

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Patriarchy

Instructions

When doing the reading for this class, there are the two basic kinds of information you need to understand:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible position on an issue, rather than another.

Reading

Pateman, C. (1988). [Chapter 2]. In *The sexual contract* (pp. 19–38). Stanford University Press.

Questions

As you read, keep these questions in mind:

1. Carole Pateman begins this chapter with a bunch of confusions about the meaning of “patriarchy”. Many other confusions are also presented throughout the chapter.
What are these confusions that Pateman mentions? Despite this, why does Pateman believe that feminist political philosophy needs a meaningful conception of “patriarchy”?
2. In the chapter, Pateman presents detailed analyses of “three great periods of debate about patriarchy” (1988, p. 20):
 - A. The 17th-century debate between John Locke and Robert Filmer on the relationship between paternal power and political power,
 - B. The debate (from 1861 and onward) between Sir John Maine and Johann Bactofan on the origins of paternal power, and
 - C. The contemporary debate between feminists and defenders of the current capitalist/contractualist social order.

For each of these debates, what position(s) do each side defend? What influence does each debate have over how we may understand the nature, meaning, and significance of patriarchy?

3. While doing all that, Pateman also intersperses detailed analyses of “three forms of patriarchal argument” (1988, p. 20):
 - A. Traditional patriarchal thought (Pateman, 1988, p. 23),
 - B. Classic patriarchalism (Pateman, 1988, p. 24), and
 - C. Modern patriarchy (Pateman, 1988, p. 25).

(Be careful: these three forms of argument do not neatly align with the three debates Pateman discusses. I guess this helps illustrate the nature of those patriarchal confusions Pateman is concerned about.)

What does Pateman mean by each of these? How does each provide a model for understanding patriarchy?

To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.