



The Moral Foundations of Politics (The Open Yale Courses Series)

Ian Shapiro

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When do governments merit our allegiance, and when should they be denied it? Ian Shapiro explores this most enduring of political dilemmas in this innovative and engaging book. Building on his highly popular Yale courses, Professor Shapiro evaluates the main contending accounts of the sources of political legitimacy. Starting with theorists of the Enlightenment, he examines the arguments put forward by utilitarians, Marxists, and theorists of the social contract. Next he turns to the anti-Enlightenment tradition that stretches from Edmund Burke to contemporary post-modernists. In the last part of the book Shapiro examines partisans and critics of democracy from Plato's time until our own. He concludes with an assessment of democracy's strengths and limitations as the font of political legitimacy. The book offers a lucid and accessible introduction to urgent ongoing conversations about the sources of political allegiance.

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