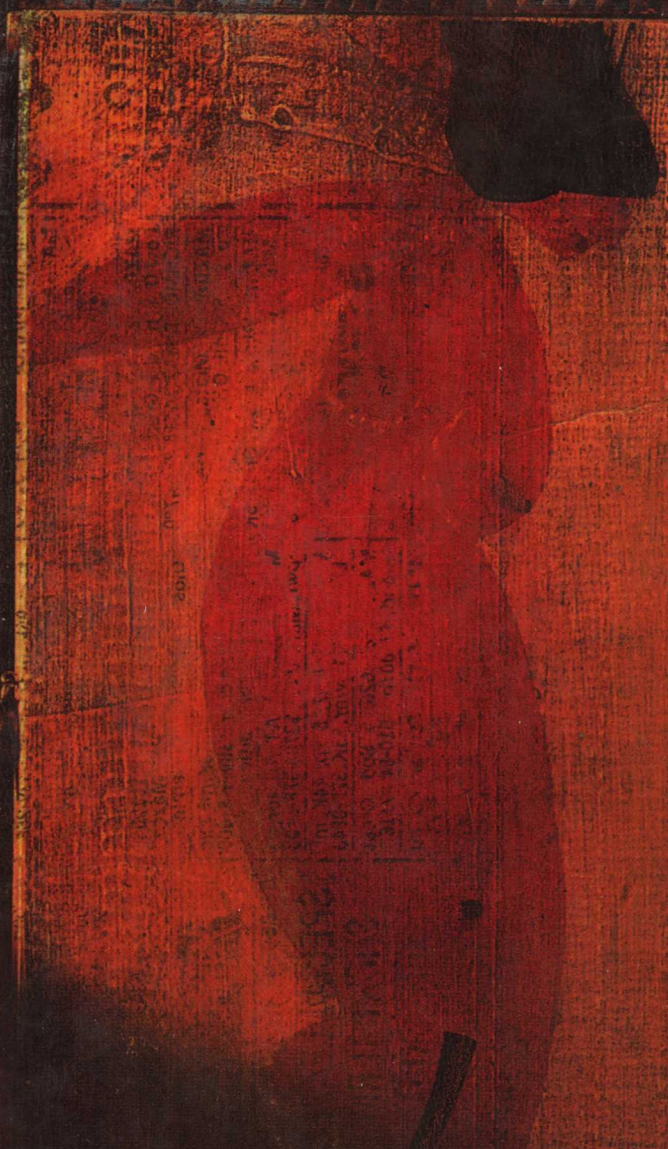
Social and Political Philosophy

Classical Western Texts in Feminist and Multicultural Perspectives



James P. Sterba

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY:

Classical Western Texts in Feminist and Multicultural Perspectives

---

James P. Sterba
University of Notre Dame

Wadsworth Publishing Company
I(T)P™ *An International Thomson Publishing Company*

Belmont • Albany • Bonn • Boston • Cincinnati • Detroit • London • Madrid • Melbourne
Mexico City • New York • Paris • San Francisco • Singapore • Tokyo • Toronto • Washington

Philosophy Editor: *Tammy Goldfeld*
Editorial Assistant: *Kelly Zavislak*
Production Services Coordinator: *Gary Mcdonald*
Production: *Ruth Cottrell*
Print Buyer: *Diana Spence*
Permissions Editor: *Robert Kauser*
Signing Representative: *Elizabeth Covello*
Copy Editor: *Lura Harrison*
Cover: *Cassandra Chu*
Compositor: *Graphic World, Inc.*
Printer: *Quebecor Printing/Fairfield*

Printed in the United States of America

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10—01 00 99 98 97 96 95

For more information, contact Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Wadsworth Publishing Company
10 Davis Drive
Belmont, California 94002
USA

International Thomson Publishing Europe
Berkshire House 168-173
High Holborn
London, WC1V 7AA
England

Thomas Nelson Australia
102 Dodds Street
South Melbourne 3205
Victoria, Australia

Nelson Canada
1120 Birchmount Road
Scarborough, Ontario
Canada M1K 5G4

International Thomson Editores
Campos Eliseos 385, Piso 7
Col. Polanco
11560 México D.F. México

International Thomson Publishing GmbH
Königswinterer Strasse 418
53227 Bonn
Germany

International Thomson Publishing Asia
221 Henderson Road
#05-10 Henderson Building
Singapore 0315

International Thomson Publishing—Japan
Hirakawacho Kyowa Building, 3F
2-2-1 Hirakawacho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102
Japan

This book is printed on acid-free recycled paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Sterba, James P.
Social and political philosophy: classical western texts in feminist and multicultural perspectives / James P. Sterba.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 0-534-24726-1
1. Ethics—History. 2. Social ethics—History. 3. Social justice—History. 4. Equality—History. 5. Political science—History. 6. Women's rights—History. I. Title.
HM216.S755 1994
303.3'72—dc20 94-35333

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY:

Classical Western Texts in Feminist and Multicultural Perspectives

Social and Political Philosophy: Texts by Wadsworth

Justice: Alternative Political Perspective, second edition
by James P. Sterba

Contemporary Social and Political Philosophy
by James P. Sterba

Society and the Individual:
Readings in Political and Social Philosophy
by Richard T. Garner and Andrew Oldenquist

Democracy: Theory and Practice
by John Arthur

The Unfinished Constitution: Philosophy and
Constitutional Practice
by John Arthur

Communitarianism: A New Public Ethics
by Markate Daly

Should We Consent to Be Governed?
A Short Introduction to Political Philosophy
by Stephen Nathanson

Morality and the Law
edited by Richard Wasserstrom

War and Morality
edited by Richard Wasserstrom

The Ethics of War and Nuclear Deterrents
edited by James P. Sterba

The Philosophy of Human Rights
by Morton E. Winston

Preface

There are a growing number of philosophy anthologies that either attempt to survey non-Western philosophies or to introduce a multicultural perspective. There are also a growing number of feminist anthologies on the market, such as *Feminist Perspectives* (Prentice Hall, 1992), which I co-edited with Janet Kourany and Rosemarie Tong.

Social and Political Philosophy attempts to address these growing trends in the teaching of philosophy by providing an anthology that will enable philosophy teachers to put the historical development of Western social and political philosophy into both multicultural and feminist perspectives.

The aim of this anthology is twofold:

1. To provide an introductory sampling of some of the classical works of the Western tradition in social and political philosophy.
2. To situate these readings within multicultural and feminist perspectives so that they can be better understood and evaluated.

As far as I know, there is no other anthology on the market which attempts to achieve this twofold aim.

Social and Political Philosophy can also be used in conjunction with either:

1. my *Justice: Alternative Political Perspectives,* 2nd edition (Wadsworth, 1992), which provides opposing readings on the major contemporary conceptions of justice and so continues the discussion of *Social and Political Philosophy* on the contemporary scene, or
2. my *Contemporary Social and Political Philosophy,* which sets out five contemporary political ideals that have their roots in many of the readings for *Social and Political Philosophy.* These political ideals are also explicitly discussed in the more contemporary readings of this anthology, and *Contemporary Social and Political Philosophy* helps students more fully understand and evaluate that discussion. In *Contemporary Social and Political Philosophy,* I also argue for the controversial thesis that *all these political ideals can be reconciled in practice,* which is a really challenging idea for students to discuss and evaluate.

Thus, in addition to what I have argued are its intrinsic merits, *Social and Political Philosophy* can also be supplemented nicely by these two other texts.

As one would expect, I have benefited from the help of many different people in writing this book. In particular, I would like to thank my wife and colleague Janet Kourany, Joan Maze of the University of New Orleans, Sharon O'Brien of the University of Notre Dame, Rosemarie Tong of Davidson College, Ofelia Schutte of the University of Florida, David Vessey of Calvin College, and the following reviewers: Donald C. Lee, University of New Mexico; Scott C. Lowe, Bloomsburg University; Lani Roberts, Oregon State University; Cheyney Ryan, University of Oregon; Sally Scholz, Purdue University; and Matthew Silliman, North Adams State College. I would

also like to thank Tammy Goldfeld, philosophy and religion editor at Wadsworth, who encouraged this project from the start, Ruth Cottrell, who supervised the production of this book, and John Davenport, who is the best proofreader I have ever known.

Acknowledgments

Selection 1. Reprinted from *The Republic,* Bk II, IV-V Translated by B. Jowett (London: Macmillan, 1892).

Selection 2. Reprinted from "The Function of Equal Education in Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*" by permission of the University of Toronto Press.

Selection 3. Reprinted from *The Four Books,* edited and translated by James Legge. Originally published in *The Chinese Classics,* Volume I (Oxford: Clarendon, 1893).

Selection 4. Reprinted from *Nicomachean Ethics,* Bk I, by permission of Blackwell Publishers.

Reprinted from *The Politics,* Bk I, Oxford University Press.

Reprinted from *Discourses* II-IV by permission of the Department of Classics, Yale University.

Selection 5. Reprinted from "Aristotle and the Politicization of the Soul" by permission of Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Selection 6. Reprinted from *African Proverbs: Guide to Conduct,* by permission of N. K. Dzoba.

Selection 7. Reprinted from *Summa Theologica* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1912).

Reprinted from *The Political Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* by Dino Bigongiari, editor, with permission of Hafner Press, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Company, Copyright 1953 renewed 1981 by Macmillan Publishing Company.

Selection 8. Printed by permission of Eileen O'Neill. To appear in *Women Philosophers of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* 2 Vols., tr. and ed. by Eileen O'Neill, Oxford University Press.

Selection 9. Reprinted from *Guide for the Perplexed,* translated by M. Friedlander (London: Routledge and Sons, 1904).

Selection 10. Reprinted from *Leviathan,* Ch. 13-18, 20. First published in 1651.

Selection 11. Reprinted from "Hobbes, Patriarchy and Conjugal Right" by permission of the author.

Selection 12. Reprinted from *The Devastation of the Indies.* Translated by John Phillips and published in London in 1656.

Selection 13. Reprinted from *Two Treatises on Government* (London: Routledge and Sons, 1887).

Selection 14. Reprinted from *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Women* (Lenox Hill Pub. and Dist. Co., 1838).

Selection 15. Reprinted from John D. Hunter, *Memoirs of a Captivity Among the Indians of North America* (London, 1824).

Selection 16. Reprinted from *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* by permission of Everyman's Library Limited.

Reprinted from *On the Social Contract* translated by G. D. H. Cole (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1916).

Reprinted from *Emile,* Bk 5, translated by Barbara Foxley (London: Guernsey Press Co., 1911).

Selection 17. Reprinted from *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (Walter Scott, 1891).

Selection 18. Reprinted from *Struggle for the Land* by permission of the author and Common Courage Press.

Selection 19. Reprinted from *Theory and Practice,* and *Metaphysic of Morals,* by permission of Cambridge University Press.

Reprinted from *Perceptual Peace.* edited by Lewis White Beck by permission of Macmillan Publishing Co. Copyright © 1957 by Macmillan College Publishing Co. Inc.

Selection 20. Reprinted from "Kant: 'An Honest but Narrow-Minded Bourgeois'?" Copyright © Ellen Kennedy and Susan Mendus, editors, *Women in Western Political Philosophy.* Reprinted by permission of St. Martin's Press, Incorporated.

Selection 21. Reprinted from "Satyagraha" by permission of Oxford University Press.

Selection 22. Reprinted from *Utilitarianism.* First published in 1863.

Reprinted from *On Liberty.* First published in 1849.

Reprinted from *The Subjection of Women.* First published in 1869.

Reprinted from *The Enfranchisement of Women.* First published in 1851.

Selection 23. Reprinted from "Marital Slavery and Friendship," *Political Theory* (1981) by permission of Sage Publications Inc.

Selection 24. Reprinted from *The Four Books,* edited and translated by James Legge. Originally published in *The Chinese Classics,* Volume II (Oxford: Clarendon, 1895).

Selection 25. Reprinted from *Communist Manifesto.* First published in English by Friedrich Engels in 1888.

Reprinted from *The Critique of the Gotha Program* edited by C. P. Dutt (1966) pp. 5-11 by permission of International Publishers.

Reprinted from *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.* First printed 1884.

Selection 26. Reprinted from "The Unhappy Marriage Between Marxism and Feminism: Toward a More Progressive Union" by permission of South End Press.

Selection 27. Reprinted from pp. 50-58 from *Small Is Beautiful: Economics As If People Mattered* by E. F. Schumacher by permission of HarperCollins Publishers Inc. © 1973 by E. F. Schumacher.

Selection 28. Reprinted by permission of the publishers from *A Theory of Justice* by John Rawls, Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Copyright © 1971 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

Reprinted from John Rawls "The Domain of the Political and Overlapping Consensus," 64 *N.Y.U.L. Rev.* 233, 239-49 (1989) by permission of *New York University Law Review.*

Reprinted from Ayn Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness* with permission from the Estate of Ayn Rand, all rights reserved.

Selection 29. Reprinted from "Justice as Fairness—For Whom?" from *Justice, Gender and the Family* by Susan Okin. Copyright © 1989 by Basic Books, Inc. by permission of Basic Books, a division of HarperCollins Publishers.

Selection 30. Reprinted from Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* © 1963 by Presence Africaine by permission.

Selection 31. Reprinted from Jouergen Habermas, "Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action," in Seyla Benhabib and Fred Dallmayr, *The Communicative Ethics Controversy* Copyright © 1990 MIT Press.

From *Power/Knowledge* by Michael Foucault. Copyright © 1972, 1975, 1976, 1977 by Michael Foucault. Reprinted by permission of Pantheon Books, a division of Random House, Inc.

Selection 32. Sandra Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power" Reprinted from *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance,* edited by Irene Diamond and Lee Quinby. Copyright 1988 by Irene Diamond and Lee Quinby. Reprinted with the permission of Northeastern University Press, Boston.

Selection 33. Reprinted from Cornel West, "Philosophy, Politics and Power: An Afro-American Perspective" in *Philosophy Born of Struggle,* edited by Leonard Harris, Copyright 1983 by Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company. Used with permission.

Selection 34. Reprinted from "The Privatization of the Good," *Review of Politics* (1990) by permission.

Reprinted from "Atomism" by permission of the author.

Selection 35. Reprinted from "Feminism and Modern Friendship: Dislocating the Community." Reprinted by permission of *Ethics* and the author.

Selection 36. Reprinted from *Ancient Futures* by permission of Sierra Club Books.

Selection 37. Printed from "Reconciling Alternative Political Ideals" by permission of the author.

Contents

General Introduction

THE CENTRAL TASK of social and political philosophy is to provide a justification for coercive institutions. Coercive institutions range in size from the family to the nation-state and world organizations like the United Nations, with their narrower and broader agendas for action. Essentially, they are institutions that, at least sometimes, employ force or the threat of force to control the behavior of their members to achieve either minimal or wide-ranging goals. To justify such coercive institutions, we need to show that the authorities within these institutions have a right to be obeyed and that their members have a corresponding duty to obey them. In other words, we need to show that these institutions have legitimate authority over their members.

Of course, classical social and political philosophers, like Socrates and Plato, were primarily interested in justifying small city-states, like Athens or Sparta. But as larger coercive institutions became both possible and desirable, social and political philosophers sought to justify them. After the seventeenth century, most social and political philosophers focused their attention on justifying the nation-state, whose claim to legitimate authority is restricted by both geography and nationality. But from time to time, and even more frequently in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, social and political philosophers have sought to justify more wide-ranging coercive institutions, including various forms of world government with more extensive powers than those that are presently exercised by the United Nations.[1] And quite recently, feminist social and political philosophers have raised important challenges to the authority of the family as it is presently constituted.[2]

Obviously, it isn't enough to show that various coercive institutions claim to have legitimate authority over their members or that many or even most of their members accept their claim to such authority. That would only show that these coercive

1 See, for example, Frederick Schuman, *International Politics*, 7th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969); Finn Laursen, *Federalism and World Order* (Copenhagen, 1970); Grenville Clark and Louis Sohn, *World Peace Through World Law*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966).

2 See, for example, Janet Kourany, James Sterba, and Rosemarie Tong, *Feminist Philosophies* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1991).

institutions are widely believed to be legitimate authorities, not that they are such. Believing something to be the case never makes it so.

But while coercive institutions that are widely believed to be legitimate authorities may not be such (e.g., Nazi Germany), these institutions can still be effective in controlling the behavior of their members, provided that a sufficient number of their members freely acknowledge their claims to be legitimate authorities. Nevertheless, since the control that these coercive institutions maintain over the behavior of their members, at least to some extent, rests on the credibility of their claims to be legitimate authorities, the central task of social and political philosophy is to show how these claims can be justified.

So the history of social and political philosophy in the Western tradition is the history of attempts to carry out this central task. In each attempt, an appeal is made to one or another social and political ideal. Putting it all too briefly, we can say that Plato appeals to an ideal of justice in the state and in the person; Aristotle to an ideal of happiness or human fulfillment; Thomas Aquinas to an ideal of natural law; Thomas Hobbes to an ideal of self-interested agreement; John Locke to an ideal of consent in a state of nature; Jean-Jacques Rousseau to an ideal of a general will; Immanuel Kant to an ideal of a hypothetical agreement of rational agents; John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor to an ideal of the maximization of utility; Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels to an ideal of equality; John Rawls to an ideal of fairness; Ayn Rand to an ideal of liberty; Jürgen Habermas to an ideal of the normative presuppositions of discourse; Michel Foucault to an ideal of the absence of domination; and Alasdair MacIntyre and Charles Taylor to an ideal of a good society.

Although obviously disagreeing about the appropriate grounds of legitimate authority, all of these philosophers agree that submission to coercive institutions as legitimate authorities can be justified in terms of their favored social and political ideal.

Yet despite this general consensus among social and political philosophers concerning the justification of legitimate authority, two problems remain. First, claiming that legitimate authorities can be justified in terms of some ultimate social and political ideal is one thing, but providing that justification is another. Thus, it may turn out that when a justification in terms of some ultimate social and political ideal, like liberty or equality, is finally worked out, no existing coercive institution will be justified because they do not sufficiently conform to that ideal. Second, the authorities that are justified by one of these social and political ideals may not be the same as the authorities justified by another, leaving us in a quandary as to whom to obey, unless the practical differences between what these ideals require can be eliminated or compromised. This is a very difficult problem. In the concluding selection to this anthology, I suggest how it might be possible to resolve this problem for the contemporary scene.

Obviously, the distinctive feature of this anthology is its inclusion of feminist and multicultural perspectives. The inclusion of these two perspectives is actually required by the central task of social and political philosophy. This is because in order to establish that the coercive institutions sanctioned by any social and political ideal are justified as legitimate authorities, the particular ideal must be able to survive in a comparative evaluation with other accessible social and political ideals, including those that are feminist and multicultural. Feminist social and political ideals demand that coercive

institutions no longer support the subordination of women by men, surely a reasonable requirement. Multicultural social and political ideals will place a variety of different demands on coercive institutions, some of which will be reasonable while others will not.

What then will a curriculum look like that attempts to help carry out the central task of social and political philosophy by including a discussion of feminist and multicultural social and political ideals? Obviously, this text attempts to answer this question. In this text, a survey of some of the greatest works of Western social and political philosophy is combined with some of the greatest related works of non-Western social and political philosophy. Some of these non-Western works are chosen because they parallel the views defended in the Western works (e.g., Confucius's work parallels that of Plato or Aristotle). Buth other non-Western works are chosen because they challenge the views defended in the Western works (e.g., American Indian works provide an interesting challenge to the Western social contract tradition of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau). Obviously, these challenges to Western social and political philosophy could lead to reinterpretations of the Western social and political ideals. For example, an examination of American Indian works might lead us to reinterpret Western social and political ideals to require greater reparations to American Indians.

In any case, what is clear is that central task social and political philosophy, the task of determining when coercive institutions are legitimate authorities, will be satisfied with nothing less than a consideration of feminist and multicultural perspectives. The only question that remains is why has it taken social and political philosophers so long to recognize the need to do so?