University of Wisconsin  
Department of History  
Fall Semester 1990

Hist. 901  
Studies in American History

Professor Paul Boyer
Mondays, 1 - 3 p.m.

Readings in American Intellectual and Cultural History

We will read and discuss a wide range of recent books and essays in American intellectual and cultural history, not only surveying topics of interest but also exploring the various methodologies and types of evidence intellectual and cultural historians employ. (Note: If you believe that Richard A. Wines, Fertilizer in America [1985] belongs on the reading list, perhaps you should consider another seminar!)

Weekly Short Reviews. At our first meeting, each student will choose a book or article to read for each week from the lists attached. (Each student’s cumulative choices should result in about a 50-50 mix of books and articles.) Each student will then write four short (2-3 page) reviews of selected books or articles. You may write on any books or articles you choose, but the semester total must equal four. Please Xerox sufficient copies for distribution to the full class, plus two copies for the instructor. (One of these copies will be returned the following week with comments.) These critical reviews, such as one might write for the American Historical Review, should concisely summarize the work’s argument or main themes; discuss the organization and use of evidence; and critically assess strengths and weaknesses. On the weeks when you do not write a review essay, you should turn in a 2-3 paragraph statement about that week’s reading, offering a brief critical evaluation of it.

Longer Paper. Each student will also write a longer paper of 8-10 pages on one of the assigned books or articles, in which the analytical and critical discussion is enlarged and deepened. (The essays in Reviews in American History might serve as a model here.) This essay—which need not involve outside research or reading—may be submitted any time during the semester prior to the final due date: Fri., 12/14. If you wish, the longer paper may be an expanded version of one of your short reviews.

Oral Reports and Class Discussion. At each class meeting, three 10-minute oral reports will be presented, following a schedule to be worked out at the first meeting. These reports should summarize and critically evaluate the work, and suggest what it contributes (or fails to contribute) to our historical understanding. After each report, another designated student will comment for about 5 minutes on the report and raise questions about any matters left unclear. With luck, we will then have about 20 minutes for general discussion of each report. Active discussion participation by all seminar students is expected.

Availability. Most of these books and journals should be available in the Historical Society Library. If you can’t locate a book or journal, contact Prof. Boyer at once to arrange for an alternative assignment.

Office Hours. Mon. 3-5 or by appt., B105A, Old Observatory (2-8151)
Week 2 (Sept. 17) - The Seventeenth Century

T.H. Breen, THE CHARACTER OF A GOOD RULER: ... PURITAN POLITICAL IDEAS IN NEW ENGLAND (1970)
Norman Fiering, MORAL PHILOSOPHY AT 17TH CENTURY HARVARD: A DISCIPLINE IN TRANSITION (1981)
David D. Hall, [New book on American colonial culture]

Theodore Dwight Bozeman, "The Puritans' 'Errand Into the Wilderness' Reconsidered" NEQ, 159 (Spring 1986).
Week 3 (Sept. 24) - The Eighteenth Century


Richard Bushman, FROM PURITAN TO YANKEE: CHARACTER AND SOCIAL ORDER IN CONNECTICUT, 1690-1765 (1967).


Carol Sue Humphrey, "The Revolutionary Press: Source of Unity or Diversity?" AM. JOURNALISM, Fall 1989, 245-256.


Week 4 (Oct. 1) - The Antebellum Era (I): Political and Social Thought; Reform

Thomas Bender, TOWARD AN URBAN VISION: IDEAS AND INSTITUTIONS IN NINETEENTH CENTURY AMERICA (1980)
Nancy Cott, THE BONDS OF WOMANHOOD: "WOMAN’S SPHERE" IN NEW ENGLAND, 1780-1835 (1977)
Lawrence W. Levine, BLACK CULTURE AND BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS: AFRO-AMERICAN FOLK THOUGHT FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM (1977)
Daniel T. Rodgers, CONTESTED TRUTHS: KEYWORDS IN AMERICAN POLITICS SINCE INDEPENDENCE (1987)
Carl Siracusa, A MECHANICAL PEOPLE: PERCEPTIONS OF THE INDUSTRIAL ORDER IN MASSACHUSETTS, 1815-1860 (1979)
Leonard I. Sweet, BLACK IMAGES OF AMERICA, 1784-1870 (1976)
Anne Taylor, VISIONS OF HARMONY: A STUDY IN 19TH CENTURY MILLENARIANISM (1987)

Amy S. Lang, "Slavery and Sentimentalism: The Strange Career of Augustine St. Clair [character in UNCLE TOM'S CABIN], WOMEN'S STUDIES, 12 (1986), 31-54.
Anne Scott, "Women's Perspective on the Patriarchy in the 1850s," JAH, June 1974.
Week 5 (Oct. 8) - Antebellum Era (II): Culture, Religion, Literature, Science

Nina Baym, NOVELS, READERS, AND REVIEWERS: RESPONSES TO FICTION IN ANTEBELLUM AMERICA (1984)
Jon Butler, AWASH IN A SEA OF FAITH: CHRISTIANIZING THE AM. PEOPLE (1990)
Joseph J. Ellis, AFTER THE REVOLUTION: PROFILES OF EARLY AMERICAN CULTURE (1979)
Lawrence J. Friedman, INVENTION OF THE PROMISED LAND (1975).
David Grimsted, MELODRAMA UNVEILED: AMERICAN THEATER AND CULTURE, 1800-1850 (198)
Karen Haltunnen, CONFIDENCE MEN AND PAINTED WOMEN: A STUDY OF MIDDLE CLASS CULTURE IN AMERICA 1830-1870 (1983)
Barbara Novak, AM. PAINTING OF THE 19TH CENTURY (1979)
Joel Porte, EMERSON AND THOREAU: TRANSCENDENTALISTS IN CONFLICT (1966)
Anne C. Rose, TRANSCENDENTALISM AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT (1981)
R. Jackson Wilson, FIGURES OF SPEECH: AMERICAN WRITERS AND THE LITERARY MARKETPLACE FROM BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO EMILY DICKINSON (1989)

Mac E. Barrick, "The Log Cabin as Cultural Symbol," MATERIAL CULTURE, Spring 1986
Susan Juster, "In a Different Voice,' Male and Female Narratives of Conversion in Post-Revolutionary America," AQ, March 1989.
Week 6 (Oct. 15) - The Gilded Age

Howard Feinstein, *BECOMING WILLIAM JAMES*
Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: ... CULTURAL HIERARCHY IN AMERICA* (1988)
Albert McLean, *AMERICAN VAUDEVILLE AS RITUAL* (1965)
Clifford H. Scott, *LESTER FRANK WARD* (1976)
Edward A. White, *SCIENCE AND RELIGION IN AMERICAN THOUGHT: THE IMPACT OF NATURALISM* (1952)


Week 7 (Oct. 29) - THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Bruce Clayton, FORGOTTEN PROPHET: THE LIFE OF RANDOLPH BOURNE (1985)
Peter Conn, IDEOLOGY AND IMAGINATION IN AMERICA, 1898-1917 (1984)
George Cotkin, WILLIAM JAMES: PUBLIC PHILOSOPHER (1989)
Daniel J. Kevles, IN THE NAME OF EUGENICS (1985)
Idus Newby, JIM CROW’S DEFENSE: ANTI-NEGRO THOUGHT IN AMERICA, 1900-1930 (1965)
Rosalind Rosenberg, BEYOND SEPARATE SPHERES: INTELLECTUAL ROOTS OF MODERN FEMINISM (1982)
H. Standish Thayer, MEANING AND ACTION: A STUDY OF AMERICAN PRAGMATISM (1973)
Alan Trachtenberg, READING AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHS (1989). [Brady to Evans]
Hamilton Cravens, "The Abandonment of Evolutionary Social Theory in America," AMERICAN STUDIES, Fall 1971. (Sociological theory, 1890-1920)
Week 8 (Nov. 5) - THE TWENTIES

Nancy F. Cott, THE GROUNDING OF MODERN FEMINISM (1987)
James Hoopes, VAN Wyck Brooks: IN SEARCH OF AMERICAN CULTURE (1977)
Nathan Huggins, HARLEM RENAISSANCE (1971).
Cecilia Tichi, SHIFTING GEARS: TECHNOLOGY, LITERATURE, AND CULTURE IN MODERNIST AMERICA (1987)

Week 9 (Nov. 12) — THE 1930s and World War II

Sue Bridwell Beckham, DEPRESSION POST OFFICE MURALS AND SOUTHERN CULTURE (1989)
Clayton Koppes and Gregory D. Black, HOLLYWOOD GOES TO WAR: HOW POLITICS, PROFITS, AND PROPAGANDA SHAPED WORLD WAR II MOVIES (1987)
Donald Meyer, THE PROTESTANT SEARCH FOR POLITICAL REALISM, 1919-1941 (1960)
Marlene Park and Gerald Markowitz, DEMOCRATIC VISTAS, POST OFFICES, AND PUBLIC ART IN THE NEW DEAL (1984)
William Stott, DOCUMENTARY EXPRESSION AND THIRTIES AMERICA (1973)

Week 10 (Nov. 19) - the 1950s

Howard Brick, DANIEL BELL AND THE DECLINE OF INTELLECTUAL RADICALISM (1986)
John P. Diggins, UP FROM COMMUNISM: CONSERVATIVE ODYSSEYS IN AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY (1975)
Richard W. Fox, REINHOLD NIEBUHR (1985)
James Gilbert, A CYCLE OF OUTRAGE: AMERICA'S REACTION TO THE JUVENILE DELINQUENT IN THE 1950s (1986)
Irving Louis Horowitz, C. WRIGHT MILLS: AN AMERICAN UTOPIAN (1983)
Ronald Lora, CONSERVATIVE MINDS IN AMERICA (1971)
Elaine Tyler May, HOMEWARD BOUND: AMERICAN FAMILIES IN THE COLD WAR ERA (1988)
Ellen Schrecker, NO IVORY TOWER: MCCARTHYISM AND THE UNIVERSITIES (1986)

Donald Fleming, "Roots of the New Conservation Movement," PERSPECTIVES IN AMERICAN HISTORY, New Series, 6 (1972), 7-91.
Week 11 (Nov. 26) - The Sixties

Morris Dickstein, GATES OF EDEN: AMERICAN CULTURE IN THE SIXTIES (1977)
Todd Gitlin, THE SIXTIES (1987)
George H. Nash, THE CONSERVATIVE INTELLECTUAL MOVEMENT IN AMERICA SINCE 1945 (1976)

Week 12 (Dec. 3) - THE CONTEMPORARY ERA - I: POLITICAL AND SOCIAL THOUGHT

Daniel Bell, THE CULTURAL CONTRADICTIONS OF CAPITALISM (1976)
Hester Eisenstein, CONTEMPORARY FEMINIST THOUGHT (1983)
Irving Kristol, REFLECTIONS OF A NEOCONSERVATIVE (1983)
Alan Wolfe, THE LIMITS OF LEGITIMACY (1977)
Garry Wills, REAGAN'S AMERICA: INNOCENTS AT HOME (1987)

Week 13 (Dec. 10) - THE CONTEMPORARY ERA, II: CULTURAL; INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

Mary F. Belenky, WOMEN’S WAYS OF KNOWING (1986)
John Fiske, UNDERSTANDING POPULAR CULTURE (1989)
E.D. Hirsch Jr., CULTURAL LITERACY (1987)
Richard Inglehart, CULTURAL SHIFT IN ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY (1981)
Neil Postman, AMUSING OURSELVES TO DEATH (1985)
Andrew Ross, NO RESPECT: INTELLECTUALS AND POPULAR CULTURE (1989)
Joseph Weitzenbaum, COMPUTER POWER AND HUMAN REASON (1976)

Lawrence Veysey, "Intellectual History and the New Social History," Higham and Conkins, Eds., NEW DIRECTIONS IN AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY.
Appendix

Week 2 - David D. Hall, WORLDS OF WONDER, DAYS OF JUDGMENT: POPULAR RELIGIOUS BELIEF IN EARLY NEW ENGLAND (1989)

Week 3 - Barry Schwartz, GEORGE WASHINGTON AND THE MAKING OF AN AMERICAN SYMBOL (1987)


Week 4 - Jean-Claude Lamberti, TOCQUEVILLE AND THE TWO DEMOCRACIES (1989)


Week 5 - Susan Danly and Leo Marx, Eds., THE RAILROAD IN AMERICAN ART: REPRESENTATION OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE (1988)


Week 9 - Cecile Whiting, ANTIFASCISM IN AMERICAN ART (1989)


Week 13 - Stuart Ewen, ALL CONSUMING IMAGES: THE POLITICS OF STYLE IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA (1988)
