



GETTYSBURG COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF
HISTORY



HIST 249
AMERICAN
INTELLECTUAL HISTORY



TUESDAYS &
THURSDAYS
10.00-11.15 AM
WEIDENSALL 110



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INTRODUCTION

This is a course in the history of American thinkers and American ideas. Of course, ideas do not come with a specific nationality attached, nor for that matter is a thinker 'American' merely for having been a citizen of the United States. But ideas do have distinctive contours, and with the contours, valences. These valences allow ideas with certain inherent similarities to cohere into recognizable patterns and shapes; and what we are after in this course are the patterns and shapes which have been shaped by American thinkers or have created a pattern we can identify as distinctively American. Similarly, there are American thinkers who were not born in America – in fact, who retained ongoing intellectual allegiances to other places – and a number who were, but who repudiated the mainstream of American ideas, either choosing a personal exile, or in a few cases actually becoming expatriates. But even in these cases, they all contributed decisively to the shaping of American and the ongoing re-constructing of American identity.

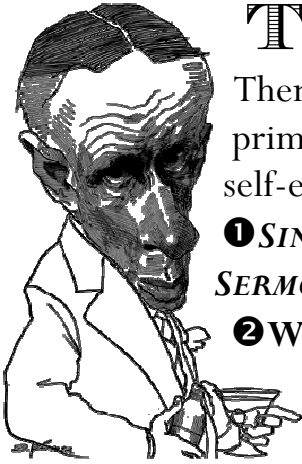
Because, at root, the United States has always been a republic of ideas. Long before the Declaration of Independence began with an invocation of a natural rights philosophy, people were driven or attracted to the American shores in pursuit of ideas, and they continued to see the American landscape as a theater in which certain ideas struggled for supremacy. The American Revolution was an intellectual event as much as political or military one, and the American Civil War was fought over ideas about human rights. Where other nations identify themselves around race, religion, ethnicity or language, we have been in love with propositions, and we regard assent to those propositions as the single most important identifier of an American. Even our founding documents as a republic are a collection of logical propositions, not a romantic call to blood and soil.

At the same time, however, we frequently describe ourselves in anti-intellectual terms – as a nation of pragmatists or activists or religious visionaries. Yet, behind the pragmatism, activism, and visions, always lie tangled skeins of ideas. Even the most reactionary of anti-intellectuals almost always have some mental framework which they have adopted or inherited, without entirely understanding how or why.

Our task in this course will be to untangle those skeins, trace down the sources of those ideas, and arrive at an understanding of what basic motifs have characterized the formation of an 'American Mind.' Three themes will be of continued importance in this survey:

1. The relationship between Puritanism and the Enlightenment (or, if you will, between religion and science)

2. The long-term hold of classical liberalism on the American political imagination
3. The ongoing interaction between American and European ideas, from the 17th century onward.



TEXTS:

There is no ‘textbook’ for this class. Instead, there will be a list of primary texts for you to acquire; additionally, I will supply you with a self-edited notebook of readings. The primary texts are as follows:

- ❶ *SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD AND OTHER PURITAN SERMONS* (Dover Publications, 2005)
- ❷ **WILLIAM JAMES**, *PRAGMATISM: A NEW NAME FOR SOME OLD WAYS OF THINKING*, ed. Bruce Kuklick (Hackett Publications, 1980)
- ❸ **W.E.B. DU BOIS**, *THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLK* (Dover Publications, 1994)
- ❹ **REINHOLD NIEBUHR**, *THE IRONY OF AMERICAN HISTORY* (University of Chicago Press, 2008)
- ❺ **FRIEDERICH A. HAYEK**, *THE ROAD TO SERFDOM*, ed. Bruce Caldwell (University of Chicago Press, 2007)

REQUIREMENTS:

Appropriately to a 200-level course, the requirements and expectations involve consistent class attendance, examinations and quizzes. The quizzes may be announced or unannounced, at the discretion of the instructor, and will be based on the assigned readings. There will be a mid-term examination and a final exam, based on the classroom lectures and composed of both short answer and multiple-choice questions.



GRADING:

Quizzes.....	30%
Mid-Term Examination.....	35%
Final Examination.....	35%

DATE	LECTURE	READINGS
January 14	1- THE INTELLECTUAL GEOGRAPHY OF AMERICA	Wilfred McClay, "Do Ideas Matter in America" <i>Wilson Quarterly</i> (Summer 2003) Bruce Kuklick, "Does American Philosophy Rest on a Mistake?" <i>American Philosophy</i> , ed. Marcus Singer (Cambridge, 1985)
January 19/21	2- THE TECHNOLOGY OF PURITAN THINKING 3- THE ENLIGHTENMENT IN AMERICA	Ames, <i>The Marrow of Theology</i> SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD & OTHER PURITAN SERMONS, 1-30, 32-65
January 26/28	4- JONATHAN EDWARDS & THE GREAT AWAKENING 5- NATURE'S GOD & THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION 6- DEISM, SCIENCE & REVOLUTION	SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD & OTHER PURITAN SERMONS, 140-184 Edwards, <i>Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God</i> Benjamin Franklin, <i>The Autobiography</i> Locke, <i>Two Treatises of Government</i> James Otis, <i>The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved</i>
February 2/4	7- HAMILTON & HIS MONEY 8- JEFFERSON & HIS DEBTS	Jefferson, "Manufactures," from <i>Notes on the State of Virginia</i> (1787) Jefferson, Letters to Albert Gallatin, the Marquis de Lafayette, and William B. Giles Taylor of Caroline, <i>New Views of the Constitution of the United States</i> Hamilton, "Opinion as to the Constitutionality of the Bank of the United States"
February 9/11	9- THE EDWARDSEANS: FROM HOPKINS TO C.G. FINNEY 10- THE MORAL PHILOSOPHERS 11- WHIGS & DEMOCRATS	Edwards, <i>Freedom of the Will</i> Hopkins, <i>An Inquiry into the Nature of True Holiness</i> Alexander, <i>Outlines of Moral Science</i> Wayland, "Discourse on the Philosophy of Analogy" Kennedy, "Address of the Friends of Domestic Industry" Kennedy, <i>A Defense of the Whigs</i>
February 16/18	12- AMERICAN ROMAN- TICISM 13- FAITH & REASON AT PRINCETON 14- ROMANTICISM IN MER- CERSBURG	Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Divinity School Address" Park, "The Theology of the Intellect and That of the Feelings" Hodge, <i>Systematic Theology</i> Nevin, <i>The Anxious Bench</i>
February 23/25	15- SLAVEHOLDERS & ABOLITIONISTS 16- LINCOLN & THE PRESERVATION OF LIBERAL	Holcombe, "Is Slavery Consistent With Natural Law?" Garrison, <i>No Compromise with Slavery</i> Selections from <i>Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln</i>

	DEMOCRACY	
March 2	17- THE FAILURE OF THE GENTEEL ELITE 18- DARWIN IN AMERICA	Hodge, <i>What Is Darwinism?</i> Sumner, "The Forgotten Man"

MARCH 4 MID-TERM EXAMINATION

MARCH 6-15 SPRING RECESS

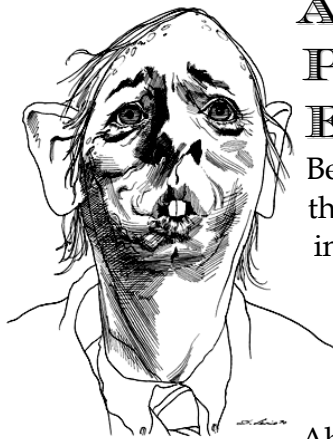
March 16/18	19- LIBERALISM & THE SOCIAL GOSPEL 20- THE AGONY OF WILLIAM JAMES 21- THE ABSOLUTIST	JAMES, PRAGMATISM: A NEW NAME FOR SOME OLD WAYS OF THINKING, 7-57, 77-105 C.S. Peirce, "The Fixation of Belief" and "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" Royce, <i>The Philosophy of Loyalty</i>
March 23/25	22- JOHN DEWEY & SOCIAL PRAGMATISM 23- AMERICAN SOCIALISM 24- POPULISTS, PROGRESSIVES & WAR	"People's Party Platform" Bryan, "Cross of Gold" Speech Debs, "Opening Speech Delivered as Candidate of the Socialist Party" Godkin, "The Eclipse of Liberalism" Wilson, <i>The New Freedom</i> , "Leaders of Men," and "First Inaugural Address" (March 4, 1913) Progressive Platform of 1912
March 30 /April 1	25- THE DISENCHANTED 26- THE SOCIAL SCIENCE REVOLUTION	Dewey, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" Boas, <i>The Mind of Primitive Man</i> Watson, "Psychology and Behavior"

APRIL 2-5 EASTER RECESS

April 6	27- THE NEW SOUTH vs. THE NEW NEGRO 28- FDR AND THE INTELLECTUALS	W.E.B. DU BOIS, THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLK, 1-164 Washington, "The Atlanta Exposition Address" <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> , 163 U.S. 537 (1896) 163 U.S. 537 Randall, "Booker T. and W.E.B" Three Popular Front Lyrics F.D. Roosevelt, <i>First Inaugural Address</i> F.D. Roosevelt, "State of the Union Message" [1944]
April 8	Follow Monday Schedule	
April 13/15	29- SCIENTISTS UNDER THE CLOUD 30- CHASTENED JUDG-	NIEBUHR, THE IRONY OF AMERICAN HISTORY, 1-174 Mills, "The Higher Immorality"

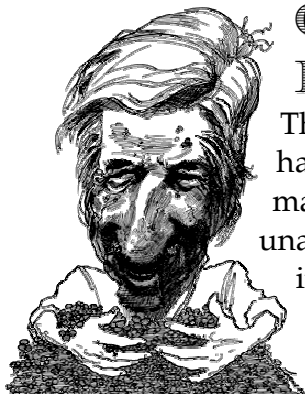
	MENTS 31- MASS CULTURE & MASS CONSUMPTION	
April 20/22	32- INTEGRATION AND SEPARATION 33- THE REBELLION OF THE PRIVILEGED	Elijah Muhammed, "What Is Islam? What Is A Muslim?" and "Black Man of U.S.A. and Africa!" King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail" Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance" Mills, "Letter to the New Left" Howe, "New Styles in Leftism" <i>Port Huron Statement of the Students for a Democratic Society (1962)</i> Tom Wolfe, "Radical Chic"
April 27	Free Day	
April 29	34- THE NEO- CONSERVATIVES	HAYEK, <i>THE ROAD TO SERFDOM</i>, 65-238 Buckley Jr., "Our Mission Statement" Kristol, "The NeoConservative Persuasion"

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS



Being a natural-born classroom leader is not a requirement for this course, but being able to speak to a particular question in an informed and balanced fashion is part of what makes for any liberally-educated person. I encourage people to volunteer questions, comments, evaluations, &c.; similarly, I have no reluctance in calling upon individuals, especially in precepts. Hence, attendance is a matter of the highest priority. Absences for any but legitimate excuses are a gesture of contempt for your fellow students, and each un-excused absence will drop your final grade by one letter.

GETTYSBURG COLLEGE HONOR CODE



The Gettysburg College Honor Code specifies that the student has maintained the highest standards of integrity in academic matters, which includes having neither given nor received unauthorized aid and nor witnessing such. This is understood to include incidents of plagiarism in written work; consequently, it is assumed that all written work turned in for this course is the product of your own labor, and that materials it cites from other sources are competently identified as such.