

PST Political and Social Thought Core Seminar II

PST 487—Spring Term 2004

Tuesdays, 3:30–5:45 pm

Professor Michael Joseph Smith (mjsmith@virginia.edu)

Office Hours: Mondays 2:00–4:30 pm in Cabell 251 (other times by appointment; please e-mail Mr. John Baxter (baxter@virginia.edu) to make *all* appointments—this eliminates waiting on the bench outside 251.)

Mr Willis Jenkins (wjj2c@virginia.edu) Office Hours TBA

Except when noted below, written responses of 500-800 words are due each week in class. “Double responses” of 1600-2000 words on two weeks of reading are possible when listed or when negotiated in advance. Please submit essays on time.

Outline of Readings and Classes

I. The “Age of Catastrophe” and Responses to Dilemmas *in extremis*

January 20: Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World 1919-1991*, chaps. 1-4.

January 27: Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*, and
Leon Trotsky, *Their Morals and Ours*.

February 3: Louis Begley, *Wartime Lies*; and
Kazuo Ishiguro, *An Artist of the Floating World*.

February 10: Toni Morrison, *Beloved*.

II. Competing Concepts of Social Justice and Ethics

(We encourage you to write a double response on two of the following three weeks' reading)

February 17: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, sections on "State and Church" and "Church and World."

Martin Luther King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," and other selections from *Why We Can't Wait*.

February 24: Orlando Patterson, *The Ordeal of Integration*.

March 2: Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*.

{Spring Break, no class on March 9}

March 16: John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice: A Brief Restatement*.

March 23: Susan Moller Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family*.

III. New Voices, New Issues

March 30: Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World 1919-1999*, chapter 9-13; 15-18

April 5: Edward Said, *Orientalism*, selections to be discussed.

April 15: Wole Soyinka, *Death and the King's Horsemen*.

Arundhati Roy, *War Talk*.

April 20: Elaine Scarry, "The Difficulty of Imagining Other Persons,"
Michael Ignatieff, "Human Rights," and
Ruti Teitel, "Bringing the Messiah through the Law," all in Carla Hesse & Robert Post,
eds., *Human Rights in Political Transitions: Gettysburg to Bosnia* (website);
Richard Rorty, "Human Rights, Rationality and Sentimentality," (website).
Stephen Lukes, "Five Fables about Human Rights," (Website).

April 27: Albert O. Hirschman, *The Rhetoric of Reaction*.