

COMMERCIALISM, IDENTITY, AND DIFFERENCE
American Political Thought

Political Science 5603
American Political Thought
Fall 2009

Hours: MW 2:00 – 4:00
TTh 1:00 – 3:00
(or by appointment)

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PURPOSE: The American founders put it this way: freedom and minority rights are best protected by a large extended commercial republic. Commercial culture, diversity, and justice, they claimed, would all thrive together. The results are mixed. The tie that binds Americans together and protects their freedoms is commerce, and commercialism has provided freedom and opportunity for millions. Yet commercialism has also aided and abetted great evils, like slavery and near-genocide against a people judged to be insufficiently commercial, indigenous Americans. The American political identity has often been achieved at the expense of those who do not easily fit its imperatives. This course is designed to introduce students to major debates surrounding diversity and commercial culture, to familiarize them with the problems they pose for justice, to offer them conceptual strategies for living ethically amid diversity and commercialism, and to glimpse, perhaps, a new yet unapproachable America.

MATERIALS:

- BUTLER, Octavia, *Kindred*
- TOCQUEVILLE, Alexis *Democracy in America*
- JOHANNSEN, *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates*
- HAMILTON, MADISON & JAY, *The Federalist*,
- FRANKLIN (Ed.), *Three Negro Classics [Up From Slavery & Souls of Black Folk]*

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Through a series of short papers graduate students will demonstrate a superior ability to read, analyze and discuss major texts and ideas in the American political tradition, including concepts like freedom, commercialism, individualism, community, democracy, and justice.

RELATION TO MISSION: The course enhances graduate students= knowledge pertaining to American Political Thought comparing differing visions of American freedom. Students demonstrate the advanced ability to interpret political theory texts and to argue for their interpretations in writing.

REQUIREMENTS: The emphasis in the course will be on close textual analysis rather than on research. Writing is a very important part of this course. There will be four essay assignments, six to eight pages, and an essay final exam. The four essays will cover the debates represented in the class readings. They will be weighted as follows:

Essays	20% each
Final exam	20%

Plagiarism will be rewarded with an F for the course.

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
I	Aug 14	Introduction: Declaration of Independence (handout)

II	Aug 17 Aug 19 Aug 21	BUTLER, <i>Kindred</i> BUTLER, <i>Kindred</i> BUTLER, <i>Kindred</i>
III	Aug 24 Aug 26 Aug 28	1ST Essay Due Arendt, “Foundation II: <i>Novus Ordo Saeclorum</i> pp. 179-195. (handout) Arendt, “Foundation II: <i>Novus Ordo Saeclorum</i> pp. 195-215.
IV	Aug 31 Sep 1 Sep 3	1st (Alternative) Essay Due Federalist Papers Nos. 1-10, 15, Federalist Papers Nos. 23, 24, 37, 38, 39, 40. Federalist Papers No. 51
V.	Sep 7 Sep 9 Sep 11	Federalist Papers Nos. 52-66. Federalist Papers Nos. 67-77. Federalist Papers Nos. 78-85.
VI	Sep 14 Sep 16 Sep 18	Wolin, “Tending and intending a Constitution” (handout) Wolin, “Montesquieu and Publius: The Crisis of Reason (handout) Wolin, “E Pluribus Unum” (handout)
VII	Sep 21 Sep 23 Sep 25	2nd Essay Due TOCQUEVILLE pp. 39-61. TOCQUEVILLE pp. 62-100 TOCQUEVILLE pp. 100-137
VIII	Sep 28 Sep 30 Oct 2	TOCQUEVILLE, pp. 111-142 TOCQUEVILLE, pp. 143-184. TOCQUEVILLE, pp. 189-219.
IX	Oct 5 Oct 7 Oct 9	TOCQUEVILLE, pp. 221-249; 253-260. TOCQUEVILLE, pp. 289-313. Connolly, “Tocqueville, Territory and Violence.” (handout)
X	Oct 12 Oct 14	Walters, “Constitutionalism and Political Morality” (handout) Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience” (handout) Emerson, “Self-Reliance” “Politics” (handout)
XI	Oct 19 Oct 21 Oct 23	3rd Essay Due Storing, “Slavery and the Moral Foundations” (handout) Storing, “Slavery and the Moral Foundations” (handout)
XII	Oct 26 Oct 28 Oct 30	JOHANNSEN, pp. 3-36. JOHANNSEN, pp. 37-74. JOHANNSEN, pp. 75-161.
XIII	Nov 2 Nov 4 Nov 6	JOHANNSEN, pp. 162-244. JOHANNSEN, pp. 245-329. 4th Essay Due

XIV	Nov 9	FRANKLIN, (Washington) pp. 29-91
	Nov 11	FRANKLIN, (Washington) pp. 91-157
	Nov 13	FRANKLIN, (Washington) pp. 157-205
XV	Nov 16	FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 209-239.
	Nov 18	FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 240-270.
	Nov 20	FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 270-301
XVI	Nov 23	FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 301-337.
	Nov 30	FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 301-337.
	Dec 2	FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 337-354.
	Dec 4	FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 337-389.

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 9, 8:00 – 10:00.
 No early exams, no special deals