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AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY SINCE THE CIVIL WAR

Overview:

This course surveys the history of ideas in an American context since the Civil War. Among other themes, readings and discussions will explore the relationships between pragmatism and progressivism, modernism and antimodernism, scarcity and abundance, unity and diversity, science and tradition, and individualism and concern for the social good.

Learning Objectives:

Students in this course can expect to learn:

- how to comprehend difficult texts.
- how to situate texts in their social and intellectual context, in order to better understand the author's intended meaning.
- how to critique and defend complex philosophical arguments in oral debate.
- how to develop forceful written arguments that acknowledge and illuminate the depth and subtlety of their subjects.
- how to track the development of ideas over broad expanses of time, and to recognize antecedents for contemporary social philosophies.

Assignments and Grading:

35%:	participation (including in-class debate, in-class writing)
5%:	first essay draft
10%:	first essay (5–7 pages)
15%:	first exam
15%:	second exam
5%:	second essay proposal
15%:	second essay (10–12 pages)

In this course, you are expected to be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. Report any violations you witness to the instructor. You may consult the associate dean of student

affairs and/or the chairman of the Ethics Board beforehand. See the guide on “Academic Ethics for Undergraduates” and the Ethics Board Web site (<http://ethics.jhu.edu>) for more information.

The grades of late papers will be lowered one level for each day they are late (e.g., a grade of B becomes a B- if one day late, a C+ if two days late, etc.).

Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class must obtain an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.

Texts:

A number of the course readings (denoted with an * in the syllabus) are available on electronic reserve. The other readings, listed below, should be acquired separately. Editions are not important, so students are welcome to use any version they choose. I like to read hard copies of books, but four of the five books used in the course are available for free online:

- Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward* (1898). (Available free through Google Books.)
- Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams*. (Available free through Project Gutenberg.)
- W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*. (Available free through Google Books.)
- Walter Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery*. (Available free through Google Books.)
- Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*. (Available used online for \$8+.)

Monday, January 27: University Life after the Civil War

Wednesday, January 29: Darwinism in an Age of Industry

Reading:

- *William Graham Sumner, “Sociology” (1881), in *Collected Essays in Political and Social Science*, 77-97.
- *Lester Frank Ward, “Mind as a Social Factor” (1884), *Mind* 9, no. 36, 563-573.

In class:

- Debate: Sumner v. Ward on the social implications of Darwinism.

Monday, February 3: Victorian Culture and Modern Morals

- *Charles Eliot Norton, “American Political Ideas,” *North American Review* 101 (1865), pp. 550–66.

- *Walt Whitman, "Democratic Vistas" (1871), in *Walt Whitman: Complete Poetry and Prose*, pp. 929–69.
- *George Santayana, "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy" (1913), in *Winds of Doctrine*, 186–215.

In class:

- First paper topics distributed and discussed.
- Group discussions of readings.

Wednesday, February 5: Reforming the Cult of Domesticity

- *Charlotte Perkins Gilman, selection from *Women and Economics* (1898), 58-75.
- *Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" and "Why I Wrote the Yellow Wallpaper" (1892), *Norton Anthology*, vol. 2, 4th ed., pp. 644–58.
- *Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "The Solitude of Self" (1892), in *Elizabeth Cady Stanton Susan B. Anthony: Correspondence, Writings, Speeches*, ed. Ellen Carol DuBois, 246–254.

In class:

- In-class writing assignment #1.

Monday, February 10: The Problem of Poverty in the Gilded Age

- *Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward* (1898), preface, ch. 1–7, 12, 14, 18, 22, 25, 28, postscript.
- *Jane Addams, selection from *Twenty Years at Hull House* (1892), 115-127.
- *Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth," *North American Review* (June 1889).

In class:

- Debate: Bellamy's social vision.

Wednesday, February 12: The White City and the Image of the West

- *Chief Joseph, "An Indian's View of Indian Affairs," *North American Review* 128 (1879), pp. 412–33.
- *Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in *The Frontier in American History* (1893), 1–38.

In class:

- Lecture on the White City.
- Discussion of the "frontier."

Monday, February 17: Antimodernism as Impulse and Theory

- Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams: An Autobiography* (1918), ch. 1, 4, 22, 25, 31, 33–35.

In class:

- Lecture on antimodernism.
- Group discussion of Adams.

Wednesday, February 19: Varieties of Pragmatism

- *Charles Peirce, "The Fixation of Belief" (1877), *The Popular Science Monthly* 12, 1–15.
- *William James, "The Will to Believe" (1897), in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*, 1–31.
- *William James, *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (1907), lectures 2 and 6.

In class:

- Debate: Jamesian pragmatism.

*** Friday, February 21: FIRST PAPER DRAFTS DUE IN SECTION ***

Monday, February 24: The Politics of Progressivism

- Walter Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery* (1914), introduction and ch. 1–3, 8–10, 13–16.

In class:

- Debate: Lippmann's solution to "drift."
- Draft feedback: Group A.

Wednesday, February 26: Legal Realism and Social Reform

- *Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., "The Path of the Law" (1897), in *American Thought, Civil War to World War I*, ed. Perry Miller, pp. 184–206.
- *Louis Brandeis, selections from *Brandeis on Democracy* (1905–1922), pp. 25–36, 51–66, 94–102.

In class:

- Debate: Holmesian jurisprudence.
- Draft feedback: Group B.

*** Monday, March 2: FIRST PAPERS DUE IN CLASS ***

Monday March 2: The Intellectuals and the War

- *John Dewey, "What America Will Fight For," *New Republic*, 18 August 1917, pp. 68–69.
- *John Dewey, "Philosophy and Democracy" (1918), in *The Middle Works, 1899-1924*, Vol. 11, 41-53.
- *Randolph Bourne, "Trans-National America" (1916), *Atlantic Monthly* 118, 86–97.
- *Randolph Bourne, "Twilight of Idols" (1917), *The Seven Arts* 11, 688–702.

In class:

- Debate: Dewey v. Bourne on pragmatism and war.
- Pragmatism timeline and review.

Wednesday, March 4: Double-Consciousness and the Cosmopolitan Ideal

- W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), ch. 1, 2, 3, 9, 13, 14.

In class:

- Group discussion of DuBois.

Monday, March 9: Conservatism in a Liberal Society

- *H. L. Mencken, selection from *Notes on Democracy* (1926) in Mason and Baker, eds., *Free Government in the Making*, pp. 638–43.
- *John Crowe Ransom, "Reconstructed but Unregenerate" (1930), in *Twelve Southerners, I'll Take My Stand*, 1–27.
- *Whittaker Chambers, selection from *Witness* (1950), 3–22.

In class:

- Exam review.

*** Wednesday, March 11: FIRST EXAM ***

Monday, March 23: Mass Culture and the Pathology of Normalcy

- *Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" (1939), *Partisan Review* 6, no. 5, 34–49.
- *James Baldwin, "Everybody's Protest Novel" (1949), in *Notes of a Native Son*, 13–22.
- *Lionel Trilling, "On the Teaching of Modern Literature" (1961), in *The Moral Obligation to Be Intelligent*, 381–401.

In class:

- Debate: Greenberg and the social role of art.

Wednesday, March 25: The Vital Center

- *Reinhold Niebuhr, selection from *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (1944), 9–41.
- *Hannah Arendt, “Ideology and Terror” (1953), *The Review of Politics* 15, no. 3 (1953), 303–327.
- *Daniel Bell, “The End of Ideology in the West” (1960), in *The End of Ideology*, 393–407.

In class:

- Debate: Niebuhr and Chambers on religion and modernity.

Monday, March 30: Cold War Capitalism

- *W. W. Rostow, selection from *The Stages of Economic Growth* (1960), 4–16.
- *Noam Chomsky, “The Responsibility of Intellectuals” (1967), in *American Power and the New Mandarins*, 323–366.

In class:

- Debate: Chomsky on intellectuals.

Wednesday, April 1: Civil Rights and the American Dilemma

- *Gunnar Myrdal, selection from *An American Dilemma* (1944), 3–12, 24–25.
- *Harold Cruse, “Revolutionary Nationalism and the Afro-American” (1962), in *Rebellion or Revolution?*, 74–96.

In class:

- In-class writing assignment

*** Friday, April 3: Second Essay Proposal Due ***

Monday, April 6: The Moral Life of Markets

- *Friedrich Hayek, “Equality, Value, and Merit,” in *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960), pp. 85–102.
- *Milton Friedman, selection from *Capitalism and Freedom* (1962), 7–21.

In class:

- Debate: Hayek, Friedman, and market critic.

Wednesday, April 8: Left Critiques of Liberalism

- *C. Wright Mills, "Letter to the New Left" (1960), *Power, Politics and People: The Collected Essays of C. Wright Mills*, 247–259.
- *Herbert Marcuse, selection from *One-Dimensional Man* (1964), 1–18.

In class:

- Debate: Bell v. Mills on Ideology.

Monday, April 13: The Redistribution of Rights

- *John Rawls, "Justice as Fairness," *The Philosophical Review* (1958).

In class:

- Debate: Rawlsian justice.

Wednesday, April 15: Truth and Meaning in the Postwar Sciences

- *Thomas Kuhn, selection from *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), 144–159.
- *Clifford Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System," in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973), pp. 193–233.

In class:

- In-class writing assignment.

Monday, April 20: Gender Equality, Gender Difference

- *Betty Friedan, selection from *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), 127–137, 140–141, 145–146.
- *Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (1989, Routledge edition 2006), pp. 1–22.

In class:

- Debate: Butler and Friedan on gender and politics.
- In-class workshop: second essay proposals, group A.

Wednesday, April 22: The Norms of Postmodernity

- Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (1989), viii–22, 44–95, 189–98.

In class:

- In-class workshop: second essay proposals, group B.

*** Friday, April 24: Second Essay Due ***

Monday, April 27: Community in an Age of Fracture

- *Robert Putnam, "Bowling Alone," *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 1 (1995), pp. 65–78.
- *Barack Obama, "A More Perfect Union" (2008).

In class:

- Lecture on intellectual history and politics today.

Wednesday, April 29: Review session

[Date TBD**]: Final Exam**