**POLS 1821C**  
**Economic Freedom and Social Justice**  
Professor John Tomasi  
Brown University

*The Topic:*  
This course explores the relationship between economic freedom and social justice. The economic liberties of capitalism have often been said to be in tension with the moral ideal of distributive justice. What are the economic liberties of capitalism and what moral value, if any, do they have? What does a commitment to social justice require and what, if anything, might motivate one to affirm social justice as an institutional ideal? Our discussions will be based upon a book manuscript by the instructor that is entitled *Market Democracy: Property, Equality, and the American Dream.* This book seeks to show how economic freedom and social justice might be brought together into a unified philosophical framework.

*The Requirements:*  
1) Weekly Seminars. This is a demanding, reading intensive senior seminar. Students should expect to devote at least five hours of reading time per week in preparation for seminar. Every student is expected to participate verbally in every seminar meeting. (This is not a course for the strong, silent type). 2) Seminar Presentation. Each student will work in a team to prepare one brief presentation to launch the seminar discussion each week. 3) Term Paper. Each student will write a 15-20 page seminar paper.

*The Schedule:*  

**Part I. Market Democracy**

*Introduction to the Course*  

*The Moral Status Quo: Economic Liberty vs. Social Justice*  
*Market Democracy*: Chapters 1-3.

*Constitution Day Event*  
4.00-6.00pm, Salomon 101  

*What Is Market Democracy?*  
*Market Democracy* Chapter 4.


Part II. Economic Freedom

The History of Property Rights in America

Recommended: Honore “Ownership.”

The Moral Value of Economic Liberty
Gerald Gaus “Property, Rights, and Freedom”

&

Daniel Shapiro “Liberalism, Basic Rights, and Free Exchange.”

Are Economic Rights Basic Rights?

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Jason Swadley “Economic Liberties and the High Liberal Tradition” (working manuscript by Brown PhD candidate).

If Property Is So Good, Shouldn’t Everybody Get Some?
Zak Beauchamp “The Worth of the Economic Liberties” (working manuscript by Brown undergrad, ’10).

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Recommended: C.B. Macpherson “Human Rights as Property Rights” and “Property as Means or End” from *The Rise and Fall of Economic Justice and Other Essays* (Oxford University Press, 1985).
Attitudes Toward Property: The Ideological Terrain
Loren Lomasky “Two Concepts of Liberalism” from Persons, Rights and the Moral Community
&
Samuel Freeman “Illiberal Libertarians: Why Libertarianism is not a Liberal View” Philosophy & Public Affairs.
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Part III. Social Justice

What Is Social Justice?
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The Difference Principle
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Social Justice versus Spontaneous Order?
F.A. Hayek “The Use of Knowledge in Society” (American Economic Review, XXXV, no. 4 September, 1945, 519-30.)
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Recommended: Tomasi Market Democracy “Chapter 5: Social Justice.”