AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

Overview:

This graduate seminar explores historical works on ideas in an American context since the late nineteenth century, with an emphasis on recent developments in the field. Topics will include the development of the modern social sciences, the politics of knowledge production, and transnational exchanges of ideas.

Assignments:

This is a readings seminar, and the primary expectation is that every student will arrive in class prepared to contribute to an in-depth discussion of the assigned texts. It will be graded on a pass/fail basis for graduate students.

Texts:

A number of the readings from the course (denoted with an * in the syllabus) will be available on electronic reserve. The other readings, listed below, can either be purchased separately or checked out on a short-term basis from Eisenhower Library reserves:


**Tuesday, January 31: Special Session with François Furstenberg**


**Tuesday, February 7: Intellectual Exchanges in the Age of Enlightenment**


**Supplementary Readings:**


**Tuesday, February 14: Slavery and Abolitionism**

Supplementary Readings:


Tuesday, February 21: Time, Space, and the History of the Future


Supplementary Readings:

• Matthew Wisnioski, Engineers for Change: Competing Visions of Technology in 1960s America (MIT Press, 2012).

Tuesday, February 28: Modernism, Antimodernism, and the Practice of Cultural History


Supplementary Readings:
• Richard Wightman Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears, eds., The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History (Pantheon, 1983).
• T. J. Jackson Lears, Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877–1920 (Harper Perennial, 2010).
• Christine Stansell, American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century (Henry Holt, 2000).

Tuesday, March 7: In Search of Progressivism


Supplementary Readings:

**Tuesday, March 15: Pragmatisms Old and New**

• Morton White, *Social Thought in America: The Revolt Against Formalism* (Beacon, 1947).

**Supplementary Readings:**

• Trygve Throntveit, *William James and the Quest for an Ethical Republic* (Palgrave, 2014).

Tuesday, March 28: The Midcentury Politics of Color and Culture


Supplementary Readings:

• David Hollinger, *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism* (Basic, 2000).

Tuesday, April 4: Knowledge Production in Cold War America

**Supplementary Readings:**
• David Hollinger, ed., *The Humanities and the Dynamics of Inclusion since World War II* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).
• James Miller, *“Democracy is in the Streets”: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (Simon and Schuster, 1987).

**Tuesday, April 11: The Political Economy of the New Capitalism**


Supplementary Readings:
• Howard Brick, Daniel Bell and the Decline of Intellectual Radicalism: Social Theory and Political Reconciliation in the 1940s (University of Wisconsin Press, 1986).
• Daniel Geary, Radical Ambition: C. Wright Mills, the Left, and American Social Thought (University of California Press, 2009).
• T. J. Jackson Lears, Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America (Basic, 1994).

Tuesday, April 18: Religion and the Dynamics of Secularization


Supplementary Readings:
• George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford University Press, 2006).

**Tuesday, April 25: The Public Life of the Social Sciences**

• *Bruno Latour, We Have Never Been Modern* (Harvard University Press, 1993), ch. 1.

*Supplementary Readings:*
• Thomas Haskell, *The Emergence of Professional Social Science: The American Social Science Association and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Authority* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

**Tuesday, May 2: Marketplace Society and the “End of History”**


Supplementary Readings:
Synthetic Texts on the History of Ideas in an American Context: