

"The foundation of our empire was not laid in the gloomy age of Ignorance and Superstition, but at an Epoch when the rights of man were better understood and more clearly defined than at any former period: the researches of the human mind after social happiness, have been carried to a great extent; the Treasures of knowledge, acquired through a long succession of years, by the labour of the free cultivation of Letters, the unbounded extension of Commerce, the progressive refinement of Manners, the general liberality of Sentiments, have had a meriting influence on mankind and increased the blessing of Society. At this auspicious period, the

Political Science 7980
Seminar in American Political Thought: The Founders and the Progressives
Fall 2011

As a matter of simple, linear time, we stand today as far from the Progressives as they stand from the American Founders. As the the program played on the radio by the Founders, the world decisively altered from the world of the late eighteenth century — not least as a consequence of economic, social, and political changes the Founders had encouraged — so the question now arises whether the world for which the Progressives wrote has now been similarly changed and thus is as much in need of rethinking as the Founders' world was (as the Founders would have said) in their time.

Both the Founders and the Progressives thought themselves to represent a new intellectual movement, an important intellectual movement in Europe: the Founders on the Enlightenment, the Progressives on historicism. They differed in many ways as well. The former drew their principles from nature, the latter from history. The former stressed liberty and individualism, the latter stressed equality and community. Both promoted a politics that incorporated the ideas and the faith of the Enlightenment.

In this course, we will examine each era or moment in itself and in relation to the other. Moreover, since the emergence of a large and active state is not a neutral act, as the movement of Progressivism and

Instructor: James Stoner, Stubbs 240
 (225) 578-2538 [office] or (504) 232-4300 [cell]
 poston@lsu.edu

Office Hours: Mondays, 2:00-3:30
 Wednesdays, 10:00-11:00, and by appointment

Books available for purchase:

- Michael Zuckert, *The Natural Rights Republic* (Notre Dame) [ISBN: 079
- Harry Jatta, *Crisis of the House Divided* (rev. Chicago, 2009; orig. 1958) [ISBN 978-0226391182]
- James Ceaser, *Nature and History in American Political Development* (Harvard
- *Political Science: Transforming the American Republic* (Cambridge, MA) [ISBN 978-0742549746]
- Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, *The Search for American Political*
- Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State* (Cambridge, 1992) [ISBN 978-0521288651]
- Herbert Goldhamer, *The Dreaming of America: A History of the American* (Cambridge, MA) [ISBN 978-1461064299]
- Irving Kristol, *The Neo-Conservative Persuasion: Selected Essays, 1942-2009* (Basic Books, 2011) [ISBN 978-0465020201]

Course requirements:

- Attendance at all class sessions and participation in class
- Four 2-page papers on the assigned reading, due in class (and sometimes to be read) [8/31 or 9/7; 9/14 or 9/21; 10/12 or 10/19; 10/26 or 11/2]
- Two 1-page bibliographic annotations [9/28 and 10/19]
- Research paper, 20-25 pages, on a topic approved by the instructor (preliminary presentation on 11/16; final paper due December 7)

SYLLABUS:

Wed 8/24 Introduction

James R. Stoner, Jr. "Is There a Political Philosophy in the Declaration of Independence?" *Intercollegiate Review*, vol. 40, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2005), pp. 3-11

I. The Founding

Wed. 9/7 Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*

Wed. 9/14 Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention, May 14-July 16, 1787, pp. 1-300

Wed., 9/21 Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention, July 17-September 17, pp. 302-659

Wed. 9/28 One book each from the Founding Library

II. Transition: The Civil War

Wed., 10/5 Jaffa, *Crisis of the House Divided*

III. Progressivism

Wed., 10/12 Orren and Stephen Skowronek, *The Search for American Political Development*

Skowronek, *Building New American States*

Wed. 10/19 Ceaser, *Nature and History in American Political Development*

Marini & Masugi, eds., *The Progressive Revolution in Politics and Political Science*

Wed. 10/26 selections from Edward Ross, Richard T. Ely, John D. Pomeroy, and Paul H. Pevsner

Pestritto & William J. Atto, eds., *American Progressivism: A Reader*

Wed. 11/6 Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*

Wed. 11/13 Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*

Wed., 11/20 One book each from the Progressive bibliography

IV. Presentation of Research

Wed. 11/16 Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*
and chosen research in a tentative conclusion

V. Deflections from the later Twentieth Century

Wed. 11/20 Irving Kristol, *The Neo-Conservative Dissensus: Selected Essays, 1949*