

SOC 348

The Sociology of Conservatism

Fall 2009

Office Hours: M: 11-12:00
Th: 11-12:00
and by appointment

Mr. Imber

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*Conservatives are not necessarily stupid, but most stupid people are conservatives. **John Stuart Mill***

*Any man who is under 30, and is not a liberal, has not heart; and any man who is over 30, and is not a conservative, has no brains. **Winston Churchill***

COURSE READINGS:

The following books are available at the Wellesley College Bookstore:

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| Berkowitz, Peter, ed. | <i>Varieties of Conservatism in America</i> |
| Dillard, Angela D. | <i>Guess Who's Coming to Dinner Now?: Multicultural Conservatism in America</i> |
| Henrie, Mark C., ed. | <i>Arguing Conservatism: Four Decades of the Intercollegiate Review</i> |
| Lyons, Paul | <i>American Conservatism: Thinking It, Teaching It</i> |
| Muller, Jerry Z., ed. | <i>Conservatism: An Anthology of Social and Political Thought from David Hume to the Present</i> |
| Story, Ronald | <i>The Rise of Conservatism in America</i> |

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Two, typewritten, 8-10 page papers.

One, typewritten, term paper, 15-20 pages.

Two, class presentations, based on course readings

The **three papers assigned, in addition to class attendance, presentations, and participation**, form the basis for a grade during the term.

- 1) Conservatism in Perspective (Legacies): DUE: October 1.
- 2) Defining Contemporary Conservatism (Strategies): DUE: November 5.
- 3) Term Paper: Multicultural and Generational Conservatism: DUE: End of Finals

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

September 4: Introduction to the Course. Explanation of Assignments.

Background Reading: "Conservatism." Entry in *American Conservatism: An Encyclopedia*.

Part One: Conservatism in Historical Perspective

September 10: America and France, circa 1800, Two Types of Revolution

- Readings: Edmund Burke, *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol*, pp. 3-6 (e-reserve).
- Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, pp. 7-40 (e-reserve).
- Edmund Burke, "Preface" to *A Vindication of Natural Society*, in Muller, pp. 63-69.
- James Madison, "Federalist No. 49," in Muller, pp. 146-151.

September 17: Conservatism and Inequality

- Readings: Alexis de Tocqueville, letter to Gobineau, "The New Social Morality," pp. 202-207 (e-reserve).
- James Fitzjames Stephen, *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*, in Muller, pp. 189-209.
- W.H. Mallock, *Aristocracy and Evolution: A Study of the Rights, the Origin, and Social Functions of the Wealthier Classes*, in Muller, pp. 210-221.
- Joseph A. Schumpeter, "Aptitude and Social Mobility," in Muller, pp. 222-232,
- Edward Banfield, "The Future of the Lower Class" (*The Unheavenly City Revisited*), in Muller, pp. 338-357.
- Robert Nisbet, "The Urban Crisis Revisited," in Henrie, pp. 841-849.

September 24: Conservatism, Tradition, and Progress (or Modernity)

- Readings: Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Earth's Holocaust," pp. 245-267 (e-reserve).
- William Graham Sumner, "Sociological Fallacies, etc.," in Muller, pp. 233-248.
- Robert P. Kraynak, "Conservative Critics of Modernity: Can They Turn Back the Clock?" in Henrie, pp. 63-71.
- Thomas Molnar, "Tradition and Social Change," in Henrie, pp. 18-23.
- Donald Atwell Zoll, "On Tradition," in Henrie, pp. 24-34.

Part Two: Defining Contemporary Conservatism

October 1: What is Conservatism Now?

First Paper Due

- Readings: Michael Oakeshott, "On Being Conservative," pp. 567-600 (e-reserve).
- Mark C. Henrie, "Understanding Traditionalist Conservatism," in Berkowitz, pp. 3-30.

October 8: Conservatism and Libertarianism

Readings: Robert Nisbet, "Uneasy Cousins," in *Freedom and Virtue: Conservative/Libertarian Debate*, ed. George W. Carey (ISI, 1984), pp. 13-24 (e-reserve).

Richard A. Epstein, "Libertarianism and Character," in Berkowitz, pp. 75-102.

October 15: Conservatives on Culture and Education

Readings: Philip Rieff, "Toward a Theory of Culture," in Muller, pp. 411-420.

Arnold Gehlen, "On Culture, Nature, and Naturalness" and "Man and Institutions," in Muller, pp. 401-410.

Cleanth Brooks, "Means and Ends: Education in a Secular Age," in Henrie, pp. 321-329.

Peter Lawler, "The Dissident Professor," in Henrie, pp. 339-346.

October 22: Culture Wars

Readings: Irving Kristol, "Capitalism, Socialism, and Nihilism," pp. 627-644 (e-reserve).

Tod Lindberg, "Neo-conservatism's Liberal Legacy," in Berkowitz, pp. 129-157.

Peter Berkowitz, "If they can find time for feminist theory, they can find time for Edmund Burke" in *The Wall Street Journal* (June 19, 2009). (e-reserve)

October 29: The Necessity of More than One Point of View

Readings: Paul Lyons, *American Conservatism: Thinking It, Teaching It*

November 5: Diversities of Conservatism: Generations

Second Paper Due

Readings: Peter Berkowitz, "The Longer Way" (e-reserve)

Commentaries on Mary Eberstadt's edited anthology, *Why I Turned Right: Leading Baby Boom Conservatives Chronicle Their Political Journeys* (e-reserve)

November 12: Diversities of Conservatism: Minorities

Readings: Angela D. Dillard, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner Now? Multicultural Conservatism in America*, chapters 1-3.

November 19: Multicultural Conservatism

Readings: Dillard, chapter 4 and Conclusion

December 3: Rethinking Conservatism

Readings: Varia, "The State of Conservatism: A Symposium," in Henrie, pp. 737-765.

Mark C. Henrie, "Rethinking American Conservatism in the 1990s: The Struggle Against Homogenization," in Henrie, pp. 773-782.

December 10: Brief Reports on Term Projects