

Department of Political Science, University of California, Berkeley
Spring 2025
Political Science 2
Prof. Steven Fish
TuTh 3:30-5:00, 155 Dwinelle, plus discussion section
Office hours: W 4:00-5:30 and Th 5:30-7:30, 744 Social Sciences Bldg

INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Welcome to comparative politics! This course aims to furnish students with the tools necessary to study politics in comparative perspective and to deepen your understanding of some of the most pressing political issues the world now faces. It is divided into four parts. The first examines political regimes, focusing on the essential differences between democracy and authoritarianism and the stakes in the struggle between democracy and its alternatives. The second section investigates explanations for the rise of challenges to democracy in the 21st century. The third section explores nationalism, identity, and belonging. The fourth focuses on political communication.

Requirements consist of three exams, weekly quizzes on the readings, and attendance at lectures and discussion sections. As noted in the appropriate week on the syllabus, the preliminary exams will be held on February 27 and April 17. The final exam will be held at the assigned time during finals week. Students are expected to do the readings for the week in their entirety by Thursday's class meeting. Your GSIs might have alternative requirements that involve completing the readings for the week prior to discussion sections. There will be a short quiz on the readings every Thursday, with the exception of weeks 6 and 12, when there will not be a quiz. Also note that there will be two quizzes during week 1. The first will be on the first day of class to assess general knowledge and everyone will receive the full two points just for taking it. The second will be on Thursday and will be a normal quiz on the week's readings. The ten top quiz grades (and only the ten top grades) out of the 13 quizzes will count toward the course grade. All quizzes must be taken in class; they may not be taken remotely, and no quizzes may be made up for any reason.

Grades will be determined on a 100-point scale. Each of the preliminary exams counts for 20 points; the final exam for 30 points; the weekly quizzes for 20 points (2 points per quiz), and attendance at lectures and discussion sections, as well as participation in discussion sections, for 10 points. The third and final exam will be cumulative in coverage of course material.

All email correspondence about course matters should be conducted with your GSI. If you wish to discuss anything with the professor, please drop by his office hours and he'll be delighted to meet with you.

Use of ChatGPT or any other such AI source is and will be treated like plagiarism. It is strictly forbidden and will result in a failing grade for the course.

Use of electronic or internet devices, including laptops and cellphones, is not allowed during class. Each infraction will automatically result in a 10-point reduction in the final course grade.

All course readings and videos are posted on the bcourses site.

PART I: POLITICAL REGIMES

Week 1 (Jan 21 & 23): Introduction to Comparative Politics; and Democracy

W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto," *Jewish Life*, May 1952, pp. 14-15.

Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is...and Is Not," *Journal of Democracy* 2, 3 (Summer 1991), pp. 75-88.

Larry Diamond, "The March and Retreat of Democracy," ch. 3 in *Ill Winds: Saving Democracy from Russian Rage, Chinese Ambition, and American Complacency* (New York: Penguin, 2019), pp. 41-58.

Darcie Draudt-Véjares, "How South Korean Democracy Saved Itself," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 11, 2024.

Bernd Reiter, "In a World Where Political Polarization and Disengagement Are Denting Democracy, Does Botswana's 'Kgotla' System Hold the Key?," *The Conversation*, November 25, 2024.

Jennifer Rubin, "Get Real and Read Some History. The Past Was Worse," *Washington Post*, December 31, 2023.

1. *Du Bois describes the intellectual journey he took as he conducted field research in Europe. How did his sojourns affect the way he thought about ethnicity and politics? Have you also traveled abroad or lived in different countries and, if so, how did your experience affect the way you view a particular aspect of social or political life?*
2. *What do Schmitter and Karl say the essential features of democracy are, and what are some things that some people might associate with democracy that the authors say are not necessarily features of democracy per se? What does Diamond see as democracy's essential features, and how does he describe the state of democracy in the world?*
3. *How, according to Draudt-Véjares, did South Korean democracy save itself in the aftermath of an attempt by the president to declare martial law in December 2024?*
4. *What is Botswana's "kgotla" system, and how might it help explain the persistence of democracy in Botswana?*
5. *What does Rubin have to say about the prevailing pessimism? How might romanticizing the past empower democracy's antagonists now, and how can democracy's defenders use what Rubin offers to turn the tide against them?*

Week 2 (Jan 28 & 30): Authoritarianism

Sergei Guriev and Daniel Treisman, “Fear and Spin,” “Discipline, but Don’t Punish,” and “Democracy for Dictators,” chs. 1, 2, and 5 in *Spin Dictators: The Changing Face of 21st-Century Tyranny* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2022), pp. 3-61, 114-135.

Carl Minzner, “China’s Age of Counterreform,” *Journal of Democracy* 35, 4 (October 2024), pp. 5-19.

“Vladimir Putin Is in Thrall to a Distinctive Brand of Russian Fascism,” *The Economist*, July 28, 2022.

Javier Corrales, “Why Maduro Hasn’t Fallen,” *Journal of Democracy* 31, 3 (July 2020), pp. 39-53.

Paolo Bautista de Alemán, “Maduro Can Only Rule through Fear and Terror,” *Journal of Democracy online*, August 2024.

Sarah Newey, “Iron Body Presses and Torture Ropes: Horrors of Syria’s ‘Slaughterhouse’ Prison Emerge,” *The Telegraph*, December 9, 2024.

Anne Applebaum “The Syrian Regime Collapsed Gradually—and Then Suddenly,” *The Atlantic*, December 8, 2024.

WATCH: Adolf Hitler, Speech at the Close of the 6th Nazi Party Congress, Nuremberg, September 8, 1934.

1. *What are the essential differences Guriev and Treisman locate between the older style dictatorships that rely primarily on fear and repression and the more modern types that rely on the manipulation of information?*
2. *How does Minzner characterize the main features of Xi’s regime in China, and how does The Economist article characterize the nature of Putin’s regime in Russia? What do you see as the main similarities and differences between their brands of authoritarianism?*
3. *How does Corrales answer the question he poses in the title of his article?*
4. *Of authoritarian regimes such as Assad’s in Syria, Putin’s in Russia, and Maduro’s in Venezuela, Applebaum states that “cold, deliberate, well-planned cruelty has a logic to it: Brutality is meant to inspire hopelessness. Ludicrous lies and cynical propaganda campaigns are meant to create apathy and nihilism.” How do brutality, ludicrous lies, and cynical propaganda have such effects? How do you think these dynamics work?*
5. *Hitler delivered his speech to the 6th Nazi Party Congress just over a year after he had terminated democracy in Germany. It is, in a sense, a perfect statement of everything democracy is not: “final answers” to everything; denigration of pluralism and political debate; glorification of a monopoly on power by a single force; glorification of the leader; and emphasis on race as a criterion for national membership. Analyze the contents of the speech and consider why it may have been appealing to many Germans at the time. Consider also the rhetorical devices and theatrics Hitler employs to induce frenzy in his listeners. What do you think enabled him to convince so many to follow him into darkness?*

Week 3 (Feb 4 & Feb 6): Democracy under Siege—and Democrats Fight Back

Larry Diamond, “How to End the Democratic Recession,” *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2024.

Azul A. Aguiar Aguilar, Rodrigo Castro Cornejo, and Alejandro Monsiváis-Carrillo, “Is Mexico at the Gates of Authoritarianism?,” *Journal of Democracy* 36, 1 (January 2025), pp. 50-64.

Andrew Higgins, “A Lesson from Poland: Reversing Populist Policies Is Tough,” *New York Times*, November 23, 2024.

Jack Nicas, “Is Elon Musk’s Brazilian Nemesis Saving Democracy or Hurting It?,” *New York Times*, October 16, 2024.

Peter Stone, “‘Incredibly Harmful’: Why Trump’s FBI and DoJ Picks Scare Civil Liberties Experts,” *The Guardian*, December 10, 2024.

Kim Lane Scheppelle and Norman Eisen, “Are We Sleepwalking into Autocracy?,” *New York Times*, January 15, 2025.

Maya Tudor, “Why India’s Democracy Is Dying,” *Journal of Democracy* 34, 3 (July 2023), pp. 121-132.

Sheikh Saaliq and Krutika Pathi, “India’s Opposition, Written off as Too Weak, Makes a Stunning Comeback to Slow Modi’s Juggernaut,” *Associated Press*, June 5, 2024.

Anne Applebaum, “The ‘Anthropological Change’ Happening in Venezuela,” *The Atlantic*, December 22, 2024.

WATCH: Maria Ressa, Lecture upon Receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize, December 10, 2021.

1. How, according to Diamond, have authoritarian populists managed to gain power? How specifically can democracy’s defenders put down the authoritarian populist challenge?
2. According to Aguiar Aguilar, Castro Cornejo, and Monsiváis-Carrillo, what steps did AMLO take to undermine Mexico’s democracy? Then consider how AMLO and his supporters would respond to the authors’ analysis and criticisms. How might they argue that AMLO’s actions actually promoted democratization? What is your perspective on this debate?
3. How, according to Higgins, did the Law and Justice party undermine Polish democracy during its time in power during 2015-2023? How is the new government led by Donald Tusk attempting to restore democratic institutions, and how are the Law and Justice Party and its allies fighting back? What general lessons can we take from the Polish case on restoring democratic institutions after a long spell of rule by illiberal rulers?
4. Brazil’s Supreme Court, which is largely controlled by progressives, is working to restore democratic protections after democracy came under attack under the presidency of the right-wing Jair Bolsonaro, who was in office 2019-2023. Yet some argue that some of the Supreme Court’s efforts may themselves threaten democracy. How is the Supreme Court acting to protect democracy, and how might it be going too far?
5. How do Trump’s picks as Attorney General and director of the FBI resemble officials who figure prominently in authoritarian regimes?

6. *What parallels do Scheppelle and Eisen find between Orbán's and Trump's methods? How, according to the authors, how should democracy's proponents fight back?*
7. *Tudor holds that Indian democracy is dying. What has the Modi government done to undermine democracy in India?*
8. *Saaliq and Pathi recount the remarkable performance of parties that oppose Modi in India's 2024 elections. How did Modi's opponents stage a comeback? How, if at all, do you think the election's result might slow or halt what some regard as Modi's push toward autocracy?*
9. *According to Applebaum, Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado is optimistic about the prospects for fundamental change in her country, despite the Maduro regime's brutality and refusal to cede power after losing elections. What is the basis of Machado's striking optimism?*
10. *What is the main message you take away from Ressa's Nobel speech on threats to democracy around the world?*

Week 4 (Feb 11 & 13): Does Political Regime Matter?

Peter Dizikes, “Study: Democracy Fosters Economic Growth,” *MIT News*, March 7, 2019.

Evan Lieberman and Rorisang Lekalake, “South Africa’s Resilient Democracy,” *Journal of Democracy* 33, 2 (April 2022), pp. 103-117.

Benji Jones, “What Lula’s Stunning Victory Means for the Imperiled Amazon Rainforest,” *Vox*, October 31, 2022.

Ashifa Kassam, “Nightmare Is Over?: Polish Election Result Brings Relief for LGBTQ+ People,” *The Guardian*, November 1, 2023.

Melissa Chan, “China Isn’t Just ‘Authoritarian’ Anymore. It’s Scariest,” *Washington Post*, January 31, 2022.

Vivian Yee, “Tunisia’s Autocratic Leader Is Poised to Steamroll to Election Victory,” *New York Times*, October 6, 2024.

Isayen Herrera and Frances Robles, “Ferraris and Hungry Children: Venezuela’s Socialist Vision in Shambles,” *New York Times*, March 21, 2023.

Jean Mackenzie, “North Korea: Residents Tell BBC of Neighbours Starving to Death,” *BBC*, June 14, 2023.

1. *What is the logic underlying the finding that economic performance is generally better in democracies than in nondemocracies?*
2. *According to Lieberman and Lekalake, what is the state of democracy in South Africa, and how has democracy affected the lives of South African citizens?*
3. *How did Lula’s defeat of Bolsonaro change the environmental situation in Brazil?*
4. *How has the victory of prodemocratic parties over the Law and Justice party changed the environment for LGBTQ+ people in Poland? How has the Xi regime changed the sociopolitical environment in China?*
5. *According to Chan, how has China’s regime changed under Xi, and what are the consequences for Chinese citizens?*
6. *As Yee recounts, many Tunisians rejoiced when their president, Kais Saïed, suspended the constitution and ended the country’s decade-long democratic experiment in 2021. But times have changed. What have been the consequences for Tunisians of Saïed’s seizure of power?*
7. *Why do you think Venezuela has descended into the state Herrera and Robles describe?*
8. *What is the link between North Korea’s political regime and the famine that afflicts the country?*

PART II: UNDERSTANDING AND EXPLAINING DEMOCRACY'S CRISIS

Week 5 (Feb 18 & 20): The Economy

Sheri Berman, "The Causes of Populism in the West," *Annual Review of Political Science* 24 (May 2021), pp. 71-77.

Helen V. Milner, "Voting for Populism in Europe: Globalization, Technological Change, and the Extreme Right," *Comparative Political Studies* 54, 13 (2021), pp. 2286-2320 (focus on pp. 2286-2396, 2312-2314).

Jonathan Rothwell, "Does Loss of Manufacturing Jobs Lead to Lower Life Ratings?," *Gallup News*, September 5, 2017.

Daniel Oesch and Nathalie Vigna, "A Decline in the Social Status of the Working Class? Conflicting Evidence for Eight Western Countries, 1987-2017," *Comparative Political Studies* 55, 7 (2022), pp. 1130-1157.

1. According to Berman, how might economic conditions help explain the rise of antidemocratic parties and politicians? What does the empirical evidence that she reviews tell us about economic arguments for democracy's dilemma?
2. Milner examines the way certain aspects of globalization might encourage some people in Europe to vote for illiberal parties. What does she find, and what is the logic of the argument linking economic change to rising vote totals for illiberal parties?
3. What does Rothwell find in his examination of the possible effects of the decline of manufacturing on life satisfaction? How do his findings differ from Milner's? What implications do they hold for understanding Trump's rise?
4. Oesch and Vigna's findings upend much of what many scholars and commentators assume has been driving working class voters' turn toward illiberal parties. How do the authors' findings challenge the standard accounts?

Week 6 (Feb 25 & 27): Political Culture

Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, "Trump and the Populist Authoritarian Parties: The Silent Revolution in Reverse," *Perspectives on Politics* 15, 2 (June 2017), pp. 443-454.

Christian Welzel, "Why the Future is Democratic," *Journal of Democracy* 32, 2 (April 2021), pp. 132-144.

Thursday, Feb 27: First preliminary exam (covers material weeks 1-6)

1. *How do Inglehart and Norris explain the rise of Trump and illiberal populists in general? What is the causal argument they make that runs from economic conditions to cultural attitudes to voting behavior?*
2. *On what theoretical and empirical basis is Welzel's optimism founded? How does his argument square with Inglehart and Norris's account?*

Week 7 (March 4 & 6): Transnational Forces

Larry Diamond, "All Democracy Is Global," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2022.

Sergei Guriev and Daniel Treisman, "Global Pillage," ch. 6 in *Spin Dictators: The Changing Face of 21st-Century Tyranny* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2022), pp. 136-165.

Kathleen Hall Jamieson, "Could Russian Trolls Have Helped Elect Donald Trump?," *Washington Post*, November 10, 2017.

Dana Milbank, "Mitch McConnell Is a Russian Asset," *New York Times*, July 26, 2019.

Natalia Viana, "The Big Lie is Going Global. We Saw It in Brazil," *New York Times*, November 14, 2022.

Michael Beckley and Hal Brands, "China's Threat to Global Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 34, 1 (January 2023), pp. 65-79.

Timothy Snyder, "Ukraine Holds the Future: The War between Democracy and Nihilism," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2022.

WATCH: Anne Applebaum, "Autocracy, Inc.: How the World's Authoritarians Work Together," 19th Annual Seymour Martin Lipset Lecture, January 17, 2023.

1. *Diamond acknowledges that democracy promotion has fallen on hard times as democracy has endured setbacks in some of the countries that have traditionally worked to advance it abroad. Yet he argues that democracy promotion remains a worthy end. How, according to him, should the United States and other democracies engage in democracy promotion today, and why does he still see the endeavor as potentially fruitful?*
2. *According to Guriev and Treisman, how do contemporary "spin dictators" promote authoritarianism abroad, and how do their techniques differ from what the old "fear dictators" used?*
3. *According to Jamieson, Russia's intervention in 2016 might have tipped the election to Trump. How did that intervention work and what made it effective?*
4. *In 2019, Milbank called then-Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell a "Russian asset." What led Milbank to level that accusation? What does McConnell's behavior tell us about how foreign dictators rely on leaders in democracies to pursue their campaigns against democracies abroad?*
5. *Viana shows how Bolsonaro and his supporters imitated Trump and his supporters to a T. What does the Brazilian case reveal about the power of events in the United States to shape the domestic political environment in other countries?*
6. *According to Beckley and Brands, how does the Chinese government work to undermine democracy around the world? How can democracies fight back?*
7. *According to Snyder, why does the outcome of the war in Ukraine exert so much influence on the future of the world?*
8. *Applebaum provides a portrait of what might be called a new Authoritarian International. How do authoritarian governments work together and to what end? Why do dictators feel compelled to undermine democracy in other countries to begin with?*

Week 8 (Mar 11 & 13): Psychology, Perception, and Misperception

David French, “Welcome to Our New ‘Bespoke Realities,’” *New York Times*, November 30, 2023.

John T. Jost and Orsolya Hunyady, “Mass Psychology in the Age of Trump,” *Democracy* 48 (Spring 2018).

Dan McAdams, “The Appeal of the Primal Leader: Human Evolution and Donald J. Trump,” *Evolutionary Studies in Imaginative Culture* 1, 2 (Fall 2017), pp. 1-13.

Danny Hayes and Jennifer L. Lawless, “There’s Much Less Gender Bias in Politics Than You Think. Here’s Why,” *Washington Post*, May 24, 2016.

Jason DeParle, “Expanded Safety Net Drives Sharp Drop in Child Poverty,” *New York Times*, September 11, 2022.

David Leonhardt, “Poverty, Plunging,” *New York Times*, September 14, 2022.

Drew Westen, “How to Win an Election,” *Psychology Today*, April 29, 2020.

Cory J. Clark, Brittany S. Liu, Bo M. Winegard, and Peter H. Ditto, “Tribalism is Human Nature,” *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 28, 6 (2019), pp. 587-592.

1. *What, according to French, are “bespoke realities,” and how are they created? How can they generate what French calls “a false consensus across partisan lines” on the performance of the economy? Why might people who are more politically engaged be even more vulnerable to living in “bespoke realities”?*
2. *Jost and Hunyady identify features of liberals’ cognitive dispositions that potentially impair their ability to fight back against the antidemocratic onslaught in America. What are those traits and how do they hold liberals back? How could democracy’s defenders alter their dispositions to take on democracy’s foes more effectively?*
3. *McAdams holds that “No U.S. president in recent memory, and perhaps none ever, has tapped so effectively into the primal psychology of dominance.” Why do you think liberals often cede “high-dominance” style and rhetoric to Trump? Do you see this phenomenon among liberals in other countries you’ve studied or read about as well?*
4. *If you found Hayes and Lawless’s findings surprising, why do you think you did? How, according to the authors, can common notions about women candidates’ disadvantages affect the representation of women in political office?*
5. *How is it that Parle and Leonhardt, long-time correspondents for the New York Times who work on economic matters, could be so shocked by data showing a steep decline in poverty in the United States?*
6. *On the basis of copious evidence from psychology and neuroscience, Westen argues that emotions rather than rational calculation drive voting behavior and that the language used in messaging is far more important than issue positioning. Why do so many politicians continue to ignore these findings in their messaging, and what are the consequences for their prospects in elections?*
7. *Clark and coauthors find that liberals are as likely as conservatives to exhibit political bias, including in the ways they receive, believe, and use information. Why would the fact that “an important moral value of the political left is opposition to inequality” lead the left to ignore some scientific findings regarding “traditionally conceived disadvantaged groups”? How might such bias manifest in the way information is generated and reported by liberal scholars and journalists?*

Week 9 (Mar 18 & 20): Leadership

Jessica Pisano, "How Zelensky Has Changed Ukraine," *Journal of Democracy* 33, 3 (July 2022), pp. 5-13.

Jeremy Cliffe, "Europe's Iron Lady: Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas," *New Statesman*, May 2022.

Igor Carvalho, "In His First Speech as President, Lula Criticizes Previous Government and Declares: 'Democracy Forever'," *Peoples Dispatch*, January 1, 2023.

M. Steven Fish, "Trump Knows Dominance Wins. Someone Tell Democrats," *New York Times*, May 6, 2024.

M. Steven Fish, "Profiles in Low-Dominance Leadership," "Bridling the Boss," "Why Liberals Need Not Shun Dominance," and "Jasmine Crockett: Republicans in the Shitter," chs. 12, 13, 15, and 27 in *Comeback: Routing Trumpism, Reclaiming the Nation, and Restoring Democracy's Edge* (Irvington, NY: Rivertowns Books, 2024), pp. 119-145, 149-159, 300-308.

Kristian Vrede Skaaning Frederiksen, "Young People Punish Undemocratic Behavior Less Than Older People," *British Journal of Political Science*, December 15, 2023, pp. 1-9.

WATCH: Volodymyr Zelensky, "Address to the Parliament of the United Kingdom," February 8, 2022.

1. *According to Pisano, Volodymyr Zelensky, a former entertainer, took the theater out of Ukrainian politics. How did he do it? How does his approach to voters differ from that of his predecessors?*
2. *Examine Zelensky's speech to the British parliament. He is trying to rouse not only British moral support for his war effort, but also to convince British lawmakers to supply Ukraine with the jets it needs to stop Russia's attacks. How does he do it? Pay attention to his bearing, his voice, his attire, the stories he tells, and his rhetorical style.*
3. *Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas has become a go-to stateswoman for leaders and journalists who seek incisive analysis of the threat that Putin poses to democracy and security in Europe. How would you compare her approach to that of some other world leaders?*
4. *American and Brazilian democracy face threats that bear a close resemblance. Bolsonaro and his followers explicitly model themselves on Trump and his followers, including in their efforts to discredit elections they lose and cling to office using force and fraud. But Biden and Lula deal with their opponents differently. How would you compare their leadership styles in dealing with their illiberal opponents?*
5. *What are "high-dominance" and "low-dominance" styles of leadership? What are the consequences of these leadership styles for leaders' abilities to communicate and govern effectively and to win elections?*
6. *Frederiksen finds that younger people seem to value democracy less than older people do. Why might this be the case?*

PART III: NATIONALISM, IDENTITY, AND BELONGING

Week 10 (Ap 1 & 3): National and Ethnic Identity

Jen Kirby, “‘Dying by Blood or Hunger’: The War in Ethiopia’s Tigray Region, Explained,” *Vox*, April 24, 2021.

Francis Fukuyama, “Why National Identity Matters,” *Journal of Democracy* 29, 4 (October 2018), pp. 5-15.

Jonathan Haidt, “The Ethics of Globalism, Nationalism, and Patriotism,” *Minding Nature* 9, 3 (Fall 2016).

Gregory A. Petrow, John Transue, and Manuel Gutierrez, “How Do You Persuade Trump Supporters to Oppose the ‘Big Lie?’,” *Washington Post*, June 14, 2022.

Amanda Lea Robinson, “Nationalism and Ethnic-Based Trust: Evidence from an African Border Region,” *Comparative Political Studies* 49, 14 (2016), pp. 1819-1854 (focus on pp. 1819-1833, 1841-1844).

George Packer, “How America Fractured into Four Parts,” *The Atlantic*, July-August 2021.

1. *According to Kirby, why did Ethiopia descend into civil war?*
2. *According to Fukuyama, why and how does national identity continue to matter? How does it potentially affect governance, economic development, trust, strong safety nets, and democracy?*
3. *Where do you fall on Haidt’s LVD test? Is your own mentality closer to that of a nationalist or a globalist? How do you think your outlook shapes the way you think of people on the other side?*
4. *What does the research of Petrow, Transue, and Gutierrez suggest about how the defenders of democracy can reduce support for those who threaten democracy?*
5. *Robinson finds that nationalism can promote political trust in multiethnic societies. What evidence does she adduce? How does exposure to national symbols reduce intergroup distrust?*
6. *What are the essential features of each of the “four Americas” that Packer locates? Where would you place yourself among these groups?*

Week 11 (Ap 8 & 10): Nationalism, Ethnonationalism, and Belonging

M. Steven Fish, “The Power of Liberal Nationalism,” *Journal of Democracy* 35, 4 (October 2024), pp. 20-34.

Shashi Tharoor, *The Battle of Belonging: On Nationalism, Patriotism, and What It Means to Be Indian* (New Delhi: Aleph, 2020), prologue and chs. 1-2, 4, 8-9, 12-13, 16-17, 19, 23, 30-31, 37.

Perna Singh, “In India, Protestors Are Singing the National Anthem and Waving the Flag. Here’s Why That Matters,” *Washington Post*, January 20, 2020.

Flavia Kleiner, “Switzerland Has Been a Lab for Toxic Rightwing Politics. We Took That on,” *The Guardian*, November 15, 2018.

1. *How do liberal and illiberal nationalism differ? How do democracy’s illiberal opponents mobilize nationalism to garner popular support, and how can democracy’s defenders use their own brand of nationalism to fight back?*
2. *How does Tharoor describe the difference between the kind of ethnonationalism Modi purveys and the type of inclusive nationalism that Tharoor himself advocates?*
3. *During most of India’s postcolonial history, liberals like Jawaharlal Nehru successfully linked the defense of democracy to Indianness and Indian national greatness. Tharoor suggests that Indian liberals somehow lost control of the national narrative to Hindu nationalists, paving the way for the rise of Modi and the BJP. How and why do you think Indian liberals, including those from the INC, of which Tharoor is a leading member, lose control of the narrative? How does Tharoor think they can get it back? Do you see lessons in the Indian story for the United States or other countries today?*
4. *Singh lauds Indian Muslims who have stood up for their rights by carrying the national flag and singing the national anthem during demonstrations. Why, in her estimation, is such a strategy a wise one?*
5. *Kleiner and her group adopted a distinctive approach to fighting the rise of ethnonationalism in Switzerland—and won. How did they do it?*

Week 12 (Ap 15 & 17): Narratives of the Nation

Shaun Walker, “Opposition Leader Donald Tusk Cheered by Crowds at Warsaw Election Rally,” *The Guardian*, October 1, 2023.

M. Steven Fish, “Claiming the Flag for Freedom’s Sake: Toward a National-Democratic Narrative,” “Frederick Douglass: The Greatness and Grandeur of the Future of the Republic,” and “Lyndon Johnson and Ronald Reagan: Opening America’s Golden Door,” chs. 22, 24 and 26 in *Comeback: Routing Trumpism, Reclaiming the Nation, and Restoring Democracy’s Edge* (Irvington, NY: Rivertowns Books, 2024), pp. 240-260, 272-282, 291-299.

WATCH: Barack Obama, speech in Tiergarten, Berlin, July 24, 2008.

Thursday, April 17: Second preliminary exam (covers material weeks 7-12)

1. *For much of his political career, Polish leader Donald Tusk was resistant to nationalism, which he tended to associate with ethnonationalism and hostility to the EU. In his 2023 campaign, however, as Walker notes, Tusk focused on seizing the flag from the ethnonational demagogues who had run the government for the previous 8 years. He and his liberal coalition subsequently won big in the country’s parliamentary election, thereby terminating the threat to democracy that the previous government had posed. What do you think led Tusk to shift course?*
2. *Frederick Douglass spelled out a vision of an America made greater by new arrivals from East Asia—a notion that very few Americans in his day shared. How would you assess the rhetoric Douglass employs to make his argument? How does he tap nationalism to make his case? What do you think Americans who seek to fight nativism and ethnonationalism today can learn from Douglass’s approach?*
3. *For several decades prior to the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, immigration to the United States was limited largely to people from Western Europe. President Lyndon Johnson and some other American leaders regarded the policy as a betrayal of the American story and a grave impediment to national progress. In his speech upon signing the bill that reopened the United States to immigration from all over the world, how does Johnson justify his action? What is the story about the nation that Johnson tells?*
4. *Compare the role of immigrants in Trump’s and Reagan’s national stories. How do they differ? Can you identify ways that current-day leaders could borrow Reagan’s rhetoric to defeat nativism today?*
5. *Barack Obama traveled to Berlin during his 2008 presidential campaign and 200,000 people showed up to see him. In his speech, he tells his own story and ties it to the American story, while also harkening to Germans’ and Americans’ common struggle against authoritarianism in early postwar Europe. Throughout, he extols democracy and lays out a new vision for a freer, less divided world. How did he do it? How did watching this speech make you feel?*

PART IV: POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Week 13 (Ap 22 & 24): Rhetoric and Messaging

Sergei Guriev and Daniel Treisman, “Postmodern Propaganda,” and “Sensible Censorship,” chs. 3-4 in *Spin Dictators: The Changing Face of 21st-Century Tyranny* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2022), pp. 62-113.

Robb Willer and Matthew Feinberg, “The Key to Political Persuasion,” *New York Times*, November 13, 2015.

Rebecca Beitsch, “Trump Winning Farm Vote Despite Pinch of Trade Policies, Pandemic,” *The Hill*, November 1, 2020.

Martin Luther King, “Speech on the Civil Rights Movement in the United States and the Anti-apartheid Movement in South Africa,” December 7, 1964, London.

Ramadan Al Sherbini, “50 Years Since His Death, Nasser’s Charisma Still Beckons,” *Gulf News*, September 28, 2020.

M. Steven Fish, “Franklin Roosevelt: The Forces of Selfishness and Lust for Power Have Met Their Match,” ch. 28 in *Comeback: Routing Trumpism, Reclaiming the Nation, and Restoring Democracy’s Edge* (Irvington, NY: Rivertowns Books, 2024), pp. 309-318.

LISTEN: Nelson Mandela, excerpt from speech upon sentencing to 27 years in prison, April 20, 1964.

WATCH: “Interview with President Gamal Abdel Nasser,” July 17, 1957.

WATCH: Barack Obama, excerpts from keynote speech to the Democratic National Convention, July 27, 2004.

1. According to Guriev and Treisman, how have Lee Kuan Yew, Nursultan Nazarbayev, and other modern dictators shaped political discourse, and how did their methods differ from those of dictators such as Hitler, Saddam Hussein, and Ferdinand Marcos?
2. Willer and Feinberg say that in order to be persuasive with people who don’t share your political opinions, “you have to get into the heads of the people you’d like to persuade, think about what they care about and make arguments that embrace their principles.” How can you imagine doing that yourself in your discussions with people whose views differ a great deal from your own? If you lean left and are speaking with a conservative, imagine how you would make the case for more liberal policies on economic policy, gun control, abortion, or any other major political issue; if you lean right, imagine how you would make the case for more conservative policies on these same matters or any other political issue.
3. After reading Beitsch’s article, why do you think almost three quarters of rural and small-town voters continue to line up with Trump?
4. The rhythm of MLK’s address is built around a distinctive cycle found in many of his speeches: Past injustice—past triumph over injustice—current injustice—call to action—vision of redemption. His rhetoric tells a stirring national story and concludes with a call to the advocates of democracy and equality to “adjourn

the counsels of despair and bring new light into the dark chambers of pessimism.” How does King’s manner of speaking differ from what you hear from American liberals today, and what do you think today’s prodemocratic leaders in America and/or other countries can learn from King’s rhetoric?

5. *During his time as the leader of Egypt (1952-1970), Gamal Abdel Nasser captivated the Arab world and became a leading global voice for countries emerging from colonial domination. What was it about his style of communication that helped enable him to achieve such towering status?*
6. *How did Franklin Roosevelt’s rhetoric differ from what you hear from Democratic Party leaders in the United States today? How do you think Trump would fare if he faced an opponent who spoke like Roosevelt rather than like Democratic Party leaders do today?*
7. *Upon his sentencing to 27 years in prison for his leadership of the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, Nelson Mandela delivered a three-hour speech that moved millions around the world and that continues to inspire today. What strikes you as distinctive about his message and manner of speaking?*
8. *Barack Obama introduced himself to the nation in his keynote speech to the Democratic National Convention nominating John Kerry for president on July 27, 2004. Kerry went down to defeat, but Obama subsequently emerged as a major political figure. Why do you think Obama’s speech had such a compelling effect?*

Week 14 (Ap 29 & May 1): Information, Disinformation, and the Fight to Secure the Truth

Maria Ressa, *How to Stand up to a Dictator: The Fight for Our Future* (New York: HarperCollins, 2022).
(entire)

1. *Ressa is one of democracy's most influential and articulate defenders today. How did her upbringing and personal experiences influence her views and shape her political commitments?*
2. *How does Ressa describe her struggle with Facebook? What does she teach us about the way the big social media platforms deal with threats to human rights and democracy?*
3. *How did Ressa confront Duterte and how did he try to silence her?*
4. *If you had to specify three things you learned about fighting authoritarianism and disinformation from reading Ressa's book, what would they be? Did you learn anything that might influence your own approach to making a difference in the political world?*