Prof. Ruth O'Brien Office: 5200.01

Spring 2010 Thurs. 1-2 & by

817-8678 Appointment

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**American Political Thought**

***PSC 7***

*Description:*

This seminar examines American political thought in historical perspective. It breaks this perspective down into the revolutionary; founding, civil war; populist; Social Darwinist; bourgeois individualist; progressive; industrial capitalist, New Deal; and identity politics periods. Original texts ranging from: James Madison’s *Federalist Papers;* John Dewey’s *The Public and Its Problems*; Malcolm X’s *Autobiography* to Gloria E. Anzaldua’s *This Bridge Called my Back* will be read. In addition, to concentrating on the standard interpretations of these texts, some radical interpretations will be emphasized, particularly black feminist thought. Also, the seminar gives more weight to the latter half of American political thought written about capitalism and identity politics in the late-19th and 20th centuries rather than the founding or the civil war eras in the 18th and early and mid-19th centuries.

***Course Requirements:***

1. Complete assigned readings before class. Before each seminar meets, students distribute an approximately 1-2 page written summary of the reading to stimulate discussions. This summary should be distributed no later than midnight the night before the seminar on Thursday at 2 p.m. These summaries, and classroom participation, will account for 25% of your final grade.

2. A mid-term; 10-15 page paper; and a final, which are each worth 25%.

**Books to Consider Purchasing:**

Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (any edition)

James Madison, John Jay and Alexander Hamilton *Federalist Papers*

J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, (Harvard University Press, 1975).

Alexis De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (Signet).

Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1955)

Abraham Lincoln, “Speeches and Writings, ed. Roy Basler (DeCapo Press, 2001, 1946)

William Graham Sumner, *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other* (any edition)

Walter Lippmann, *The Phantom Public* (Transaction Publishers, 1993).

John Dewey, *The Public & Its Problems* (Swallow Press, 1954)

Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Dover Thrift)

Saul Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals* (Vintage, 1989)

W.E.B. DuBois, *The Soul of Black Folks* (Signet Classic)

Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X as Told to Alex Hayley* (Penguin Books, 1973).

Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and American Democracy* (Harper & Row, 1944)

Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (W.W. Norton, 2001).

Herbert Marcuse *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Beacon Press, 1991).

Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (University of Chicago Press, 1998).

David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (Verso, 1999).

Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Harvard University Press, 1993).

Patricia Hill Collins, [*Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Black_Feminist_Thought:_Knowledge,_Consciousness_and_the_Politics_of_Empowerment&action=edit&redlink=1) (Routledge, 2008, 1990).

Gloria Anzaldua’s *This Bridge Called my Back The Gloria Anzaldua Reader* (Duke University Press, 2009).

Reinhold Neibhur, T*he Irony of American History* (University of Chicago Press, 2008).

All the articles mentioned can be found in the Mina Reese database source of Proquest.

**WEEKLY COURSE OVERVIEW**

**1.Colonial America**

Reading:

John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity,” <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/winthmod.html>; Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (any edition).

Recommended Reading:

Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seven Century* (Harvard Belnap Press, 1983).

James Morone, *Hellfire Nation: The Politics of Sin in American History* (Yale University Press, 2003).

Mark A. Peterson, “From Founding Fathers to Old- Boy Networks: The Declension of Perry Miller’s Puritans,” *Reviews in American History*  23 (1995): 13-19.

**2. Revolution**

Reading:

Thomas Paine, Common Sense <http://www.ushistory.org/paine/commonsense/index.htm>; Ben Franklin, “The Way to Wealth,” 1758;

<http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/bdorsey1/41docs/52-fra.html>; James Madison, “Property and Suffrage: Second Thoughts on the Constitutional Convention,” (1821); Thomas Jefferson, “Notes on the State of Virginia, query xvii; letter to Cabel, February 2, 1816; Letter to Kercheval, July 12, 1816; Declaration of Independence; letter to Danbury

Recommended Reading:

Joyce Oldham Appleby, *Inheriting the Revolution: The First Generation of Americans* Harvard University Press, 2000).

Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (Alfred Knopf, 1992).

David C. Hoffman, “Paine and Prejudice: Rhetorical Leadership through Perceptual Framing in Common Sense,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 9.3 (2006) 373-410.

Michael Hardt, “Jefferson and Democracy,” *American Quarterly* 59 (2007): 41-78.

Stephen H. Browne, “The Circle of Our Felicities": Thomas Jefferson's First Inaugural Address and the Rhetoric of Nationhood,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*  (2002): 409-38.

Jeremy Engels, “Democratic Alienation, “ *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 11 (2008): 471-81.

Gary B. Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America* (New York: Viking, 2005).

Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000).

**3. The Science of Government: Federalists & Republicanism**

James Madison, John Jay and Alexander Hamilton Federalist Papers # 9, 10, 48, 49, 51, 57, 62, 63, 69.

James Madison, “Vices of the Political System of the United States” in T*he Mind of the Founder* (Marvin Myer, ed.)

J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, (Harvard University Press, 1975), chp. 5.

Recommended Reading:

Jack N. Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution* (New York, 1996).

Garry Wills, *Explaining America: The Federalist* (Garden City, NY, 1981).

Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776*–1787 (Chapel Hill, NC, 1969 or Norton edition).

**4. Democracy in America**

Reading:

Alexis De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (Signet classic)

Louis Hartz. *The Liberal Tradition in America* (Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1955), introduction.

Frederick Jackson Turner, "[The Significance of the Frontier in American History](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Significance_of_the_Frontier_in_American_History)," delivered to the [American Historical Association](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Historical_Association) in [1893](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1893) at the [World's Columbian Exposition](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World%27s_Columbian_Exposition) in [Chicago](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago). <http://www.library.csi.cuny.edu/dept/history/lavender/frontierthesis.html>

Recommended Reading:

John Mack Faragher, “Frederick Jackson Turner, New Historian,” [*Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 30 (1999](http://muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.gc.cuny.edu/journals/journal_of_interdisciplinary_history/toc/jih30.2.html)): 283-91.

James T. Kloppenberg, “In Retrospect: Louis Hartz's *The Liberal Tradition in America* *Reviews in American History* 29 (2001) 460-76.

Rogers M. Smith, *Civic Ideals* Conflicting Views of Citizenship in U.S. History (Yale University Press, 1997).

**5. Union & Self-Reliance & Slavery**

Reading:

Abraham Lincoln, “Speeches and Writings, ed. Roy Basler (DeCapo Press, 2001, 1946), 202-12, 283-323, 339-45, 347-65, 372-81, 385-424, 428-68, 547-55, 594-609- 689-91, 734, 792-93.

Sojourner Truth “Ain’t I a Woman?” <http://www.feminist.com/resources/artspeech/genwom/sojour.htm>

Ralph Waldo Emerson *Self-Reliance* 1841 <http://usinfo.org/docs/democracy/14.htm>

Recommended Reading:

John Burt, “Lincoln’s Dred Scott: Contesting the Declaration of Independence,” *American Literary History* 21 (2009): 730-75.

James L. Huston, “Theory’s Failure: Malthusian Population Theory and the Project Demise of Slavery, *Civil War History* 55 (2009): 354-81.

Jay Grossman and Donald E. Pease, *Reconstituting the American Renaissance: Emerson, Whitman and the Politics of Representation* (Duke University Press, 2003).

**6. Populism; Social Darwinism; & Bourgeois Individualism**

Reading:

Horatio Alger, Jr.[*Ragged Dick*](http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/modeng/modengA.browse.html) (1868) http://www.albany.edu/history/history316/RaggedDick-1.html

William Graham Sumner *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other*

(Bibliobazar, 2007); Francis Galton, *Hereditary Genuis,* [*http://galton.org/*](http://galton.org/)http://books.google.com/

Recommended Reading on Capitalism:

Martin Sklar, *The Corporate Reconstruction of American Capitalism* (Cambridge University Press, 1988).

Richard Hofstadter, T*he American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* (Vintage, 1962).

Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (Vintage, 1960).

Regina Gagnier, “The Law of Progress and the Ironies of Individualism in the 19th Century,” *New Literary History* 31 (2000): 315-36.

**7. Democratic Progressivism & Pragmatism I**

Walter Lippmann, *The Phantom Public* (Transaction Publishers, 1993).

John Dewey, *The Public & Its Problems* (Swallow Press, 1954), chps. 1,3,4, 5

Recommended Reading:

Daniel T. Rodgers. *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998).

Eldon J. Eisenach, T*he Lost Promise of Progressivism* (University of Kansas, 1994).

Robert H. Wiebe, T*he Search for Order, 1877-1920* (Hill & Wang, 1966).

**8. In Class Midterm**

**9. Republican Progressivism II, Antimonopoly Capitalism & the New Deal**

Reading:

Louis Brandeis, *Other People’s Money* <http://www.law.louisville.edu/library/collections/brandeis/node/191>; Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Dover Thrift) Chps 1, 4, 12

Saul Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals* (Vintage, 1989),

Recommended Reading:

Gerald Berk, *Louis D. Brandeis and the Making of Regulated Competition, 1900-1932* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Harry Chatten Boyte, “Seeds of a Different Politics,” *The Good Society* 12 (2003): 70-73.

Harold Meyerson, “Liberalism and Its Friends,” *Dissent* 56 (2009): 128-31.

Malcolm Rutherford, “Institutional Economies at Columbia University,” *History of Political Economy* 36 (2004): 31-78.

**10. Identity Politics: Race**

Reading:

W.E.B. DuBois, *The Soul of Black Folks* (Signet Classic), I, II, IV, X, XIV

Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X as Told to Alex Hayley* (Penguin Books, 1973).

Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and American Democracy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1944), Introduction.

Recommended Reading on Race

John Pittman, A*frican-American Perspectives and Philosophical Traditions* (Routledge, 1996).

Carol A. Horton. *Race and the Making of American Liberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), Introduction.

David A. Hollinger, *Postethnic* *America: Beyond Multiculturalism* (New York, 1995).

Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*  
(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

**11. Identity Politics: Gender 1950s & 1960s**

Reading:

Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (W.W. Norton, 2001).

Herbert Marcuse *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Beacon Press, 1991).

Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (University of Chicago Press, 1998).

Recommended Reading:

Daniel Horowitz, [*Betty Friedan and the Making of "The Feminine Mystique": The American Left, the Cold War, and Modern Feminism*](http://www.amazon.com/Betty-Friedan-Making-Feminine-Mystique/dp/1558492763/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1264086045&sr=1-2)

**S**abine Gurtler and Andrew F. Smith, “The Ethical Dimension of Work: A Feminist Perspective,” *Hypatia* 20 (2005): 119-34.

Katherine Adams, “At the Table with Arendt: Toward a Self-Interested Practice of Coalition Discourse,” 17 *H*y*patia* (2002), 27.

**12. Identity Politics & Radical Frameworks:**

Reading:

David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1999).

Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Harvard University Press, 1993)

Charles Mills, "Ideal Theory" as Ideology,” [*Hypatia* 20 (2005](http://muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.gc.cuny.edu/journals/hypatia/toc/hyp20.3.html)): 165-84.

Recommended reading:

**S**eyla Benhabib, S*ituating the Self: Gender, Community, and Postmodernism in Contemporary Ethics,* (Polity, 1992).

Eileen Boris, “On the Importance of Naming: Gender, Race, and the Writing of Policy History,” *Journal of Policy History* 17 (2005): 72-93.

Eric Arneson, “Up From Exclusion: Black and White Workers, Race, and the State of Labor History,” [*Reviews in American History* 26 (1998](http://muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.gc.cuny.edu/journals/reviews_in_american_history/toc/rah26.1.html)): 146-74.

**13. Intersectionality**

Reading:

Patricia Hill Collins, [*Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Black_Feminist_Thought:_Knowledge,_Consciousness_and_the_Politics_of_Empowerment&action=edit&redlink=1) (Routledge: 1990, 2000, 2008);and Gloria Anzaldua’s *This Bridge Called my Back The Gloria Anzaldua Reader,* (Duke University Press, 2009).

Recommended Reading:

Kimberlee Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43 (1991): 1241-58.

Iris Marion Young, “Fighting Words: Black women and the Search for Justice,” *Hypatia* 16 (2001): 91-93.

V. Denise James, “Theorizing Black Feminist Pragmatism: Forethoughts on the Practice and Purpose of Philosophy as Envisioned by Black Feminists and John Dewey,” *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 23 (2009): 92-99.

**14. Anti-Isolationism (Internationalism); and the Age of Empire?**

Reading:

Reinhold Neibhur, T*he Irony of American History* (University of Chicago Press, 2008).

Kevin Mattson, “Why We Should Be Reading Reinhold Niebuhr Now More Than Ever: Liberalism and the Future of American Political Thought,” [*The Good Society* 14 (2005](http://muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.gc.cuny.edu/journals/good_society/toc/gso14.3.html)) 77-82.

Recommended Reading:

David Brion Davis, “Reflections: Intellectual Trajectories: Why People Study What They Do,” *Reviews in American History* 37 (2009): 148-59.

Sandra M. Gustafson, “Histories of Democracy and Empire,”

[*American Quarterly* 59 (2007](http://muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.gc.cuny.edu/journals/american_quarterly/toc/aq59.1.html)): 107-33.

Susan K. Gillman, “The New, Newest Thing: Have American Studies Gone Imperial?”

[*American Literary History* 17 (2005](http://muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.gc.cuny.edu/journals/american_literary_history/toc/alh17.1.html)): 196-214.

Alonzo L. Hamby, “Is There No Democratic Left in America? Reflections on the Transformation of an Ideology,” [*Journal of Policy History*, 15 (2003](http://muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.gc.cuny.edu/journals/journal_of_policy_history/toc/jph15.1.html)): 3-25.

**15. In class Final**