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# Seminar: American Political Thought Syllabus

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Samson, Steven Alan, "Seminar: American Political Thought Syllabus" (1997). *Faculty Publications and Presentations*. Paper 299. http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/gov\_fac\_pubs/299

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POLS 4391 SEMINAR: AMERICAN POLITICAL THOUGHT Dr. Samson

Hardy 10 Hours: MWF 8-9, 10-11, 12-1; TR 9:30-11, 12-1 Phone: 939-4551

### **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 <u>The Annals of America</u> (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. <u>The Genius of American Politics</u> [B] Levy, Michael B. <u>Political Thought in America</u> [L] Lutz, Donald. A Preface to American Political Theory [P]

# Reserve Desk

Barr, Stringfellow. <u>Voices That Endured</u>
Grimes, Alan Pendleton. <u>American Political Thought</u> [G]
Hall, Verna. <u>Christian History of the Constitution</u>, vol. 1 [H]
Kirk, Russell. <u>The Portable Conservative Reader</u> [K]
Mason, Alpheus Thomas. <u>Free Government in the Making</u> [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, <u>The Gospel and the American Dream</u>, chs. 3-4. <u>Background</u>: G. 1; R. J. Rushdoony, "The Importance of the Law," <u>Institutes of Biblical Law</u>, 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]. <u>Background</u>: 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]. <u>Background</u>: 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. <u>Background</u>: 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]. <u>Background</u>: 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]. <u>Background</u>: 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 <u>Juilliard</u> v. <u>Greenman</u>. <u>Background</u>: 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. <u>Background</u>: 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

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Daniel Bell

**Edward Bellamy** 

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Albert Brisbane

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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

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John Dewey

John Dickinson

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Peter F. Drucker

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Jonathan Edwards

T. S. Eliot

Richard T. Ely

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Stephen J. Field

John Fiske

George Fitzhugh

John T. Flynn

Felix Frankfurter

Benjamin Franklin

Betty Friedan

Milton Friedman

Carl J. Friedrich

Octavius Brooks Frothingham

Francis Fukuyama

Margaret Fuller

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William Lloyd Garrison

Marcus Garvey

Henry George

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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

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Reinhold Niebuhr

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Albert Jay Nock

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Theodore Parker

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George Sutherland

William Howard Taft

Roger B. Taney

Frederick Winslow Taylor

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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