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Tacit Consent Revisited

Though historically important, the notion of tacit consent plays little role in contemporary discussions of political legitimacy. The idea, in fact, is often dismissed as obviously implausible. Our ambition in this article is challenge this assumption. After considering the inadequacies of Locke's original conception of tacit consent, as well as the problems of the rival accounts of political legitimacy (especially the hypothetical consent theories and the Weberian social-scientific approaches), we develop a new, non-Lockean conception of legitimacy based on tacit consent. In short, we hold that if the inhabitants of the state have free access to information and ample options to display active dissent towards their government, yet choose not to do so, then they tacitly consent to the government, thus making it legitimate.

Tuesday, December 1, 2020, 05:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

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