SOC 348

The Sociology of Conservatism

Fall 2010
Office Hours:  M: 11-12:00
Th: 11-12:00
and by appointment

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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:

Berkowitz, Peter, ed.  *Varieties of Conservatism in America*

Dillard, Angela D.  *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner Now?: Multicultural Conservatism in America*

Henrie, Mark C., ed.  *Arguing Conservatism: Four Decades of the Intercollegiate Review*

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

Muller, Jerry Z., ed.  *Conservatism: An Anthology of Social and Political Thought from David Hume to the Present*

Nisbet, Robert  *Conservatism: Dream and Reality*
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Two, typewritten, 8-10 page papers.

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

Two, in-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.


2) Defining Contemporary Conservatism (Strategies): DUE: November 11.

3) Term Paper: Varieties of Conservatisms: DUE: End of Finals

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

September 9: Introduction to the Course. Explanation of Assignments.

Background Reading: Bruce Frohnen, “Conservatism.” Entry in American Conservatism: An Encyclopedia. (e-reserve)

Part One: Conservatism in Historical Perspective

September 16: 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 23: Conservatism and Inequality


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.


September 30: Conservatism, Tradition, and Progress (or Modernity)


William Graham Sumner, “Sociological Fallacies, etc.,” in Muller, pp. 233-248.


Part Two: Defining Contemporary Conservatism

October 7: What is Conservatism Now?

First Paper Due


October 14: Conservatism and Libertarianism


October 21: Conservatives on Culture and Education


October 28: Culture Wars


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)

November 4: The Necessity of More than One Point of View

Readings: Paul Lyons, American Conservatism: Thinking It, Teaching It
November 11: Diversities of Conservatism: Generations

**Second Paper Due**

**Readings:**
- Robert Nisbet, *Conservatism: Dream and Reality*
- 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 18: Diversities of Conservatism: Minorities

**Readings:**

December 2: Multicultural Conservatism

**Readings:**
- Dillard, chapter 4 and Conclusion

December 9: Rethinking Conservatism

**Readings:**

**Brief Reports on Term Projects**