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## Law, Self, and Society

### Syllabus and Reading List

#### 1. Background I: Moral Theories

J. Murphy and J. Coleman, *Philosophy of Law* (excerpt)  
J. Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (excerpt)  
*People v. Minkowski*  
Robert Nozick, "The Experience Machine"  
T.E. Hill, Jr., *Dignity and Practical Reason in Kant's Moral Theory*, Chapter 2  
M. Dan-Cohen, "Defending Dignity"

#### 2. Background II: Conceptions of Self

D. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*: "Of Personal Identity"  
R. Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (excerpt)  
J.P. Sartre, "The Humanism of Existentialism"  
P. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (excerpt)  
D.C. Dennett, "The Origins of Selves"  
Marya Schechtman, *The Constitution of Selves* (excerpt)  
D. C. Dennett, "The Self as a Center of Narrative Gravity"  
A. Oksenberg Rorty and D. Wong, *Identity, Character and Morality*, Chapter 1  
Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (excerpts)

#### 3. Responsibility and Boundaries of Self

John Hospers, "What Means This Freedom?"  
P.F. Strawson, "Freedom and Resentment"  
M. Dan-Cohen, "Responsibility and the Boundaries of the Self"  
Harry Frankfurt, "Taking Ourselves Seriously"  
M. Dan-Cohen, "Socializing Harry"  
*Regina v. Charlson*  
*State v. Snowden*

(turn over)

**4. The Physical Dimension**

M. Dan-Cohen, "The Value of Ownership"

*Breithaupt v. Abram*

*Lovett v. West Virginia Central Gas Company*

*Moore v. Regents of the University of California*

M.J. Radin, "Commodification as a Worldview"

M.J. Radin, "Prostitution and Baby-Selling: Contested Commodification and Women's Capacities"

M.J. Radin, "Commodification, Objectification, and Subordination"

**5. The Social Dimension**

E. Goffman, "Role Distance"

J.P. Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (excerpt)

M. Dan-Cohen, "Between Selves and Collectivities"

M. Dan-Cohen, "Harmful Thoughts"

**6. The temporal dimension**

David Benatar, "The Wrong of Wrongful Life"

Bonnie Steinbock, "The Logical Case for 'Wrongful Life'"

Ernest Partridge, "Posthumous Interests and Posthumous Respect"

M. Dan-Cohen, "Revising the Past: On the Metaphysics of Repentance, Forgiveness, and Pardon."

**Requirements and grading**

Grading will be based on class participation in lecture and in section (30%), a midterm in-class exam (30%), and a take-home final. As part of class participation students will be occasionally asked to submit short written reports on the reading material and to make oral presentations in section.