**Political Science 5025:**

# American Political Thought

(1620-1865)

Mark Button, Ph.D. Spring 2010

Department of Political Science WEB L110

University of Utah T/H 9:10-10:30

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Office Hours: T/H 10:30-11:30 (or by appointment)



**Course Description:**

This course provides students with an introduction to the study of American political thought from the colonial period to the age of Lincoln. The course is divided into the following thematic sections: (1) “Colonial Origins: Faith, Order, and Liberty” with a focus on the contributions of Puritanism to American political and cultural development; (2) “A Right to Revolution?” in which we address the moral and political ideas that helped shape the American Revolution and the responses to it; (3) “Novus Ordo Seclorum,” is dedicated to a critical study of the constitution and the debates that surrounded its ratification; (4) “American Democracy: Promise and Peril” focuses on early nineteenth century politics, slavery, the exclusion of women, and the forced removal of native inhabitants, with particular focus given to the justifications for these and other practices of repression; (5) “Lincoln and the Refounding of America,” assesses Lincoln’s role in American political life before and after the Civil War; and (6) “The American Self: Democracy and Individualism” concludes the course with a study of the writings of Emerson and Thoreau.

**Course Goals and Expectations:**

Throughout this course students will:

* Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental moral and political ideas that helped shape the history of the American republic from the colonial period to the end of the Civil War.
* Demonstrate an ability to identify and critically assess the central normative claims that were made at various critical stages of American historical development.
* Demonstrate the ability to critically interpret foundational documents and key historical figures in a way that considers the moral and political implications of these intellectual sources on our present political system and culture.

This is an upper-division course that analyzes political thought within its historical context. As such, careful reading, thoughtful deliberation, and critical analysis will be expected of students for every facet of this course. I require every student paper to reflect best writing practices for advanced college students. If you have concerns about your writing competency you should seek assistance from the University Writing Center in the Marriott Library. A more detailed list of course requirements follow immediately below.

**Course Requirements:**

**1. Participation: 10%.** I expect students to come to class prepared to actively contribute to our discussions of the required readings, every session. “Participation” obviously assumes your attendance, but further entails such things as: raising questions, expressing confusions and/or concerns, pressing objections and disagreements, considering the implications and consequences of ideas, theories or beliefs, introducing new arguments or critically interrogating previous arguments, etc.Your grade will also be determined by your level of participation in periodic group discussion circles held throughout the semester.

* Consistent attendance with consistent, informed, and effective participation: 8-10%
* Consistent attendance with little to no participation: 6-7%
* Inconsistent attendance with inconsistent and ill-informed participation: 5% or less.
* Inconsistent attendance with no participation: 0%

Please note: If there is not sufficient, wide-spread, and **informed** participation during the semester I will periodically distribute quizzes to test for reading and course content comprehension. These quizzes will be utilized in determining participation scores for final grades.

**2. Critical Response Papers: 20% each.** Three short critical response papers are required in this course. These papers will be written in response to a required question distributed at least four days in advance (see schedule listed below). Each paper will be at least three pages long (typed, double-spaced, with one inch margins and twelve point font). In these papers you will be expected to provide a brief summary of the central ideas from the relevant required readings, and provide an independent critical analysis of the main arguments under consideration. Each critical response paper should reflect your careful, detailed, and thoughtful evaluation of the primary materials discussed in this course. All response papers will be submitted at *the beginning of class* on the date for which they are due.

Grade Policy:

18-20 A

16-17.9 B

14-15.9 C

12-13.9 D

0-11.9 E

Please note: there are no “make-up assignments,” “re-writes,” or “extra credit” options in this course. If you anticipate having a scheduling conflict you should contact me as soon as possible.

**3. Final Paper: 30%.** The final paper (6-7 pages) will cover some of the major thinkers, issues, and themes emphasized throughout the course. More information about this final assignment will be made available during the penultimate week of class.

**Final Papers are due no later than 12:00 p.m. on Monday, May 3rd. No exceptions.**

Late Paper Policy: All late papers, unaccompanied by a valid doctor’s note or previous advanced notification, will be graded down a half-letter grade for each date late.

Accommodations:

The University of Utah, Department of Political Science seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the instructor and to the Center for Disability Services, <http://disability.utah.edu/> 162 Olpin Union Bldg, 581-5020 (V/TDD) to make arrangements for accommodations. This information is available in alternative format with prior notification.

Student Academic Conduct:

**The University of Utah’s policies pertaining to Academic Misconduct and Dishonesty will be carefully observed and strictly enforced in this class. This policy appears on pages 11-13 of the 2000-2002 General Catalog and in the electronic Policy and Procedures Manual at** [**http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html**](http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html)

Any instance of plagiarism, or other forms of academic misconduct, will result in a failing grade for that assignment and may also result in a failing grade for the course. The University’s definition of plagiarism is as follows:

“Plagiarism” means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person's work in, or as a basis for, one's own work offered for academic consideration or credit or for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one's own, without attribution, any other individual’s words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression.

**Required Readings:** The following books are the required texts for this course. They are available for purchase at the University Bookstore.

*Classics of American Political and Constitutional Thought: Volume 1, Origins through the Civil War,* eds. Hammond, Hardwick, and Lubert (Hackett, 2007).

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Self-Reliance and Other Essays* (Dover)

Required Reserve Readings:

Throughout the semester I will place additional required readings on course reserve. Reserve Readings are available at the Reserve Desk of the Marriott Library. These readings, marked by an asterisk (\*), are available electronically through the Library’s web site. Many of the readings for this course are also available through the electronic public domain.

Please print off these reserve materials beforehand and bring them to class with you. **No Lap Tops or Cell phones during class time, please.**

Additional Resources:

The following is a short list of on-line resources that may also be of interest to you.

**From Revolution to Reconstruction**: A hypertext on American history from the colonial period to modern times: <http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/index.htm>

**Internet Modern History Sourcebook**, from Fordham University:

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook.html>

**The Avalon Project at Yale University Law School**, documents in Law, History, and Diplomacy: <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/avalon.htm>

**The Founders Constitution**, A join venture of University of Chicago Press and the Liberty Fund: <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/>

For additional information on Tocqueville, see the following web site: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/toc_intro.html>

**Course Schedule and Required Readings:**

Please Note: All assigned readings are to be completed prior to the class session for which they have been assigned. To participate in an effective manner during class (as required) you will need to read – and frequently re-read – the following assignments with some care. It is a good idea to take notes from the readings and bring the assigned materials with you to class.

1/12 **Course Introduction:**

The Study of American Political Thought: Ideals and Historical Realities

Introduction to Puritan Political Thought

# I. Colonial Origins: Faith, Order, and Liberty

1/14 American Constitutional Origins: Covenants, Compacts, and Charters

Read:

“Mayflower Compact” (1620) 7

John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity” (1630) 13

“Fundamental Orders of Connecticut” (1639) 8

Recommended:

“The Third Charter of Virginia” (1611)

“The Maryland Toleration Act” (July, 1645)

William Penn, “Frame of Government of the Province of Pennsylvania” (1683)

1/19 “The New England Way” and the Trouble with Toleration

Read:

John Winthrop, “Little Speech on Liberty” (1645) 18

\*“The Examination of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson at the Court at Newton” (1637)

Also available at: <http://www.annehutchinson.com/anne_hutchinson_trial_001.htm>

Recommended:

\*Roger Williams, “The Bloody Tenant of Persecution” (1643)

Nathaniel Ward, “The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam” (1647)

Jonathan Edwards, “Northampton Covenant” (1742)

# II. A Right to Revolution?

1/21 Liberty, Law, and the Problem of Power

Read:

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (selections) 50-64; 68-72

Jonathan Mayhew, “A Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission” (1750) 134

1/26 Order and Resistance

Read:

\*John Adams, “A Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law” (1765)

James Otis, “Rights of the Colonies Asserted and Proved” (1764) 154

Resolutions of the Stamp Act Congress (1765) 175

Recommended:

John Dickenson, “Letter from a Farmer” (1768)

John Adams, “Novanglus,” 1775; “Clarendon, no. 3” (1766)

Richard Bland, “An Inquiry into the Rights of the British Colonies (1766) 186

Thomas Hutchinson, “Speech of the Governor to the Two Houses” (January 6, 1773)

1/28 Reluctant Revolutionaries

Read:

Thomas Jefferson, “A Summary View of the Rights of British America” (1774) 249

“Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress,” (October 1774) 245

\*Edmund Burke, “Speech for Conciliation with the Colonies” (1775)

\*“Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking up Arms,” (July 6, 1775), available at: <http://www.nationalcenter.org/1775DeclarationofArms.html>.

Recommended:

John Wesley, “A Calm Address to Our American Colonies” (1775)

2/2 The Revolutionary Thomas Paine

Read:

Thomas Paine, selection from *Common Sense* (1776) 267

Thomas Paine, selection from *The Crisis,* no. 1 (1776) 318

**\***Paine, selections from *Rights of Man*

2/4 American Republicanism: Principles and Practice

Read:

“The Declaration of Independence” (1776) READ THIS CAREFULLY, xvii

John Adams, “Thoughts on Government” (1776) 291

James Madison, “Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments” (1785) 359

**First Critical Response Paper Distributed**

Recommended:

John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, selections from *Cato’s Letters* (1719-23)

John Witherspoon, “The Dominion of Providence over the Passions of Men” (1776)

Carter Braxton, “A Native of this Colony,” (1776)

**III. Novus Ordo Seclorum**

**2/9 First Critical Response Paper Due**

Crisis of the New Regime: Authority, Liberty, and Legitimacy

Read:

“The Articles of Confederation” (1777/1781) 332

Richard Henry Lee, Letter to Sam Adams, (March 14, 1785) 363

Robert Yates, “Brutus Essays,” (1787-1788) 534-542; 556-558

Recommended:

“An Old Whig,” no. 5 (1787)

Melancton Smith, Speeches (1788)

2/11The Constitutional Founding: Constraining the Demos

Read:

The Constitution of the United States

“Publius,” *Federalist Papers*: \*1,\*6, 7, 8, 9, 10

Recommended:

David Hume, selections from *Essays Moral, Political and Literary* (1742/77)

Montesquieu, selections from *Spirit of the Laws* (1748)

2/16 The Constitutional Founding: Liberty and Law I

Read:

“Publius,” *Federalist Papers*: 11, 14, 15, 39, 47

2/18 The Constitutional Founding: Liberty and Law II

Read:

“Publius,” *Federalist Papers*: 48, 49, 51, 54, 55, 63, 70

Thomas Jefferson, Letter to Madison, March 15, 1789

**Second Critical Response Paper Distributed**

**IV. American Democracy: Promise and Peril**

**2/23** **Second Critical Response Paper Due**

American Mores/American Nationalism

Read:

George Washington, “Farewell Address” (1796) 651

James Madison, “A Candid State of the Parties” (1792), 633

J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782): “What is an American?” 342

Recommended:

Segoyewatha, “Speech in Response to White Missionaries” (1805) and “Speech in Response to Land Speculators” (1811) 600

Tully, No. 1 and 3 (1794)

2/25 Virtue Ethics, American style

Read:

Benjamin Franklin, selections from *The Autobiography,* esp. 717-730

Recommended:

Phillis Wheatley, Selected Poems (1770-1776)

3/2 Thomas Jefferson and his Agonistes

Read:

Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1782) 347

Alexander Hamilton, “Report on Public Credit” (1790) 613

Jefferson, “On the Constitutionality of a National Bank” (1791) 615

Jefferson, Letter to James Madison (1794) 648

Alexander Hamilton, “Memorandum on the French Revolution” (1794) 649

Recommended:

George Washington, Letter to Henry Lee, August 26, 1794

Hamilton, “Report on the Subject of Manufacturers” (1791)

3/4 Jeffersonian Democracy

Read:

Jefferson, Draft of the Kentucky Resolutions (1798) 664

Jefferson, First Inaugural Address (1801) 688

Jefferson, Letter to John Adams (October 28, 1813) 742

\*Jefferson, Letter to Thomas Law (June 13, 1814)

Jefferson, Letter to Kercheval (July 12, 1826) 744

3/9 Virtues and Vices of American Democracy

Read:

Alexis de Tocqueville, selections from *Democracy in America* (Vol. I 1835) 770-788

Recommended:

Fisher Ames, “The Mire of Democracy,” (1805)

Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Politics,” (1844)

3/11 *Democracy in America*

Read:

Alexis de Tocqueville continued: from Vol II (1840) 788-801

**Third Critical Response Paper Distributed**

**3/16 Third Critical Response Paper Due**

A White Man’s Republic, Part I

Read:

John Marshall, *Cherokee Nation v. State of Georgia* (1831)

Andrew Jackson, “Message on the Removal of Southern Indians” (1835)

“Memorial and Protest of the Cherokee Nation” (1836)

\*Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “The Seneca Falls Declaration” (1848)

Recommended:

Tecumseh, Three Speeches (1811-1812)

Theophilus Fisk, *Capital against Labor,* selections(1835)

David Henshaw, “Remarks upon the Rights and Powers of Corporations” (1837)

\*Sarah Grimke, selection from *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes* (1838)

\*Margaret Fuller, selection from Woman in the Nineteenth Century (1845)

3/18 A White Man’s Republic, Part II

Read:

David Walker, “Appeal in Four Articles to the Colored Citizens of the World” (1830) 964

Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” (1852) 1013

##### William Lloyd Garrison, selections from *The Liberator* (1831-1844) 973

Chief Justice Roger Taney, *Dred Scott v. Sanford* (1857) 1030

Recommended:

Richard Furman, “Exposition of the Views of Baptists, Relative to the Coloured Population in the United States” (1822) 953

##### James Madison, Letter to Edward Everett (August 28, 1830)

George Fitzhugh, selections from *Sociology for the South* (1854)

**Spring Break: March 22nd – 26th**

3/30 Slavery and Liberty in the American Constitutional Order

Read:

John C. Calhoun, selections from *A Disquisition on Government* (c. late 1840s)

Daniel Webster, Speech in the U.S. Senate, March 7th, 1850. Available at: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~dwebster/speeches/seventh-march.html>

Recommended:

R.W. Emerson, “The Fugitive Slave Law” (1851)

4/1 No Class (No foolin’)

**V. Lincoln and the Re-founding of America**

4/6 The Formation of Abraham Lincoln

Read:

Lincoln, “Address to the Young Men’s Lyceum of Springfield, IL” (1838) “Fragment on Slavery” (1854)

\*“Speech at Peoria,” (1854)

4/8 Lincoln before the War

Read:

“House Divided Speech at Springfield, IL” (June 16, 1858)

Lincoln and Stephen Douglas, Selected Debates, (1858)

“Address at Cooper Institute,” (February 27, 1860)

“First Inaugural Address,” (March 4, 1861)

4/13 Lincoln, Leadership, and Democratic Politics

Read:

Alexander Stephens, “Cornerstone Speech,” (March 21, 1861)

Lincoln, Letter to Horace Greeley (August 22, 1862), Letter to Erastus Corning, et. al., (June 12, 1863), “Address at Gettysburg,” 1863; “Second Inaugural Address,” March 4, 1865

**VI. The American Self: Democracy and Individualism**

4/15 Ralph Waldo Emerson

Read:

Emerson, “Divinity School Address” (1838)

Emerson, “Self-Reliance” (1841)

Emerson, “the Over-Soul” (1841

Recommended:

\*Emerson, “Experience,” “Character,” and “Politics”

4/20 Henry David Thoreau and American Individualism

Read:

Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience” (1849)

\*Martin Luther King, Jr., “The American Dream”

**4/22 Final Paper Assignment Distributed**

Dreams of Democracy

Read:

\*Walt Whitman, “Democratic Vistas”

4/27 Course Review and Conclusion

**Final Paper Due: Monday, May 3rd 12:00.**

Turn-in to my office: OSH 154A.