

Lectures for IES Europe, Summer 2007
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What are rights & Why Do We Have Them?

1. US Declaration “hold these truths” vs. “are” self-evident
2. What are rights? Principles defining personal authority within which one needs to be in charge of one’s life and works.
3. What is meant by “natural” in “natural rights”?
4. History of the idea of basic rights:
 - a. Aristotle, Lykophron (a la Fred D. Miller)
 - b. Wm. Of Ockham and the common law tradition
 - c. Hobbes’ use of “rights” to mean power (in a materialist, non-normative framework)
 - d. Locke and modern natural rights (mildly grounded)
 - e. Mill and the utilitarian case for rights
 - f. Positive rights – Hagel, Marx & Green
 - g. Ayn Rand
 - h. Murray N. Rothbard
 - i. Allen Gewirth
 - j. Rawls/Dworkin
 - k. Nozick
 - l. Mack
 - m. Lomasky
 - n. Ramussen/Den Uyl
 - o. Narveson
5. More on Negative versus Positive Rights
6. Rights as “meta-norms” (more on Rasmussen/Den Uyl)
7. Rights as criteria for political justice

Liberty & Virtue: Why Moral Goodness Cannot be Coerced

1. Classical Liberal/Libertarian Problem: Free to do wrong.
2. Private vice, public benefit
3. Preliminaries to a coherent account of freedom's relation to virtue:
 - a. Free will (metaphysics)
 - b. Political Liberty
 - i. negative – from
 - ii. positive – to
4. Preliminaries – Kinds of virtue:
 - a. Virtue as good trait (“this horse’s virtues are”)
 - b. Virtue as morally good trait (“this person is virtuous”)
5. Liberalism and Liberty
 - a. Absence of “friction” or “obstacle” (freedom as efficiency)
 - c. “Ought” implies “can” (freedom as option)
6. Natural Rights and Virtues
7. Statism and Demoralization
8. Liberalism versus Global Utopianism
9. Freedom vs. determinism in classical liberal thought

The Virtue of Prudence as the Moral Basis of Commerce

1. Morality and Political Economy
 - a. The Need for moral support
 - b. Some Skeptical Problems (Friedman, Epstein, et al.)
 - c. Stable Principles
2. Virtue Ethics versus Deontology & Consequentialism
 - a. Aristotelian Meta-ethics
 - b. Randian Update (individualism)
 - c. The Virtue of Selfishness or Prudence
 - d. General Principles & Practical Judgments
3. Moral Virtue and Choice
 - a. The Prerequisite of Liberty (Rand & Hayek)
 - b. The Role of Property Rights
 - c. Capitalism & Individualism
4. How to Judge Political Systems
 - a. Comparative Assessment
 - b. Anti-utopianism