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By Steven B. Smith

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Who ought to govern? Why should I obey the law? How should conflict be controlled? What is the proper education for a citizen and a statesman? These questions probe some of the deepest and most enduring problems that every society confronts, regardless of time and place. Today we ask the same crucial questions about law, authority, justice, and freedom that Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Tocqueville faced in previous centuries.

In this lively and enlightening book, Professor Steven B. Smith introduces the wide terrain of political philosophy through the classic texts of the discipline. Works by the greatest thinkers illuminate the permanent problems of political life, Smith shows, and while we may not accept all their conclusions, it would be a mistake to overlook the relevance of their insights.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Steven B. Smith is Alfred Cowles Professor of Political Science, Yale University. His previous books include the prize-winning *Spinoza, Liberalism, and the Question of Jewish Identity* and *Spinoza's Book of Life*, both published by Yale University Press. He lives in New Haven, CT.

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