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RAWLS
A Theory of Justice

PHIL 102
Ethics, Politics, & Law
Jeff Johnson

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ETHICS, POLITICS & LAW

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Social Contract

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- Hobbes
- Thought experiments

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- Economic rationality

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- State of Nature
- Bargains

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- Enforcing bargains

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- Social contract

2

- Sovereign

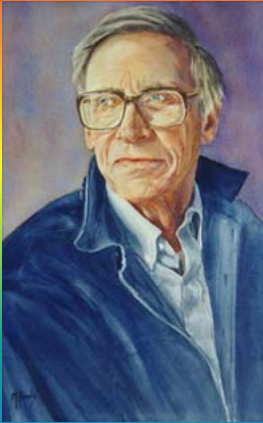


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John Rawls

- John Rawls
- 1921-2002
- Princeton
- WW II
- Princeton
- Cornell
- Oxford
- MIT
- Harvard




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John Rawls

- Early 20th Century political philosophy
- Articles in the 1950s
- *A Theory of Justice* - 1971
- *Later work*



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A Theory of Justice

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- Hobbes
- Thought experiments
- Economic rationality
- State of Nature
- Bargains
- Enforcing bargains
- Social contract
- Sovereign

- Rawls
- Thought experiments
- Economic rationality
- Original Position
- Veil of Ignorance
- Moral philosophy, not government
- Basic structure of society
- Principles of justice

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Original Position

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- Setting the basic structure of society
- Before government and constitution
- Veil of ignorance
 - Smart, informed
 - No knowledge of self
 - Includes political values
- Maxi-min strategy
- Principles of justice



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Principles of Justice

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- Two principles - really three

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- Lexical order

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- Greatest equal civil liberties

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- Equality of opportunity

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- Difference principle

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- Softball e.g.

- Is America a just society?



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Contemporary America

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- Greatest liberty?
 - Gay marriage?
 - Search & seizure?

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- Equality of opportunity?
 - Wage differentials?
 - Health statistics?

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- Difference principle?

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- Tax structure?

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- Safety net?

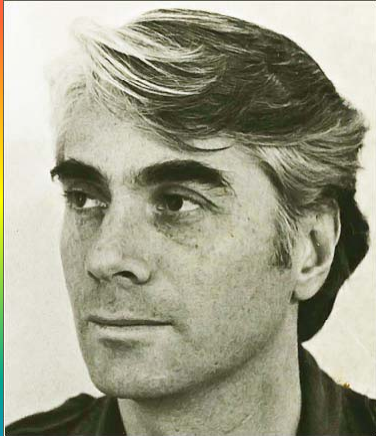


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Entitlement Theory

- Private property
- Justice in acquisition
- Redistribution
 - Immoral?
 - Liberty
 - Wilt Chamberlain
- Utopia



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