

## SOCIAL THOUGHT IN MODERN AMERICA

History 1330  
Fall, 2011  
email: [jkloppen@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:jkloppen@fas.harvard.edu)

Prof. Kloppenberg  
Robinson 120  
TFs: Elizabeth Jemison, John Dixon

This course examines the development of modern American social thought, a broad category including philosophy, law, literature, art, music, and political theory since the Civil War. Nearly all of the required readings are from primary sources; lectures and recommended readings will provide historical and biographical background and deal with issues not covered in the readings. Discussion sections will meet once a week and will focus primarily on the readings and the materials on the website. Almost all of the readings are available in the Coop as well as on reserve. Readings designated with an asterisk are included in a course pack that all students in the course must purchase. Finally, throughout the semester you are advised to consult the relevant short essays on the authors whose work you are reading in A Companion to American Thought, ed. Richard Wightman Fox and James T. Kloppenberg, on reserve.

In general, all class meetings will include both lecture and discussion. For that reason you must do all of the reading on time. In part to help you achieve that goal, you will be required to write three papers: the first, 4-6 pages long, is due on Monday, October 3; the second, 5-7 pages long, is due on Monday, November 14; and the third, 6-8 pages long, is due Thursday, December 8.

The grades of papers turned in after the time specified on the syllabus 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.). These writing assignments are intended to encourage you to read carefully and develop your capacity to think critically and express yourself clearly.

Part one of the mid-term exam and the final exam will include five paragraph-long passages taken from the readings, which you will be asked to identify and discuss critically. Part two of the mid-term exam will be one in-class essay; part two of the final exam will include two essay questions, one handed out in advance. Grades in the course will be determined as follows: mid-term exam, 10%; first paper, 10%; second paper, 15%; third paper, 20%; final exam, 25%; and participation in class discussions, 20%. As should be apparent, this is not intended to be an introductory course. A good background in American history is desirable; a serious commitment to the study of difficult ideas is essential.

Prof. Kloppenberg will hold office hours on Thursdays 4:00-5:30. To schedule an appointment, contact Elena Palladino at [epalladino@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:epalladino@fas.harvard.edu)

If you have a documented disability, please see Prof. Kloppenberg immediately.

1. Th 9-1: Studying Ideas Historically: Lincoln and the American Tradition

2. Tu 9-6: Victorian America and the Challenge of Darwinism

David Hollinger and Charles Capper, eds., Preface and Introduction to The American Intellectual Tradition, 4th ed., vol. 2 (hereafter cited as AIT), xi-xiii, 3-4

Asa Gray, "Review of Darwin's Origin of Species," 6-11

Charles Peirce, "The Fixation of Belief," in AIT, 5-15

\*Thomas Haskell, "Responsibility, Convention, and the Role of Ideas"

3. Th 9-8: The Gilded Age and Popular Protest
  - William Graham Sumner, "Sociology," in AIT, 26-35
  - Lester Frank Ward, "Mind as a Social Factor," in AIT, 42-50
  - Edward Bellamy, Looking Backward, Preface, chapters 1-7, 12, 14, 18, 22, 25, 28, and Postscript
4. Tu 9-13: From Romanticism to Realism
  - T. W. Higginson, "A Plea for Culture," in AIT, 12-15
  - \*Charles Eliot Norton, "American Political Ideas"
  - \*Walt Whitman, Democratic Vistas, selections
  - \*Stephen Crane, "An Episode of War"
5. Th 9-15: The Frontier and the White City
  - \*H. H. Jackson, A Century of Dishonor, selection
  - \*Chief Joseph, "Chief Joseph's Own Story"
  - Frederick Jackson Turner, "Significance of the Frontier," in AIT, 60-68
6. Tu 9-20: The Emerald City and the Rise of Social Science
  - \*The Populist Party Platform of 1892
  - Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class, chapters 1-4, 6-7
7. Th 9-22: From the Cult of True Womanhood to the New Woman
  - Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "The Solitude of Self," and "The Woman's Bible," in AIT, 55-59
  - Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Women and Economics, selection in AIT, 96-102
  - \*Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper," "Why I Wrote 'The Yellow Wallpaper'"
  - Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class, chapters 13-14
8. Tu 9-27: William James and Pragmatism
  - William James, "The Will to Believe," "The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life," "On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings," "What Makes a Life Significant?" and Pragmatism, chapters 2 and 6, in Pragmatism and other Essays, ed. Giles Gunn
  - \*William James, "Robert Gould Shaw, An Oration"
9. Th 9-29: Race, Ethnicity, and Cosmopolitanism
  - W. E. B. DuBois, The Souls of Black Folk, chapters 1, 2, 3, 9, 13, 14
  - Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man, chapters 1-7
- \*FIRST ESSAYS DUE BY 2:00 P.M. MONDAY, OCTOBER 3\***
10. Tu 10-4: Progressive Reform, the Social Gospel, and Social Settlements
  - Jane Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House, chapters 2, 4-10, 18
  - \*Walter Rauschenbusch, Christianity and the Social Crisis, selection
11. Th 10-6: Progressive Education and Democracy
  - \*John Dewey, Political Writings, pp. 59-76, 110-124

John Dewey, "Philosophy and Democracy," in AIT, 208-216

12. Tu 10-8: The Transformation of American Law

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., "Natural Law," in AIT, 204-207

\*Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., "The Path of the Law," "A Soldier's Faith"

\*Louis D. Brandeis, Brandeis on Democracy, 25-36, 51-66, 94-102

13. Th 10-13: Pragmatism and Progressive Reform

Walter Lippmann, Drift and Mastery, Intro. & chapters 1-3, 8-10, 13-16

Randolph Bourne, "Trans-National America," "Twilight of Idols," in AIT, 177-194

14. Tu 10-18: Varieties of Modernism and Anti-modernism

\*Gertrude Stein, The Making of Americans, selection from Introduction

Henry Adams, The Education of Henry Adams, chapters 1, 4, 22, 25, 31, 35

15. Th 10-20: Hypochondria of the Soul and the Search for Community

\*Joseph Wood Krutch, The Modern Temper, in AIT, 224-232

\*Walter Lippmann, Public Opinion, selection

\*John Dewey, The Public and Its Problems, selection

Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man, chapters 8-17

16. Tu 10-27: Debating Democracy

John Dewey, Liberalism and Social Action

\*Reinhold Niebuhr, "The Pathos of Liberalism"

\*Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1944 State of the Union Address, view on youtube

**17. Tu 10-18: MID-TERM EXAM**

18. Tu 11-1: The Vital Center

Reinhold Niebuhr, The Children of Light and . . . Darkness, in AIT, 285-291

Whittaker Chambers, Witness, in AIT, 325-337

John Courtney Murray, We Hold These Truths, in AIT, 364-371

Daniel Bell, "The End of Ideology in the West," in AIT, 372-378

19. Th 11-3: Race and Civil Rights

Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma, selection in AIT, 276-284

Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," selection in AIT, 475-482

Malcolm X, "The Ballot or the Bullet," view on youtube

20. Tu 11-8: Race, Modernism, and Identity

Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man, chapters 18-25 and epilogue

21. Th 11-10: Art, Mass Culture, and Cultural Criticism

Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," in AIT, 257-269

\*Robert Lowell, "For the Union Dead"

\*Allen Ginsburg, "A Supermarket in California"

**\*\*SECOND ESSAYS DUE BY 2:00 P.M. MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14\*\***

22. Tu 11-15: New Left, New Right

\*Students for a Democratic Society, The Port Huron Statement

Ayn Rand, "Man's Rights," in AIT, 411-416

Milton Friedman, Capitalism and Freedom, selection in AIT, 401-410

Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man, selection in AIT, 490-499

23. Th 11-17: Post-modernism

T.S. Kuhn, Structure of Scientific Revolutions, selection in AIT, 458-466

\*Clifford Geertz, Interpretation of Cultures, selection

John Rawls, "The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus," in AIT, 544-561

Richard Rorty, Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity, viii-95, 189-198

24. Tu 11-22: Feminism Reborn

Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique, selection in AIT, 467-474

\*Judith Butler, Gender Trouble, selection

\*Joan Williams, Unbending Gender, Preface, Introduction, chapters 2, 8

25. Th 11-29: Multi-culturalism and Cosmopolitanism

David Hollinger, Postethnic America, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., entire

Henry Louis Gates, "Loose Canons," in AIT, 572-584

26. Tu 12-1: Recent American Social and Political Thought

Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," in AIT, 579-603

Stewart Brand, Whole Earth Discipline: An Ecopragmatist Manifesto, selection in AIT, 621-636

\*Barack Obama, Dreams from My Father, chapters 1-4, Epilogue

**\*\*\*THIRD ESSAYS DUE BY 2:00 P.M. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8\*\*\***

## Recommended Reading

Students wishing to do further reading should begin by consulting the excellent discussions of secondary sources throughout Hollinger and Capper, The American Intellectual Tradition; at the end of each essay in Richard Wightman Fox and James T. Kloppenberg, eds., A Companion to American Thought (1995, 1998); and in the notes to the articles in Theodore Porter and Dorothy Ross, eds., The Cambridge History of Science, vol. 7, The Modern Social Sciences (2003). The best sources for current work in the field of modern American intellectual history are the journals Modern Intellectual History and Journal of the History of Ideas. The following list of recommended reading is keyed to the units in History 1330.

1. Thomas Bender, "Intellectual and Cultural History," in Eric Foner, The New American History, 2nd edition (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997).  
William Bouwsma, "From History of Ideas to History of Meaning," Journal of Interdisciplinary History 12 (1981): 279-91.  
John Higham, "The Study of American Intellectual History," in John Higham, Writing American History (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1970).  
John Higham and Paul Conkin, eds., New Directions in American Intellectual History (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979).  
Mark Bevir, The Logic of the History of Ideas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).  
James T. Kloppenberg, "Intellectual History, Democracy, and the Culture of Irony," in Melvyn Stokes, ed., The State of American History (London: Berg, 2002).
2. Carl N. Degler, In Search of Human Nature: The Decline and Revival of Interest in Darwinism in American Social Thought (1991).  
Ronald L. Numbers and John Stenhouse, eds., Desseminating Darwinism: The Role of Place, Race, Religion, and Gender (1999).
3. Robert Bannister, Social Darwinism: Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1979).  
John L. Thomas, Alternative America: Henry George, Edward Bellamy, Henry Demarest Lloyd and the Adversary Tradition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983).
4. David Shi, Facing Facts: Realism in American Thought and Culture, 1850-1920 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).  
Daniel H. Borus, Writing Realism: Howells, James, and Norris in the Mass Market (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).
5. Robert Berkhofer, The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present (New York: Knopf, 1978).  
James Gilbert, Perfect Cities: Chicago's Utopias of 1893 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
6. Lawrence Goodwyn, Democratic Promise: The Populist Movement in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976).  
Thomas Haskell, The Emergence of Professional Social Science: The American Social Science Association and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Authority, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).  
Dorothy Ross, The Origins of American Social Science (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

7. Nancy Cott, The Grounding of Modern Feminism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).  
 Rosalind Rosenberg, Beyond Separate Spheres: Intellectual Roots of Modern Feminism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).  
 Ann J. Lane, To Herland and Beyond: The Life and Work of Charlotte Perkins Gilman (New York: Pantheon Books, 1990).
8. R. W. B. Lewis, The Jameses: A Family Narrative (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1991).  
 Gerald Myers, William James: His Life and Thought (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).  
 Bruce Kuklick, The Rise of American Philosophy: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1860-1930 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).
9. David Levering Lewis, W. E. B. DuBois: Biography of a Race, 1869-1919 (New York: Henry Holt, 1993).  
 Ross Posnock, Color and Culture: Black Writers and the Making of the Modern Intellectual (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).
10. Eldon Eisenach, The Lost Promise of Progressivism (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996).  
 Allen Davis, American Heroine: The Life and Legend of Jane Addams (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).  
 Kathryn Kish Sklar, Florence Kelley and the Nation's Work: The Rise of Women's Political Culture, 1830-1900 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).
11. Robert B. Westbrook, John Dewey and American Democracy (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).  
 Louis Menand, The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2001).
12. Morton Horwitz, The Transformation of American Law, 1870-1960: The Crisis of Legal Orthodoxy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).  
 Robert W. Gordon, ed., The Legacy of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).  
 Phillippa Strum, Brandeis: Beyond Progressivism (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993).
13. Daniel T. Rodgers, Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).  
 James T. Kloppenberg, Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870-1920 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).
15. Henry F. May, The End of American Innocence: The First Years of Our Own Time, 1912-1917 (1959; New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 3-20, 219-249, 302-333.  
 Christine Stansell, American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century (New York: Henry Holt, 2000).  
 Robert M. Crunden, American Salons: Encounters with European Modernism, 1885-1917 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

T. J. Jackson Lears, No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920 (New York: Pantheon, 1981).

Casey Nelson Blake, Beloved Community: The Cultural Criticism of Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank, and Lewis Mumford (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

16. Richard H. Pells, Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

Ann Douglas, Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995).

17. Edward Purcell, The Crisis of Democracy Theory: Scientific Naturalism and the Problem of Value (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1973).

Richard Wightman Fox, Reinhold Niebuhr (New York: Pantheon, 1985).

18. Neil Jumonville, Critical Crossings: The New York Intellectuals in Postwar America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

David A. Hollinger, Science, Jews, and Secular Culture: Studies in Mid-Twentieth-Century American Intellectual History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

Howard Brick, Daniel Bell and the Decline of Intellectual Radicalism: Social Theory and Political Reconciliation in the 1940s (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986).

19. Walter A. Jackson, Gunnar Myrdal and America's Conscience: Social Engineering and Racial Liberalism, 1938-1987 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

Richard H. King, Civil Rights and the Idea of Freedom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

20. Jerry Watts, Heroism and the Black Intellectual: Ralph Ellison, Politics, and Afro-American Intellectual Life (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

Alan Nadel, Invisible Criticism: Ralph Ellison and the American Canon (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988).

21. Michael Kammen, American Culture American Tastes: Social Change and the Twentieth Century (New York: Knopf, 1999), chapters 1 and 5.

Mark Krupnick, Lionel Trilling and the Fate of Cultural Criticism (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1986).

Richard Wightman Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears, eds., The Power of Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

22. James Miller, "Democracy Is in the Streets": From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987).

J. David Hoeveler, Jr., Watch on the Right: Conservative Intellectuals in the Reagan Era (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991).

John Patrick Diggins, The Rise and Fall of the American Left (New York: Norton, 1992).

23. Morris Dickstein, ed., The Revival of Pragmatism: New Essays on Social Thought, Law, and Culture (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), pp. 1-53, 83-234, 418-434.

Cornel West, The American Evasion of Philosophy (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989)

Richard J. Bernstein, The New Constellation: The Ethical-Political Horizons of Modernity/Postmodernity (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991).

24. Seyla Benhabib, Judith Butler, Drucilla Cornell, and Nancy Fraser, Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange (London: Routledge, 1995).

Dawn Keetley and John Pettegrew, eds., Public Women, Public Words: A Documentary History of American Feminism, vol. 3: 1960 to the Present (Lanham, MD.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002).

25. Werner Sollors, ed., Theories of Ethnicity: A Classical Reader (New York: New York University Press, 1996).

Werner Sollors, Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

Cornel West, Race Matters (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993).

26. Michael Sandel, Democracy's Discontent: America in Search of a Public Philosophy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

Rogers M. Smith, Civic Ideals: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U. S. History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

Jedediah Purdy, For Common Things: Irony, Trust, and Commitment in America Today (New York: Knopf, 1999).

James T. Kloppenberg, The Virtues of Liberalism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Nancy Rosenblum, Membership and Morals: The Personal Uses of Pluralism in America (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

Robert Putnam, Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

Theda Skocpol, Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003).