



**FREE MARKET
INSTITUTE**

TEXAS TECH
Research & Innovation

Political Economy Reading Program

Democracy: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics

Participants explore both classic and contemporary debates about the nature, potential, and ideals of democracy. Key questions include:

- Does democracy lead to better policies or foster virtuous citizens?
- What are the strongest defenses and critiques of democracy?
- Is democracy in crisis, and if so, what can be done?
- What are the responsibilities of democratic citizens?

Reading Schedule

Introduction

- Brennan, Jason. (2023). “Democracy: Why or Why Not?” In *Democracy: A Guided Tour*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 1-18.

Session 1 – Stability

- Brennan, Jason. (2023). “For Stability: Stability through Shared Power.” In *Democracy: A Guided Tour*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 19-40.
- ——— (2023). “Against Stability: Passion and Polarization.” 41-66.

Session 2 – Virtue

- Brennan, Jason. (2023). “For Virtue: Does Democracy Enlighten and Ennoble?” In *Democracy: A Guided Tour*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 67-92.
- ——— (2023). “Against Virtue: Does Democracy Make Us Angry, Mean, and Dumb?” 93-116.

Session 3 – Wisdom

- Brennan, Jason. (2023). “For Wisdom: Two Heads Are Smarter than One.” In *Democracy: A Guided Tour*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 117-142.
- ——— (2023). “Against Wisdom: Garbage In, Garbage Out.” 143-172.

Session 4 – Liberty

- Brennan, Jason. (2023). “For Liberty: The Consent of the Governed.” In *Democracy: A Guided Tour*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 173-198.
- ——— (2023). “Against Liberty: Democracy as the Many-Headed Master.” 199-224.



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Session 5 – Equality

- Brennan, Jason. (2023). “For Equality: Democracy as the Public Expression of Equal Standing.” In *Democracy: A Guided Tour*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 225-250.
- ——— (2023). “Against Equality: Is Democratic Equality an Illusion?” 251-275.

Session 6 – Justice and Democracy

- Allen, Danielle. (2023). “On Surprise and the Purpose of Political Philosophy.” In *Justice by Means of Democracy*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press. 3-15.
- ——— (2023). “Justice That Sacrifices Democracy: An Error.” 16-30.
- ——— (2023). “Justice by Means of Democracy: An Ideal and Its Design Principles.” 31-64.

Session 7 – Subsidiary Ideals I

- Allen, Danielle. (2023). “The First Subsidiary Ideal: Egalitarian Participatory Constitutional Democracy.” In *Justice by Means of Democracy*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press. 67-100.
- ——— (2023). “The Second Subsidiary Ideal: A Connected Society.” 101-128.

Session 8 – Subsidiary Ideals II

- Allen, Danielle. (2023). “The Third Subsidiary Ideal: Polypolitanism.” In *Justice by Means of Democracy*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press. 129-157.
- ——— (2023). “The Fourth Subsidiary Ideal: Empowering Economies.” 158-195.

Session 9 – Ignoring Politics I

- Freiman, Christopher. (2021). “Introduction.” In *Why It’s Ok to Ignore Politics*. New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis. 1-8.
- ——— (2021). “In Pursuit of Political Wisdom.” 9-23.
- ——— (2021). “We’re All Partisan Hacks.” 25-42.
- ——— (2021). “The Costs and Benefits of Political Participation.” 43-66.



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Session 10 – Ignoring Politics II

- Freiman, Christopher. (2021). “Fairness and Free Riding.” In *Why It’s Ok to Ignore Politics*. New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis. 67-91.
- ——— (2021). “Political Abstention and Complicity in Injustice.” 93-102.
- ——— (2021). “The Morality of the Message.” 103-118.

Session 11 – Conclusion

- Allen, Danielle. (2023). “A New Model for the Practice of Democratic Citizenship.” In *Justice by Means of Democracy*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press. 199-227.
- ——— (2023). “Epilogue.” 228-229.
- Freiman, Christopher. (2021). “Political Ignorance Is Bliss.” In *Why It’s Ok to Ignore Politics*. New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis. 119-130.
- ——— (2021). “Why It’s Obligatory to Ignore Politics.” 131-137.