

Winter Term 2014/15

Dr. Jan Sauermann

(1402) The Limits of Democracy: Social Choice Theory and its Critics

Time: Thursdays 8:00 – 9:30

Room: Gottfried-Keller-Str. 6, Hörsaal des Forschungsinstituts

First Session: 9 October 2014

Course description

Is there a public good? Can it be revealed by democratic procedures? The course will focus on these fundamental questions through the lens of social choice theory. In his highly influential book *'Liberalism against Populism'* William Riker argues that democratic decisions are chaotic, meaningless, and arbitrary. The seminar consists of two parts. In the first part of the seminar we will examine Riker's line of argumentation in detail. In the second part we will analyse alternatives from democratic theory trying to defend democracy against Riker's pessimistic interpretation of social choice theory.

Prerequisites

Students should have a good knowledge of political science concepts, basic qualitative and quantitative methods, some math skills, and an interest in current research. Since nearly all reading assignments are in English, this will be the general classroom language as well. Participants therefore must know enough English to be able to participate actively. Perfection is not required – you just need to understand and make yourself understood.

Relevance for study programmes

The course is open to all doctoral students and advanced master/diploma students of the WiSo-Faculty with an interest in political science.

Registration

The course will be taught on a weekly basis (first session October 9). Students should register via KLIPS. Students unable to use KLIPS can register via Email (jan.sauermann@uni-koeln.de).

Reading assignments

At the beginning of October a reader with the required texts for the sessions of the seminar can be bought at Copy-Star (Zülpicher Straße 184, 50937 Köln).

Working requirements and assessment method

All participants are expected to:

- attend the seminar on a regular basis
- complete assigned readings according to schedule
- actively contribute to class discussions
- give a 10 to 15 minutes presentation in the seminar

Depending on the "Prüfungsordnung"

- EITHER write a research paper of 15-20 pages (about 5.000-6.000 words) in length
- OR sit a written exam

Submission of the research paper

Please hand in two versions of your research paper:

- **Electronic version**
(pdf- or Word file) via email to jan.sauermann@uni-koeln.de
Deadline: 9 March 2015, 10:00am
- **Paper version**
You can hand in the paper version personally at the secretary of the Cologne Center for Comparative Politics (*IBW Gebäude, Herbert-Lewin-Str. 2, 1st floor, Room 1.09*) or send it by mail to:
Jan Sauermann, Universität zu Köln, Cologne Center for Comparative Politics,
Postfach 411020, 50870 Köln

The paper version must contain the following signed statement:

http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/fileadmin/wiso_fak/cccp/Lehre/ErklaerungzuArbeiten.pdf

Teilnahme- und Prüfungsbedingungen

- Regelmäßige Teilnahme an den Seminarsitzungen
- Gründliche Vorbereitung der angegebenen Grundlagenliteratur
- Aktive Beteiligung an den Diskussionen im Seminar
- Referat (10-15 Minuten)
- **UND:** Abhängig von der jeweils geltenden Prüfungsordnung:
 - Hausarbeit von 15-20 Seiten (ca. 5.000-6.000 Wörter)
- **ODER:**
 - Klausur (60 Minuten)

Abgabe der Hausarbeit

Bitte reichen Sie zwei Versionen Ihrer Hausarbeit ein:

- **Elektronische Version**
(pdf- oder Word-Dokument) per Email an jan.sauermann@uni-koeln.de
Deadline: 9. März 2015, 10:00 Uhr
- **Papierversion**
Sie können die ausgedruckte Version Ihrer Hausarbeit entweder persönlich während der Öffnungszeiten im Sekretariat des Cologne Center for Comparative Politics (IBW-Gebäude, Herbert-Lewin-Str.2, 1. Stock, Raum 1.09) abgeben oder per Post an folgende Adresse senden:
Jan Sauermann, Universität zu Köln, Cologne Center for Comparative Politics,
Postfach 411020, 50870 Köln

Die Papierversion muss folgende unterschriebene Erklärung beinhalten:

http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/fileadmin/wiso_fak/cccp/Lehre/ErklaerungzuArbeiten.pdf

General readings:

- Hinich, Melvin J., and Michael C. Munger. 1997. *Analytical Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mueller, Dennis C. 2003. *Public Choice III*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shepsle, Kenneth A., and Mark S. Bonchek. 1997. *Analyzing Politics. Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company.

Schedule

9 October 2014 Introduction

Required readings:

- Shapiro, Ian. 2003. *The State of Democratic Theory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1-34.

16 October 2014 Rational choice theory

Required readings:

- Opp, Karl-Dieter. 1999. "Contending Conceptions of the Theory of Rational Action." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 11 (2): 171-202.

Optional readings:

- Frohlich, Norman, and Joe A. Oppenheimer. 2006. "Skating on Thin Ice. Cracks in the Public Choice Foundation." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 18 (3): 235-266.

23 October 2014 Riker I

Required readings:

- Riker, William H. 1982. *Liberalism against Populism. A Confrontation between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice*. Long Grove: Waveland Press, 1-64.

30 October 2014 Riker II: The Arrow-problem

Required readings:

- Riker, William H. 1982. *Liberalism against Populism. A Confrontation between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice*. Long Grove: Waveland Press, 65-136.

Optional readings:

- Mueller, Dennis C. 2003. *Public Choice III*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 582-596.

6 November 2014 NO CLASS

13 November 2014 Riker III: Strategic voting and agenda control

Required readings:

- Riker, William H. 1982. *Liberalism against Populism. A Confrontation between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice*. Long Grove: Waveland Press, 137-195.

Optional readings:

- Mueller, Dennis C. 2003. *Public Choice III*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 79-127.

20 November 2014 Riker IV: Political disequilibrium

Required readings:

- Riker, William H. 1982. *Liberalism against Populism. A Confrontation between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice*. Long Grove: Waveland Press, 197-232.
- Riker, William H. 1980. "Implications from the Disequilibrium of Majority Rule for the Study of Institutions." *American Political Science Review* 74: 432-446.

27 November 2014 Riker's conception of democracy

Required readings:

- Riker, William H. 1982. *Liberalism against Populism. A Confrontation between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice*. Long Grove: Waveland Press, 233-253.
- Radcliff, Benjamin. 1993. "Liberalism, Populism, and Collective Choice." *Political Science Quarterly* 46 (1): 127-42.

4 Decembet 2014 Mackie I: Defending democracy from social choice

Required readings:

- Mackie, Gerry. 2003. *Democracy Defended*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1-71. (Only skim Chapter 1, pp. 1-22)

11 December 2014 Mackie II: Unrestricted domain of preferences

Required readings:

- Mackie, Gerry. 2003. *Democracy Defended*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 95-122.
- Sauermann, Jan, and André Kaiser. 2010. "Taking Others into Account: Self-Interest and Fairness in Majority Decision Making." *American Journal of Political Science* 54 (3): 667-685.

Optional readings:

- Frohlich, Norman, and Joe A. Oppenheimer. 2007. "Justice Preferences and the Arrow Problem." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 19 (4): 363-390.

18 December 2014 Discussion of research designs

Joint discussion of participants' ideas/ research questions/ research designs for final papers.

Task for this session:

Hand in a one-page outline of your planned research design by Tuesday, 16 December 2013, 10:00 AM.

8 January 2014 Mackie III: Strategic voting

Required readings:

- Mackie, Gerry. 2003. *Democracy Defended*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 158-172.
- Dowding, Keith, and Martin van Hees. 2007. "In Praise of Manipulation." *British Journal of Political Science* 38 (1): 1-15.

15 January 2015 Mackie IV: Multidimensional chaos

Required readings:

- Fiorina, Morris P., and Charles R. Plott. 1978. "Committee Decisions under Majority Rule: An Experimental Study." *American Political Science Review* 72 (2): 575-598.

Optional readings:

- Mackie, Gerry. 2003. *Democracy Defended*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 173-196.
- Miller, Gary J. 2011. "Legislative Voting and Cycling." In *Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science*, eds. James N. Druckman, Donald P. Green, James H. Kuklinski and Arthur Lupia. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 353-368.
- Bianco, William T., Michael S. Lynch, Gary J. Miller, and Itai Sened. 2006. "'A Theory Waiting to Be Discoverd and Used": A Reanalysis of Canonical Experiments on Majority Rule Decision-Making." *Journal of Politics* 68 (4): 838-51.

22 January 2015 Mackie vs. Riker

Required readings:

- Mackie, Gerry. 2003. *Democracy Defended*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 378-431.

Optional readings:

- Dowding, Keith. 2006. "Can Populism Be Defended? William Riker, Gerry Mackie and the Interpretation of Democracy." *Government and Opposition* 41 (3): 327-46.

29 January 2015 Social choice and deliberation

Required readings:

- Goodin, Robert E. 1986. "Laundering Preferences." In *Foundations of Social Choice Theory*, eds. Jon Elster and Aanund Hylland. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 75-101.
- Dryzek, John S., and Christian List. 2003. "Social Choice Theory and Deliberative Democracy: A Reconciliation." *British Journal of Political Science* 33 (1): 1-28.

5 February 2015 Social choice and pluralism

Required readings:

- Miller, Nicholas. 1983. "Pluralism and Social Choice." *American Political Science Review* 77 (3): 734-747.
- McGann, Anthony J. 2004. "The Tyranny of the Supermajority. How Majority Rule Protects Minorities." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 16 (1): 53-77.