & Politics* July.

Henderson, Ailsa. 2004. "Regional political cultures in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. 37:3, 595-615.

Morrill, Richard, Larry Knopp, Michael Brown. 2011. "Anomalies in Red and Blue II: Towards an understanding of the roles of setting, values, and demography in the 2004 and 2008 U.S. presidential elections," *Political Geography*. 30:3, March, 2011. 153-168

Abramowitz, Alan. 2010. *The disappearing center: Engaged citizens, polarization, and American democracy*. Yale University Press.

C. (Ir)Rational culture wars of North America: intimate dimension

2 February

Madsen, Richard. 2011. "American Grace: an Interview with Robert Putnam and David Campbell," *Hedgehog Review*, Spring, 59-68.

Douthat, Ross. 2010. "The Changing Culture War," *New York Times*. December 6.

Wilcox, Bradford, Paul Taylor, and Chuck Donovan. 2011. *When marriage disappears: The retreat from marriage in middle America*. Heritage Foundation

Wilson, Matthew and Michael Lusztig. 2004. "The spouse in the house: What explains the marriage gap in Canada?" *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. 37:4, 979-99.

Editor. 2007. "The frayed knot: As the divorce rate plummets at the top of American society and rises at the bottom, the widening "marriage gap" is breeding inequality," *Economist*.

[Banks, Ralph. 2011. "The racial gap in marriage: how the institution is tied to inequality." *Atlantic Monthly*.](#)

Malloy, Jonathan. 2009. "Bush/Harper? Canadian and American Evangelical politics compared," *American Review of Canadian Studies*. 39:4, 352-363.

II. STRUCTURAL THEORIES: (POST) MODERNIZATION

9 February

Guest lecture: Dr. Peter Butler is professor emeritus of Sociology and Public Administration at Dalhousie. Professor Butler has been a consultant for provincial and federal governments, and has done research and polling for political parties.

World Values Survey <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>

Butler, Peter. 2007. *Polling and Public Opinion: A Canadian Perspective*. University of Toronto Press.

Brodie, Ian and Neil Neviite. 1993. "Evaluating the citizens' constitution theory," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 26:2, 235-259.

Cairns, Alan. 1993. A defence of the citizens' constitution theory: A response to Ian Brodie and Neil Neviite," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 26:2, 261-267. Followed by Brodie & Neviite rebuttal.

Inglehart, Ronald, Christian Welzel. 2010. "Changing mass priorities: The link between modernization and democracy" *Perspectives on Politics*, 8: 551-567.

GENDER AND MODERNIZATION THEORY

16 February

Inglehart, Ronald and Pippa Norris. 2003. *Rising tide: Gender equality and cultural change around the world*. Cambridge University Press.

Adams, Julia and Ann Shola Orloff. 2005. "Defending modernity? High politics, feminist anti-modernism, and the place of gender," *Politics & Gender*, 1: 166-182.

Ross, Michael. 2008. "Oil, Islam, women," *American Political Science Review* 102: 107-123.

Debate: Oil, Islam, and Women, *Politics & Gender*, 5:4 (December 2009).

Norris, Pippa, "Petroleum patriarchy? A response to Ross."

Kang, Alice, "Studying oil, Islam, and women as if political institutions mattered."

Ross, Michael, "Does oil wealth hurt women? A reply to Caraway, Charrad, Kang, and Norris."

READING WEEK, NO CLASS 23 February

TEST

1 March

III. POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY

A. Theory

1 March

Fletcher, Joseph and Jennifer Hove. 2012. "Emotional determinants of support for the Canadian mission in Afghanistan: a view from the bridge," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 45:1, 33-62.

Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, Erin Cassese. 2007. "On the distinct political effects of anxiety and anger." In Peter Neuman, Russell, George Marcus, Ann Crigler, and Michael MacKuen (Eds.). *The affect effect: Dynamics of emotion in political thinking and behavior*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sears, David, Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis (Eds.). 2003. *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Marcus, George. 2002. *The sentimental citizen*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

LeDoux, Joseph, *The emotional brain*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996, pp. 11-41.

B. Psychology in action as political marketing

8 March

Westen, Drew. 2007 *The political brain: The role of emotion in deciding the fate of the nation*. <http://www.onlinebrandingcompany.ca/>

Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. 2009. *Political marketing: Principles and applications*. Routledge.

Ansolabehere, Stephen and Shanto Iyengar. 1996. "The craft of political advertising: A progress report." In Mutz, Sniderman and Brody (Eds.), *Political persuasion and attitude change*. Cambridge University Press. Ch. 4.

McDermott, Rose. 2004. "The feeling of rationality: The meaning of neuroscientific advances for political science." *Perspectives on Politics* 2(4):691-706 (December).

Freedman, Paul, Michael M. Franz and Kenneth Goldstein. 2004. "Campaign advertising and democratic citizenship." *American Journal of Political Science* 48: 723-741.

Lau, Richard, Lee Sigelman, Carolyn Heldman and Paul Babbitt. 1999. "The effects of negative political advertisements: A meta-analytic assessment." *American Political Science Review* 93: 851-876.

C. Canadian campaign marketing

15 March

Cutler, Fred. 2002. "The simplest shortcut of all: Sociodemographic characteristics and electoral choice" *Journal of Politics*, 64:2, May, 466-490.

Marland, Alex. 2010. "Marketing by Canadian political parties." Political marketing specialist group meeting, Political Studies Association conference, Edinburgh.

Marland, Alex. 2008. "Promotional and other spending by party candidates in the 2006 Canadian federal election campaign" *Canadian Journal of Media Studies*, Vol. 3(1) 57-89.

Kinsella, Warren. 2007. *The war room: Political strategies for business, NGOs, and anyone who wants to win*. Toronto: Dundurn Press.

Wells, Pauls. 2006. *Right side up: The fall of Paul Martin and the rise of Stephen Harper's new conservatism*. Toronto: Douglas Gibson.

IV. Biology & Politics

A. Genetic components to political ideology

22 March

Exchange in *Perspectives on Politics* 6(2) June 2008.

Charney, Evan. "Genes and ideologies."

Alford, John, Carolyn Funk, John Hibbing. "Beyond liberals and conservatives to political genotypes and phenotypes."

Hannagan, Rebecca, and Peter Hatemi. "The threat of genes: A comment on Evan Charney's 'Genes and ideologies'."

Jon Beckwith and Corey Morris. 2008. Twin studies of political behavior: Untenable assumptions?

Alford, John, Carolyn Funk, John Hibbing. 2008. "Twin studies, molecular genetics, politics, and tolerance: A Response to Beckwith and Morris." *Perspectives on Politics*, 6:4, 793-797.

Jacobs, Tom. 2010. "A new take on political ideology: An evolutionary psychologist proposes a new framework for understanding the root causes of our political beliefs," *Miller-McLure*. October 26. <http://www.miller-mccune.com/politics/a-new-take-on-political-ideology-24683/>

Hayden, Erika Check. 2009. "The other strand," *Nature* 457:776-79 (February 12).

Oxley, Douglas R., et al. 2008. "Political attitudes vary with physiological traits." *Science* 321:1667-1670 (September 19).

Fowler, James and Darren Schreiber. 2008. "Biology, politics, and the emerging science of human nature." *Science* 322:912-914 (November 7).

Buller, David. 2009. "Four fallacies of pop evolutionary psychology." *Scientific American* 300(1): 74-81 (January).

B. An evolutionary legacy of altruism?

29 March

Hrdy, Sarah. 2009. *Mothers and others: The evolutionary origins of mutual understanding*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Peter Loewen, "Affinity, antipathy, and political participation: How our concern for others makes us vote, ." *CJPS* 43:3 (September, 2010), 661-87.

Steven Pinker. 2008. "[The moral instinct](#)," *New York Times*. January 13.

Or an evolutionary legacy of violence?

5 April

Rosen, Stephen Peter. 2005. *War and human nature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Johnson, Dominic D., et al. 2006. "Overconfidence in Wargames: Experimental evidence on expectations, aggression, gender and testosterone." *Royal Society* 273:2513-20.

[Http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1634904/pdf/rsrb20063606.pdf](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1634904/pdf/rsrb20063606.pdf)

Satoshi Kanazawa. 2009. "[Evolutionary psychological foundations of civil wars.](#)" *Journal of Politics*, 7:1 (January).

UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS

- From the University Calendar: "Students are expected to complete class work by the prescribed deadlines. Only in special circumstances ... may an instructor extend such deadlines."
- Late papers will be assessed a late penalty at the instructor's discretion. Students who miss a deadline on account of illness are expected to hand in the assignment within one week of their return to class, with a medical certificate, per academic regulations of the Dalhousie Calendar.
- Papers should be submitted directly to the instructor, or the teaching assistant, or in person to the Political Science office between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm on weekdays only. The instructor cannot assume responsibility for papers otherwise submitted.
- Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests, quizzes and exams should make their request to the Office of Student Accessibility & Accommodation (OSAA) prior to or at the outset of each academic term (with the exception of X/Y courses). Please see www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca for more information and to obtain Form A: Request for Accommodation.
- A note taker may be required to assist a classmate. There is an honorarium of \$75/course/term. If you are interested, please contact OSAA at 494-2836 for more information.
- Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom so that students who require their usage will be able to participate in the class.

INFORMATION ON PLAGIARISM

Proper documentation is required on all writing assignments. Failure to document sources constitutes plagiarism and can result in severe academic penalty. You should keep your rough notes and be prepared to defend your work orally. Consult a writing/style manual for acceptable citation styles.

Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived.

At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course; students should read the Policy on Intellectual Honesty contained in the Calendar or

on the Online Dalhousie website. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand.

Additional Information for Graduate Students

As this is a cross-listed class, the requirements for graduate students are somewhat different from those for undergraduates. The number of and types of assignments are the same, but the expectations for these assignments are considerably higher:

1. In all assignments, graduate students are expected to evince a deeper analytical ability when evaluating readings; to show familiarity with a wider variety of sources; and to articulate a greater complexity of thought, in both verbal and written forms.
2. The writing style for graduate students should illustrate greater sophistication, both in the construction of the argument and in the clarity and lucidity of the writing.
3. Graduate students are expected to be prepared for each seminar; and to read beyond the minimal expectations set out for undergraduates (ie, more than one primary reading, secondary text, one online/PDF article, one student paper). Attendance is crucial. Graduate students should be willing to participate actively in the discussions, rather than waiting to be called upon to speak.
4. At the graduate level, students should show an understanding of the nuances of criticism, ie, how to accomplish an intellectually incisive criticism in a respectful and constructive manner.
5. Research papers for graduate students are generally longer (around 20 pages). They should show evidence of good research skills; of the capacity for revision; and of the analytical capability noted in (1) above. Graduate students may choose to tailor their research papers to their thesis work; but please discuss this with me in advance.
6. Graduate students should enjoy their work more thoroughly.