

1997

## Seminar: American Political Thought Syllabus

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### DESCRIPTION

This seminar is designed to provide an overview of the key ideas and purposes that have shaped the American political experiment and to introduce students to major sources of American political thought from the colonial period to the present. Using an approach that is at once chronological and topical, we will also study methodological issues in light of the possibility (or impossibility) of a distinctly American political theory.

Chronologically the seminar is divided into three phases. We begin by reviewing the classical and Christian intellectual traditions transplanted by the European settlers. Special attention will be given to distinctly American contributions to the growth of institutional liberty. Next, we examine the development and broadening of this new political tradition as a practical response to the demands of nation-building, sectional rivalries, the Civil War, immigration, industrialization, the rise of great fortunes, social and racial conflict, foreign wars and economic crises. Here we will emphasize the contributions of individual thinkers and schools of thought. The seminar concludes by considering some of the challenges Americans face as they strive to realize their ideal of "one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

### REQUIREMENTS

1. Each student is responsible for assigned readings and should keep a looseleaf notebook for class materials.
2. Participation is an essential part of class. Reading assignments must be completed before the class meets.
3. Attendance is required. One week's absence may be excused for good cause. Each week's absence after the first will result in the loss of half a grade.
4. Students will be tested on their knowledge of reading and discussion material through three essay and identification exams (60%).
5. The remainder of the grade will be determined by three writing assignments.
  - A 4-6 page report on the intellectual background of American political thought from one of the following books: Barr, Burgess, Evans [8-17], Fischer [pp. 3-205, 783-898]; Kirk [1-8], Lippmann, Lutz, Reichley [1-5], Schlossberg, Voegelin, or Weaver (10%). DUE: February 12.
  - A 4-6 page bibliographic essay on a selected American political thinker based on a careful examination of at least one major work and a brief review of several other works (10%). DUE: March 5.
  - A 6-8 page original paper on a topic approved in advance (20%). It will be presented and critiqued in the manner of a formal academic conference. DUE: April 9. This paper may be consolidated with the bibliographic essay if the two are clearly related.
6. Good general sources of primary materials include The Annals of America (originally published in 1968) and the Evans Collection (up to 1800).

7. My surgery is scheduled for Friday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. Although it is possible I will be able to return for classes during the first week of May, I do not expect to be able to resume a full schedule until after Spring Break. Please continue the reading and pursue your research projects in my absence.

## READING LIST

### Textbooks

Boorstin, Daniel. The Genius of American Politics [B]  
Levy, Michael B. Political Thought in America [L]  
Lutz, Donald. A Preface to American Political Theory [P]

### Reserve Desk

Barr, Stringfellow. Voices That Endured  
Grimes, Alan Pendleton. American Political Thought [G]  
Hall, Verna. Christian History of the Constitution, vol. 1 [H]  
Kirk, Russell. The Portable Conservative Reader [K]  
Mason, Alpheus Thomas. Free Government in the Making [M]

### Stacks

Burgess, John W. Recent Changes in American Constitutional Theory  
Evans, M. Stanton. The Theme Is Freedom  
Fischer, David Hackett. Albion's Seed  
Kirk, Russell. The Roots of American Order  
Lippmann, Walter. Essays in the Public Philosophy  
Lutz, Donald S. The Origins of American Constitutionalism  
Reichley, A. James. Religion in American Public Life  
Schlossberg, Herbert. Idols for Destruction  
Voegelin, Eric. The New Science of Politics  
Weaver, Richard M. Ideas Have Consequences

## SCHEDULE

FIRST WEEK: INTRODUCTION (January 15-20)

B. 1; P. 1; Bruce Shelley, The Gospel and the American Dream, chs. 3-4.  
Background: G. 1; R. J. Rushdoony, "The Importance of the Law," Institutes of Biblical Law, pp. 1-14.

SECOND WEEK: PURITANISM (January 22-27)

L. 1 [pp. 1-37]; B. 2; P. 2; John Cotton [M 2: 3]; Fundamental Orders of Connecticut [H. pp. 253-61]. Background: G. 2.

THIRD WEEK: ENGLISH REVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT (January 29-February 3)

L. 1 [pp. 38-47]; P. 5; Algernon Sidney [H. pp. 126-30]; John Locke and James Harrington [M. 1: 3-4]; Petition of Right and English Bill of Rights [H. pp. 42-47]. Background: G. 3

FOURTH WEEK: AMERICAN WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE (February 5-10)

L. 2; B. 3; James Otis, John Dickinson, James Wilson [M. 3: 3-5]. Background: G. 4; Gary Amos, "Government by the Consent of the Governed."

FIFTH WEEK: AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONALISM (February 12-17)

L. 3 [pp. 93-137]; P. 4. Background: G. 5; Ellis Sandoz, "Reflections on Spiritual Aspects of the American Founding;" Carl J. Richard.

REPORT DUE: February 12

SIXTH WEEK: FEDERALISTS AND ANTI-FEDERALISTS (February 19-24)

L. 3 [pp. 138-64]; P. 3; James Wilson [M. 6: 4]; John Adams, Fisher Ames [K. 2: pp. 51-66, 84-112]. Background: G. 6-7.

FIRST EXAM: February 26

SEVENTH WEEK: THE EARLY REPUBLIC (March 3-5)

L. 4 [except pp. 216-71, 306-17]; Joseph Story [M. 10: 1]; John Randolph, James Fenimore Cooper, Orestes Brownson [K. 4, 5, 7]. Background: G. 8; Samuel Blumenfeld.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY DUE: March 5

EIGHTH WEEK: SPRING BREAK (March 10-12)

NINTH WEEK: REFORM AND SLAVERY (March 17-19)

L. 4 [pp. 232-71]; William Lloyd Garrison, William Ellery Channing, George Fitzhugh, William Harper [M. 13: 1-2, 5-6]; Thomas Macaulay, [K. 6: pp. 214-18]. Background: G. 9-11.

TENTH WEEK: SECTIONALISM AND NATIONALISM (March 24-26)

L. 4 [pp. 216-31, 306-17]; B. 4; John Taylor, Hugh Legare, John C. Calhoun,

Francis Lieber, Salmon P. Chase [M. 14: 1-2, 4-5, 7]. Background: G. 12.

#### ELEVENTH WEEK: THE GILDED AGE (March 31-April 2)

L. 5; Lester Ward, Walter Rauschenbusch [M. 15: 2, 6]; E. L. Godkin [K. 9]; Zach. Montgomery, "Political Poison; Justice Stephen Field's dissent in Juilliard v. Greenman. Background: G. 13-14.

SECOND EXAM: April 7

#### TWELFTH WEEK: THE PROGRESSIVE ERA (April 9-14)

L. 6 [pp. 391-435]; B. 5; Theodore Roosevelt, Brooks Adams, Walter Lippmann [M. 16: 2, 6, 9]; Irving Babbitt [K. 12]; J. Gresham Machen, "Shall We Have a Federal Department of Education?" Background: G. 15-17.

#### THIRTEENTH WEEK: THE IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM (April 16-21)

L. 6 [pp. 436-490]; B. 6. Background: G. 18-19.

PAPER DUE: April 16

#### FOURTEENTH WEEK: WINDOW ON THE WORLD AND WRAP-UP (April 23-30)

L. 7; P. 6; Portland Declaration

PRESENTATIONS

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, May 5, 8:30 AM

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## AMERICAN POLITICAL THINKERS

Francis E. Abbot  
 Lyman Abbott  
 John Dalberg-Acton  
 Brooks Adams  
 Henry Adams  
 John Adams  
 John Quincy Adams  
 Samuel Adams

Jane Addams  
Fisher Ames  
Hannah Arendt  
Thurman Arnold  
Irving Babbitt  
Isaac Backus  
Leonard Bacon  
Robert Baird  
George Bancroft  
Jacques Barzun  
Charles A. Beard  
Daniel Bell  
Edward Bellamy  
Arthur F. Bentley  
Raoul Berger  
Adolph A. Berle  
Edward Bernays  
Albert J. Beveridge  
Alexander M. Bickel  
W. D. P. Bliss  
Allan Bloom  
Jonathan Boucher  
Kenneth Boulding  
Randolph Bourne  
Louis D. Brandeis  
Albert Brisbane  
Orestes Brownson  
William Jennings Bryan  
James Bryce  
William F. Buckley, Jr.  
John W. Burgess  
James Burnham  
John C. Calhoun  
Henry Seidel Canby  
Henry Carey  
Matthew Carey  
Stokely Carmichael  
Andrew Carnegie  
William Ellery Channing  
Frank Chodorov  
John Bates Clark  
Henry Clay  
James Fenimore Cooper  
Edward S. Corwin  
John Cotton  
Ralph Adams Cram

Michel-Guillaume Jean de Crevecoeur  
Herbert Croly  
Robert L. Dabney  
Donald Davidson  
Jefferson Davis  
Dorothy Day  
Eugene V. Debs  
Daniel De Leon  
Lawrence Dennis  
Thomas R. Dew  
John Dewey  
John Dickinson  
Frederick Douglass  
Peter F. Drucker  
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Jonathan Edwards  
T. S. Eliot  
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George Fitzhugh  
John T. Flynn  
Felix Frankfurter  
Benjamin Franklin  
Betty Friedan  
Milton Friedman  
Carl J. Friedrich  
Octavius Brooks Frothingham  
Francis Fukuyama  
Margaret Fuller  
R. Buckminster Fuller  
John Kenneth Galbraith  
William Lloyd Garrison  
Marcus Garvey  
Henry George  
Elbridge Gerry  
William J. Ghent  
Washington Gladden  
Nathan Glazer  
E. L. Godkin  
Emma Goldman  
Barry Goldwater  
Samuel Gompers  
Paul Goodman  
Madison Grant



Simon Greenleaf  
Francis J. Grund  
Alexander Hamilton  
Learned Hand  
Michael Harrington  
Nathaniel Hawthorne  
Tom Hayden  
Friedrich A. Hayek  
Robert Hayne  
Isaac Hecker  
George D. Herron  
Richard Hildreth  
Morris Hillquit  
Eric Hoffer  
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.  
Sidney Hook  
Thomas Hooker  
Herbert Hoover  
Frederick C. Howe  
William Dean Howells  
Charles Evans Hughes  
Thomas Hutchinson  
Andrew Jackson  
Robert H. Jackson  
William James  
Thomas Jefferson  
Jesse H. Jones  
Chief Joseph  
James Kent  
Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Russell Kirk  
Joseph Wood Krutch  
Robert LaFollette  
John Lansing  
Harold D. Lasswell  
Richard Henry Lee  
Daniel Leonard  
Francis Lieber  
Abraham Lincoln  
Walter Lippmann  
Henry Demarest Lloyd  
Henry Cabot Lodge  
Jack London  
James Russell Lowell  
John Lukacs  
J. Gresham Machen

Marshall McLuhan  
James Madison  
Alfred Thayer Mahan  
Malcolm X  
Horace Mann  
Karl Mannheim  
Herbert Marcuse  
John Marshall  
Luther Martin  
George Mason  
Cotton Mather  
Increase Mather  
Jonathan Mayhew  
Herman Melville  
Charles E. Merriam  
C. Wright Mills  
Ludwig von Mises  
Thomas Molnar  
James Monroe  
Paul Elmer More  
Lewis Henry Morgan  
Felix Morley  
Gouverneur Morris  
Jedidiah Morse  
Samuel F. B. Morse  
Lewis Mumford  
John Courtney Murray  
Scott Nearing  
Reinhold Niebuhr  
Robert Nisbet  
Albert Jay Nock  
George W. Norris  
Walter Ong  
James Otis  
John L. O'Sullivan  
Thomas Paine  
Theodore Parker  
William Paterson  
Simon Patten  
William Penn  
Ralph Barton Perry  
U. B. Phillips  
Wendell Phillips  
Roscoe Pound  
Robert Rantoul, Jr.  
John Randolph of Roanoke

Walter Rauschenbusch  
Franklin Delano Roosevelt  
Theodore Roosevelt  
Elihu Root  
Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy  
Murray Rothbard  
Josiah Royce  
Rousas John Rushdoony  
George Santayana  
Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.  
Charles M. Sheldon  
Judith Shklar  
J. Allen Smith  
Christina Hoff Sommers  
Pitirim A. Sorokin  
Thomas Sowell  
Lysander Spooner  
Elizabeth Cady Stanton  
Lincoln Steffens  
Alexander H. Stephens  
Lothrop Stoddard  
Joseph Story  
Leo Strauss  
Clarence K. Streit  
Josiah Strong  
Thomas Szasz  
William Graham Sumner  
George Sutherland  
William Howard Taft  
Roger B. Taney  
Frederick Winslow Taylor  
John Taylor of Caroline  
Norman Thomas  
Henry David Thoreau  
Alexis de Tocqueville  
Benjamin R. Tucker  
Frederick Jackson Turner  
Mark Twain  
Abel Upshur  
Thorstein Veblen  
Peter Viereck  
Oswald Garrison Villard  
Eric Voegelin  
Lester Frank Ward  
Nathaniel Ward  
Josiah Warren

Booker T. Washington  
George Washington  
Francis Wayland  
Richard Weaver  
Daniel Webster  
Noah Webster  
Walt Whitman  
Roger Williams  
Rene de Visme Williamson  
James Wilson  
Woodrow Wilson  
John Winthrop  
Robert Winthrop  
John Wise  
John Witherspoon  
Karl Wittfogel  
John Woolman  
Frances Wright  
Robert Yates