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.

Assignments and grading:

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. (The “supplementary readings” are not mandatory, but are listed as a guide to help students identify further readings on specific topics.) Unless students request otherwise, this course will be graded on a pass/fail basis.

Texts:

Most 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:


Wednesday, January 27th: Methodologies of Intellectual History

Wednesday, February 3rd: International History and the Problem of U.S. Empire


**Supplementary Readings:**
Wednesday, February 10th: Race, Nation, and Civic Memory


Supplementary Readings:

Wednesday, February 17th: Pragmatism and Progressivism


**Supplementary Readings:**


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


**Wednesday, February 24th: Nineteenth-Century Liberalism and its Critics**


Supplementary Readings:


Wednesday, March 3rd: Black Radicalism and the Politics of Self-Determination:


Supplementary Readings:

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

**Wednesday, March 10th: Foundations and Anti-Foundations:**


**Supplementary Readings:**

• Evelyn Barish, *The Double Life of Paul De Man* (Liveright, 2014).
Wednesday, March 17th: The Making of the Statistical Individual (revised meeting time):


Supplementary Readings:

**Wednesday, March 31st: Religion and the Dynamics of Secularization:**


**Supplementary Readings:**

- David Hollinger, ed., *The Humanities and the Dynamics of Inclusion since World War II* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).
- George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford University Press, 2006).

Wednesday, April 7th: The Cold War Social Sciences:

• *Joel Isaac, Working Knowledge: Making the Human Sciences from Parsons to Kuhn (Harvard University Press, 2012).
• *Howard Brick, Transcending Capitalism: Visions of a New Society in Modern American Thought (Cornell University Press, 2006), ch. 5, ch. 6.

Supplementary Readings:
• Paul Boyer, By the Bomb’s Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age (University of North Carolina Press, 1985).
• Howard Brick, Daniel Bell and the Decline of Intellectual Radicalism: Social Theory and Political Reconciliation in the 1940s (University of Wisconsin Press, 1986).
• Sarah Bridger, Scientists at War: The Ethics of Cold War Weapons Research (Harvard University Press, 2015).
• David Ciepley, Liberalism in the Shadow of Totalitarianism (Harvard University Press, 2006).
• Ellen Schrecker, No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities (Oxford University Press, 1986).
• Mark Solovey, Shaky Foundations: The Politics-Patronage-Social Science Nexus in Cold War America (Rutgers University Press, 2013).


Wednesday, April 14th: The Liberal Tradition, Then and Now


**Supplementary Readings:**
- Daniel Geary, *Radical Ambition: C. Wright Mills, the Left, and American Social Thought* (University of California Press, 2009).

Wednesday, April 21st: The Neoliberal Turn:


**Supplementary Readings:**

**Wednesday, April 28th: Current States and New Directions**