THE CAMBRIDGE RAWLS LEXICON

John Rawls is widely regarded as one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century, and his work has permanently shaped the nature and terms of moral and political philosophy, deploying a robust and specialized vocabulary that reaches beyond philosophy to political science, economics, sociology, and law. This volume is a complete and accessible guide to Rawls's vocabulary, with over 200 alphabetical encyclopaedic entries written by the world's leading Rawls scholars. From *basic structure* to *burdened society*, from *Sidgwick* to *strains of commitment*, and from *Nash point* to *natural duties*, the volume covers the entirety of Rawls's central ideas and terminology, with illuminating detail and careful cross-referencing. It will be an essential resource for students and scholars of Rawls, as well as for other readers in political philosophy, ethics, political science, sociology, international relations, and law.

Jon Mandle is Professor of Philosophy at the University at Albany (SUNY). He is the author of *Rawls's* A Theory of Justice: *An Introduction* (2009) and co-editor of *A Companion to Rawls* (2014).

David A. Reidy is Professor of Philosophy at The University of Tennessee. He is the co-editor of *Rawls's Law of Peoples: A Realistic Utopia* (2006) and *A Companion to Rawls* (2014).

THE CAMBRIDGE RAWLS LEXICON

EDITED BY

Jon Mandle

SUNY Albany

AND

David A. Reidy

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521192941

First published 2015

Printed in the United Kingdom by Clays, St Ives plc

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data
The Cambridge Rawls lexicon / edited by Jon Mandle, SUNY Albany and David A. Reidy, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.
pages cm
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-521-19294-1 (hardback)
1. Rawls, John, 1921–2002 – Dictionaries. I. Mandle, Jon, 1966– editor. II. Reidy, David A., 1962– editor.
B945.R283Z863 2014
320.01 – dc23 2014020026

ISBN 978-0-521-19294-1 Hardback

Contents

C

D

E

F

J

K

L

S

Abbreviations for Rawls's texts

When referring to Rawls's works, we have used the following abbreviations in this volume:

BIMSF	*A Brief Inquiry into the Meaning of Sin and Faith*, ed. Thomas Nagel (Harvard University Press, 2009)
CP	*Collected Papers*, ed. Samuel Freeman (Harvard University Press, 1999)
JF	*Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*, ed. Erin Kelly (Harvard University Press, 2001)
LHMP	*Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*, ed. Barbara Herman (Harvard University Press, 2000)
LHPP	*Lectures on the History of Political Philosophy*, ed. Samuel Freeman (Harvard University Press, 2007)
LP	*The Law of Peoples* (Harvard University Press, 1999)
PL	*Political Liberalism*, expanded edition (Columbia University Press 2005; original edition, 1993)
TJ	*A Theory of Justice*, revised edition (Harvard University Press, 1999; original edition, 1971)

Introduction

John (Jack) Bordley Rawls was born on February 21, 1921, in Baltimore, MD. His father, William Lee Rawls, was a self-taught lawyer who had managed a successful career and achieved some political influence. His mother, Anna Abell Stump Rawls, though primarily a homemaker, was politically active on her own as well. She was also an artist. Of the two parents, Rawls was closer to his mother.

Rawls had four brothers, one older and three younger. Two of his younger brothers died in childhood, both from infectious diseases that then claimed many more lives than today. In 1928, Rawls was ill with diphtheria. His closest younger brother and "great companion" Bobby contracted the disease from him and died. Only a year later, Rawls was ill with pneumonia after having his tonsils removed. His next youngest brother Tommy then came down with pneumonia and did not survive. Very shortly after, Rawls developed a stutter that would be with him to one degree or another for the rest of his life. The stutter forced him as a university professor meticulously to handwrite out and then read his lectures, a discipline that, especially when conjoined with constant and wide reading and an inability to resist the temptation to revise lectures in the light thereof, contributed to his immense and deep learning. All too cognizant of the risks of error when it comes to self-understanding, Rawls neither affirmed nor denied claims linking his stutter to a sense of guilt over his brothers' deaths, though he allowed that their deaths no doubt affected him profoundly.

Rawls did well in elementary and secondary school. He attended mostly private schools, attending public school only for a two-year period, middle school or junior high, while his father was President of the Baltimore School Board. He boarded at the Kent School in Connecticut for high school, where he found himself insufficiently challenged academically and without enough personal freedom. It was a High Episcopalian school. Rawls found uncongenial the severity of the school's headmaster, but the religious orientation suited him and he began to

contemplate a future in the Episcopalian priesthood. In 1939, he followed his older brother from Kent to Princeton. He tried and did reasonably well in a number of subjects, including chemistry, math, art, and music (leading to a run as the music critic for the *Daily Princetonian* student publication). But he did not excel and he eventually settled into philosophy. Among the philosophy teachers who made an impact on the young Rawls were Walter Stace and Norman Malcolm. Stace was a British empiricist with utilitarian leanings who, perhaps oddly, had written an early book on Hegel and who retained a lifelong interest in mysticism arising out of an early religious experience. Malcolm had studied under Wittgenstein and was instrumental in bringing Wittgenstein's thought to the US. Increasingly drawn toward philosophical-theological inquiry, and writing under Stace's direction, Rawls wrote his undergraduate senior thesis, titled "A Brief Inquiry into Sin and the Meaning of Faith: An Interpretation Based on the Concept of Community," on the idea of sin as the refusal of, and faith as an openness to, genuine community and so personality, the spiritual core of the universe. He graduated in philosophy *summa cum laude*.

He graduated early in January of 1943 so that he could enlist in the US Army and join the fight in World War II against what he judged great evils. He served from 1943 to 1946, experiencing fierce hand-to-hand combat as an infantryman and then infantry radioman in the Pacific theater – New Guinea, Leyte, and Luzon – and earning a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. As part of the occupation force of Japan, he passed through Hiroshima not long after the bomb, just one of several war experiences that challenged Rawls's belief in a personal theistic God to whom one might pray. He left the Army freed of his previous ambition for the seminary.

He entered the graduate program in philosophy at Princeton in 1946. Troubled by the rise of emotivist and other noncognitivist accounts of our moral capacities and nature, and by their implications for the rationality and so reasoned criticism of political deliberation, judgment, and authority, Rawls began to work toward a refutation of such views by counterexample. He would demonstrate the possibility of representing our moral judgments as the outcome of a rational procedure, a reasoning machine, with which we might freely identify and which we might even internalize as a regulative part of our self-understanding. By so doing, he would establish a rationalist, cognitivist alternative to emotivist and other noncognitivist accounts of our moral capacities and nature and would thereby undermine a tempting post-war invitation to cynicism about the ideal of democracy as reasoned self-rule. Such were his ambitions as a graduate student.

Notwithstanding his other interests, and a year (1947–1948) spent as a visiting graduate student at Cornell, where Malcolm and Max Black were then spreading Wittgenstein's teachings and influence, Rawls worked steadily, albeit in fits and starts, on his project. In 1949 he defended his dissertation, "A Study in the Grounds of Ethical Knowledge: Considered with Reference to Judgments on the Moral Worth of Character." He imagined the dissertation, written under Stace's direction, as the first installment of a three-part project, the other two taking up the grounds of ethical knowledge with respect to judgments regarding right actions and final ends. During this time, Rawls's substantive normative views were largely Millian in spirit and he thought of himself as a kind of, even if an unorthodox, utilitarian.

While a graduate student at Princeton Rawls met Margaret ("Mardy") Warfield Fox, a student at Pembroke College, Brown University. Like Rawls's mother, she was intelligent, interested in history and politics, and an artist. Jack had taken to painting and their shared passion for it was a source of both union and the occasional vigorous debate. They married in the summer of 1949. Their first child was born late autumn of 1950. By the summer of 1957, they would add three more, giving them two boys and two girls. Mardy and Jack remained married until his death. Always a full partner, Mardy played a significant role not only as a homemaker and financial manager during his active career years, but as a fulltime caregiver and editor and intellectual assistant in his later years of declining health.

Rawls spent 1949–1950 as a post-doctoral fellow and then 1950–1951 and 1951–1952 as an instructor at Princeton. He published a revised section of his dissertation under the title "Outline of a Decision Procedure for Ethics." And he began to read widely and to sit in on lectures as he was able. Economics, political and legal history, and the then emerging fields of decision and game theory drew special attention. In 1951 Rawls met the Oxford philosopher J. O. Urmson, who was visiting at Princeton. Urmson urged Rawls to apply for a Fulbright in order to spend a year at Oxford. Rawls applied, secured the Fulbright, and spent 1952–1953 as a member of the High Table at Christ Church College, Oxford. It was a pivotal year for Rawls, setting him on the path to what would become *A Theory of Justice*. The rich intellectual environment of Oxford and important relationships forged with Isaiah Berlin, H. L. A. Hart, Stuart Hampshire, Gilbert Ryle, and others served Rawls well. In brief, it was while at Oxford that Rawls became convinced of the need for a theory of institutional justice and began to worry that his own preferred version of a Millian utilitarianism was inadequate to the need.

The need for a theory of institutional or social or distributive justice arose from several sources. One was the insight, which Rawls credits to his reading of Rousseau and Marx, that culpable individual behavior cannot by itself explain, and so its elimination cannot ensure our overcoming, the great evils of the world. Another was the growing worry that his dissertation project, which aimed at a rationalist, cognitivist explanation of our moral capacities and nature, presupposed as data to be explained moral judgments that themselves stood in need of explanation. To serve the role he assigned them in his theory, certain moral judgments needed genuinely to express our moral capacities and nature rather than forces of indoctrination or manipulation. But this could only be asserted if the background conditions against which they arose were favorable to the free development and expression of our moral capacities and nature. To be sure, he held, a just constitutional liberal democracy would constitute favorable background conditions. But how might one publicly verify that any given polity was in fact a just constitutional liberal democracy? Without a theory of institutional justice, one suited to a democratic society and capable of underwriting an objective public judgment as to whether any given democratic society is in fact a just constitutional liberal democracy, one could never be sure that the moral judgments given a rationalist, cognitivist explanation were a free expression of our moral capacities and nature.

Rawls came to think his somewhat unorthodox Millian utilitarianism inadequate as a theory of institutional justice in several respects. These included an insufficiently secure public justification for the priority of liberty and, relatedly, the absence of any principled public constraint on what might count as a legitimate exercise of democratic citizenship, since with the right informational inputs the principle of utility might justify virtually any proposal or action as conducive to the common good and thus legitimate as an exercise of democratic citizenship.

Upon return to the US, Rawls took a position as an assistant professor of philosophy at Cornell. He began to work toward an adequate theory of institutional or social or distributive justice. After the publication of his influential paper "Two Concepts of Rules," a paper Rawls judged an essential first step toward shifting his focus to issues of institutional justice, Rawls was tenured and promoted at Cornell. Though "Two Concepts" was for Rawls an essential first step in his then just unfolding project, few readers recognized it as a promissory note on the project. But by 1958, Rawls's project was, in its first basic outline, available to all, in the form of his widely read paper "Justice as Fairness." Rawls would over the next twelve years complete the project, which would receive its

full expression in his masterpiece *A Theory of Justice*. He would study carefully Aristotle, Aquinas, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Mill, Sidgwick, the British Idealists, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century political economy, Wittgenstein, Dewey, Quine, and much else. It would all find its way, synthesized, imaginatively reworked, sometimes repurposed, into his masterpiece.

In the late 1950s, Jack met Burton Dreben, then at Harvard, and Dreben helped to arrange an invitation to Rawls to spend 1959–60 as a visiting faculty member at Harvard. Dreben and Rawls would become close life-long friends. Rather than return to Cornell in 1960 after his Harvard visit, Rawls accepted a position as professor of philosophy with the then fledgling philosophy department at MIT, where he hired, among others, Hilary Putnam, who would later join him at Harvard. After just two years at MIT, Rawls left for a permanent position at Harvard, beginning there in the fall of 1962 as professor of philosophy. For the next eight years he worked steadily on drafts of what was to be *A Theory of Justice*. He also devoted considerable time to opposing the 2-S student deferment of draft military service in Vietnam on the grounds that it worked to distribute unjustly liability to military service. And with colleagues Tom Nagel, Marshall Cohen, Ronald Dworkin, Frank Michaelman, Owen Fiss, Charles Fried, Michael Walzer, Robert Nozick, Tim Scanlon, and a few others, he met regularly for what would become a most influential and long-lasting reading group, from which in the early 1970s would be born also the influential journal *Philosophy and Public Affairs*. Rawls spent a sabbatical year at Stanford in 1969–70 where he completed the final draft of *A Theory of Justice*. Remarkably, the manuscript (typescript in those days) was almost lost to a fire and, waterlogged, had to be set out page by page to dry. Rawls then returned to Harvard with *TJ* just published and facing a four-year term as Chairperson of the Philosophy Department, during politically turbulent times at Harvard (like most college campuses) and for the nation, an administrative task that he did not much enjoy.

Rawls spent much of the 1970s explaining and defending *TJ*, which he often felt was not well understood, and receiving recognitions and awards. He had hoped to move on to work in moral psychology. But by the late 1970s, he came to think incorrect a key piece of *TJ*, the so-called "congruence argument" given in part III's account of how a society faithful to the principles of justice as fairness could reasonably be expected to be stable in the right way. The defect proved challenging to correct. The process of correcting it unfolded over a little more than a decade's worth of papers and led eventually to Rawls's second book, *Political Liberalism*, first published in 1993, two years after he retired to Emeritus status

at Harvard. Before readers had been able to fully absorb the lessons of *TJ*, Rawls had put in their laps another dense, rich, careful work of political philosophy. Inevitably, debates opened over its meaning, methods, motivation, and relationship to *TJ*.

Just as *Political Liberalism* was hitting the shelves, Rawls delivered in 1993 an Oxford Amnesty Lecture he titled "The Law of Peoples." In the lecture, he endeavored to extend his view, now to be understood as a political liberalism, to issues of international relations, or more specifically, to issues of foreign policy as confronted by a just, stable, and pluralist constitutional liberal democracy. The lecture, which was published, drew attention, mostly critical. The lecture surprised and disappointed even some of Rawls's closest students and most careful expositors and defenders, since he rejected a direct application of his principles of domestic justice, including the difference principle, to the question of global justice. And so the debates over *Political Liberalism* were forced to compete with, and were often folded into, the debates over Rawls's foray into foreign policy and international justice.

Rawls taught part-time in Emeritus status at Harvard until 1994. In 1995, just two days after a large conference celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of *A Theory of Justice* and attended by colleagues, students, admirers, critics, and the like, he suffered a stroke. He would suffer two more, amidst difficult and slowly declining health, before passing seven years later. However, Rawls had planned to publish not only a new introduction to *Political Liberalism*, but another treatment of the idea and ideal of public reason, so central to it and his project more generally. Both were underway at the time of his first stroke. And he had intended to work up his Oxford Amnesty Lecture into a short monograph treatment of international justice and foreign policy from the point of view of a democratic people committed to political liberalism. The stroke put all this in doubt. With the assistance of his wife Mardy, his close friend Burton, and others, he was able to get all this work done. His new introduction to *Political Liberalism* appeared in 1996. His essay "The Idea of Public Reason Revisited" appeared in 1997. And his short monograph *The Law of Peoples* appeared in 1999.

Students and colleagues had long urged Rawls to draw together and republish in one volume his many papers and to publish his course lectures, so carefully written out and developed over many years. Initially reluctant, he finally agreed. His *Collected Papers* appeared in 1999, edited by his past student Samuel Freeman. Under the editorial supervision of his past student Barbara Herman, his *Lectures*

on the History of Moral Philosophy were published in 2000. His, by then widely circulated in mimeograph form and well-known, lectures on justice as fairness from the survey course on political philosophy he regularly taught at Harvard, and updated on each iteration of the course, were published in 2001 under the editorial supervision of his past student Erin Kelly under the title *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*. Samuel Freeman had already begun work on Rawls's lectures in the history of political philosophy, but they would not appear in print before Rawls's passing. He passed away, his wife Mardy at his side, on November 24, 2002. Under Freeman's editorial supervision, his lectures on Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Rousseau, Mill, and Marx appeared as *Lectures on the History of Political Philosophy* in 2007. After Rawls's passing, his undergraduate thesis on sin, community, and the meaning of faith was discovered in both the Princeton and Harvard archives. After discussion, Mardy and his literary executor, Tim Scanlon, agreed to the publication of the thesis, not because Rawls would have wanted it published but because it was publicly available in university archives and likely to attract scholarly attention in any event. Better to supervise the publication and get the material properly introduced and contextualized. In 2009 the thesis was published as *A Brief Inquiry into the Meaning of Sin and Faith* and introduced by Joshua Cohen and Thomas Nagel, with Robert Adams providing a contextualizing essay in the intellectual history of philosophical theology. The volume included also Rawls's own brief late life statement of his religious orientation, a short essay titled "On My Religion."

Since Rawls's passing, nearly every major publisher has ventured one or more volumes offering a systematic reconstruction, a rethinking, or a new contextualization or fresh assessment of his work. With scholars now also actively working through his archived papers, more can be expected. All this is to the good, for it can hardly be doubted that much of this recent work has been insightful and productive and there remains much of value still to be drawn out of engaging his work.

We have prepared this *Lexicon* with the intention of contributing to the value of future engagements with Rawls's work, whether done by students or scholars. Rawls was an exceedingly careful philosopher and writer. He was very deliberate in his choice and very disciplined in his use of words. He took immense care with his own and others' ideas. In the course of so doing, he produced a terminologically and often technically rich and distinctive body of work. The terminology and technical aspects of Rawls's work can sometimes prove challenging, for both students and scholars. We have attempted in this volume to provide a reliable

resource for dealing with such challenges. We have not attempted to resolve genuine interpretive or substantive debates. We have attempted only to set out clearly how Rawls used various terms, including terms of art, and presented key ideas. Inevitably, of course, this may seem to some as weighing in on a substantive or interpretive debate. We can say only that with respect to debatable matters, we have tried to avoid taking positions and instead have indicated that the matter is debatable. But not everything is debatable. And it is part of the aim of this volume to enable students and scholars to better distinguish what is debatable from what is not and to bring the latter more fully to bear on the former.

Rawls saw his work as a single painting, one he worked on over the course of his life. All the elements, as diverse as they often were – methodological, substantively normative, metaphilosophical, historical, sociopsychological, institutional, and so on – were meant to fit together systematically into a unified view. The painting was the result of Rawls's efforts, both for himself and with the communities of which he was a part, toward self-understanding and self-constitution, activities inseparable from one another. The vision, both of what we are and what we might be, answers our needs for both reconciliation to and reasoned reform of our shared social world. To the extent that it finds a regulative place within the self-understandings and conception-dependent desires of successive generations, there need be no talk of late modernity as a period of disenchantment with the world.

Rawls rightly recognized that his principles of justice were not particularly novel or controversial. Indeed, only the so-called difference principle represented a substantial departure from what one might have characterized as the enlightened center of mid-twentieth-century democratic thought. What was novel in Rawls's work was his ability to draw everything together and to overcome all manner of false dichotomies and divisions within philosophy. He could find a way to draw together both Humean and Kantian insights, to honor fully the priority and autonomy of practical reason without making a metaphysical commitment out of so doing, to articulate a meaningful conception of the common good and civic friendship for late modern democracies awash in self-centered individualism and base materialism, and to make clear why Lincoln was right about our last best hope.

Rawls received many honors and awards over his life. He received two honorary professorships from Harvard. He received honorary degrees from Harvard, Princeton, and Oxford and was a member of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters. He received the Ralph Waldo Emerson award from Phi Beta Kappa, the Ames Prize from Harvard Law, and the Lippincott Award from the American

Political Science Association. In 1999 he was awarded the National Humanities Medal by President Clinton and the Rolf Schock Prize by the Royal Swedish Academy. But apart from the awards, it was the painting – not the thing but the activity, one pursued both alone and with others – that animated the life.

JON MANDLE and DAVID A. REIDY