Tutorial on Markets, Choice, and Democracy

Instructor: Alexander Prescott-Couch
Office hours: Friday 12-2 in Emerson 102

Overview: Why should it matter that what happens to us depends on how we respond when presented with alternatives? This seminar uses this question as a frame for considering recent debates about markets and democracy. We will begin by considering the moral significance of choice and consent. Why is choice valuable? What roles does consent play in moral and political justification? We then consider how answers to these questions illuminate recent debate surrounding the limits of the market and grounds of democratic authority.

Requirements:
• One short paper (1250 words)
• One long paper (2500 words) due at the end of reading period
• Each student must post a question or comment on the discussion blog each week.

Grading:
• Short paper: 20%
• Long paper: 50%
• Attendance and participation: 30%
• Late papers will be penalized a half-letter grade per day. Extensions may be granted depending on the circumstances of the case

Readings: The readings will be available online. However, you must bring a hard copy to class.

Course Plan

Part 1: The Moral Significance of Choice and Consent

Week 1: Value of Choice
Reading: Scanlon, What We Owe to Each Other Chapter 6 (especially 248-256)

Week 2: Choice and Well-Being

Week 3: The Relevance of Consent for Permissibility
Week 4: Hypothetical Consent and Justice
   Reading: Rawls, *Theory of Justice* 3-24, 102-105, 118-123, 456-464
   Supplemental Reading: Dan Brudney “Hypothetical Consent and Moral Force”

Week 5: Hypothetical Choice

Week 6: Choice and Distributive Justice
   Supplemental reading: Anderson: “What is the Point of Equality?”

*Short paper due*

Part 2. Choice and Markets

Week 7: What Do Markets Do?

Week 8: Noxious Markets

Week 9: Markets and Choice Among Alternative Ways of Valuing
   Reading: Anderson, *Value in Ethics and Economics*, chapter 7 (“The Ethical Limitations of the Market”)

Week 10: Exploitation and Unfair Choice
   Reading: Wertheimer, *Exploitation*, Chapter 1, 2

3. Collective Choice and Democracy

Week 11: Value of Collective Choice
   Reading: Jon Elster, “The Market and the Forum”

Week 12: Democracy: Instrumentally Valuable?
   Reading: David Estlund, Democratic Authority (Selections TBA)

Week 13: Democracy Expresses Equality
   Reading: Christiano, “Democracy as Equality” in *Democracy* (ed. Estlund)