

Professor Dumm  
Political Science 334  
American Political Thought  
Fall, 2011  
Office Hours: Monday 3:30 to 5 and by appointment

This course is an exploration of some of the key ideas that have informed American political thought over since the Puritan settlement. It does not pretend to be comprehensive, but will instead focus on thinkers who, for the most part, have approached problems concerning the American experience as writers, more than as politicians.

All relevant reading should be done before the class meeting devoted to its discussion.

You will be given three essay assignments during the course of the semester. The final grade will be based on your performance on those assignments, as well as by your attendance and participation, in the following sense: if you are close to the next higher grade in final evaluation and I am able to note that you have come to class faithfully and contributed constructively to discussion, either by responding to questions or by appearing interested, I will be inclined to bump you to a higher grade. Participation is crucial to the success of a course such as this, and good discussion depends upon careful preparation of materials. Paper assignments will be distributed as we reach general consensus about where we are in the development of the course, but I have marked on the calendar the anticipated dates of assignments and due dates.

Books for Purchase available at Amherst Books, downtown Amherst.

Jason Frank, Constituent Moments (Duke University Press) CM

Louis Hartz, The Liberal Tradition in America (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich) LT

All other readings will be on e-reserve.

9/6 Introduction: Liberalism/Democracy

Louis Hartz, The Concept of a Liberal Society," LT, Jason Frank, "Constituent Moments," CM

I. Foundational Thoughts

9/8 Puritan beginnings, Quaker Ends: The Mayflower Compact

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th\\_century/mayflower.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/mayflower.asp) A Model of Christian Charity  
<http://religiousfreedom.lib.virginia.edu/sacred/charity.html>, Frame of Government of Pennsylvania, May 5, 1682, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th\\_century/pa04.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/pa04.asp)

9/13 Revolution, I: Jefferson, "A Summary View of the Rights of British America,"

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/jeffsumm.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/jeffsumm.asp), "The Declaration of Independence," <http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/>

9/15 Revolution, II: Tom Paine, Common Sense, "On the Origin of Design of Government in General, with Concise Remarks on the English Constitution"  
<http://www.bartleby.com/133/1.html>

9/20 Revolution III: Hannah Arendt, "The Meaning of Revolution," Jason Frank, "Revolution and Reiteration"CM

9/22 Republicanism: Federalist 10, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/fed10.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed10.asp), Constitution of the United States, (excluding all amendments)  
<http://www.usconstitution.net/const.html>

9/27 Sovereignty issues: Calhoun, South Carolina Exposition and Protest, [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/South\\_Carolina\\_Exposition\\_and\\_Protest](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/South_Carolina_Exposition_and_Protest), Hartz, "The Reactionary Enlightenment"LT

## II. Democracy and Others

9/29 Tyranny of Majority, Tocqueville, Democracy in America, Volume One, Chapters 15, [http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/1\\_ch15.htm](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/1_ch15.htm) and 16 ,  
[http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/1\\_ch16.htm](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/1_ch16.htm)

10/4 Social Issues: Tocqueville, Democracy in America, Volume One, Chapter 18, [http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/1\\_ch18.htm](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/1_ch18.htm), Volume Two, Book 4, Chapter Six, [http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/ch4\\_06.htm](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/ch4_06.htm)

10/6 Emerson, Experience, I,  
<http://www.vcu.edu/engweb/transcendentalism/authors/emerson/essays/experience.html>

Fall Break:

10/13 Emerson, Experience, II, same text

## III. Liberal Individualism

10/18 Democratic Individuality: George Kateb, "Democratic Individuality and the Claims of Politics"

10/20 Self-Reliance, I: Emerson, The American Scholar,  
<http://www.vcu.edu/engweb/transcendentalism/authors/emerson/essays/amscholar.html>

10/25 Self-Reliance, II: Emerson, Self-reliance  
[http://public.wsu.edu/~wldciv/world\\_civ\\_reader/world\\_civ\\_reader\\_2/emerson.html](http://public.wsu.edu/~wldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_2/emerson.html)

10/27 Thoreau, from Walden, "Economy, ""Where I Lived, and What I Lived For"  
<http://www.princeton.edu/~batke/thoreau/>

11/1 Thoreau, from Walden, "Solitude," "Spring," Conclusion"  
<http://www.princeton.edu/~batke/thoreau/>

11/3 Thoreau, Civil Disobedience (Read Entire, Parts Two and Three as well).  
<http://thoreau.eserver.org/civil1.html>

IV. Slavery, the Nation, Race

11/8 Presidential Rhetoric, I: Lincoln, "House Divided," "Address at Cooper Institute"  
<http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/speeches/speechintro.htm>

11/10 Presidential Rhetoric, II: Lincoln, "First Inaugural," "Gettysburg Address," "Second Inaugural"  
<http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/speeches/speechintro.htm>

11/15 Dissensus: Jason Frank, "Staging Dissensus," Frederick Douglass, July 4th Speech,  
<http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/douglassjuly4.html>

11/17 W.E.B. Dubois, The Souls of Black Folk, "On Booker T. Washington," "On the Death of the First Born," <http://www.bartleby.com/114/> "The Talented Tenth,"  
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=174>

Thanksgiving Break

Twentieth Century Themes: Mass Democracy and Its Discontents

11/29: Public Opinion: Walter Lippman, "The World Outside and the Pictures in Our Heads", John Dewey, "Search for the Great Community"

12/1 Minority Voices,: James Baldwin, "Letter to My Nephew on the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Emancipation," Betty Friedan, "The Problem That Has No Name"

12/6 The Sixties, Youth Culture, "The Port Huron Statement"  
<http://www.h-net.org/~hst306/documents/huron.html>

12/8 The Sixties, Conservative Surge: Barry Goldwater's Acceptance Speech, 1964.  
<http://www.nationalcenter.org/Goldwater.html>

12/13 Concluding Class