The Original Position

At the center of John Rawls’s political philosophy is one of the most influential thought experiments of the twentieth century: which principles of justice would a group of individuals choose to regulate their society if they were deprived of any information about themselves that might bias their choice? In this collection of new essays, leading political philosophers examine the ramifications and continued relevance of Rawls’s idea. Their chapters explore topics including the place of the original position in rational choice theory, the similarities between Rawls’s original position and Kant’s categorical imperative, the differences between Rawls’s model and Scanlon’s contractualism, and the role of the original position in the argument between Rawls and other views in political philosophy, including utilitarianism, feminism, and radicalism. This accessible volume will be a valuable resource for undergraduates as well as advanced students and scholars of philosophy, game theory, economics, and the social and political sciences.

Timothy Hinton is Professor of Philosophy at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina. He has published numerous papers on political philosophy, ethics, and the philosophy of religion in journals including Philosophy and Public Affairs, Analysis, and Journal of Social Philosophy.
Classic Philosophical Arguments

Over the centuries, a number of individual arguments have formed a crucial part of philosophical enquiry. The volumes in this series examine these arguments, looking at the ramifications and applications which they have come to have, the challenges which they have encountered, and the ways in which they have stood the test of time.

Titles in the series
The Prisoner’s Dilemma
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The Original Position

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used for John Rawls’s works:

- **TJ**  
  *A Theory of Justice* (Harvard University Press, 1971)
- **TJR**  
- **PL**  
  *Political Liberalism* (Columbia University Press, 1993)
- **LP**  
  *Law of Peoples* (Harvard University Press, 1999)
- **CP**  
  *Collected Papers*, S. Freeman (ed.) (Harvard University Press, 1999)
- **LHMP**  
- **JFR**  
  *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* (Harvard University Press, 2001)
- **LHPP**  
  *Lectures on the History of Political Philosophy* (Harvard University Press, 2007)

The following abbreviation is used for Robert Nozick’s work:

- **ASU**  
  *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (Basic Books, 1974)