

Bellevue College

INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN POLITICAL CULTURE

Cultural & Ethnic Studies 160/Political Science 160

Item 5638 HYA/5361 HYA

Fall 2012 (9/18-12/07)

Credits: 5¹

Dr. Tate

(L-221) M-T, 11:30-12:20

(425) 564-2169, ttate@bellevuecollege.edu

Course Description

This course treats the ways in which political culture (APC) defines and shapes American political institutions, the policy process, political outcomes, and political life in general. Political culture--attitudes and orientations towards the political system and towards the role of the self in it (Almond & Verba)--may shed light on recurring "quarrels" in American politics and on the policy process. Political outcomes in the United States are not random but are structured and underpinned by a core set of values. The course seeks to identify and describe those core values and understand their role in the political structures, social-welfare, the market, and in Americans' self-perception. *Critical questions include* the origins, sources, and distinctive elements of American political culture (APC), how the political culture shapes and constrains political decisions and the institutions; the identifiable changes over time as a response to broad societal shifts, and what the future portends in a time of globalization. In this broad inquiry, we necessarily treat concepts such as democracy, liberalism, egalitarianism, individualism, exceptionalism, political community, and political culture itself.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the concept of political culture and interpret its function in political society
2. Identify the core elements of APC and evaluate the effects on American political life.
3. Describe and explain how the political culture shapes the political process and policy outcomes
4. Demonstrate high-order critical-thinking and effective writing.

Essential Reading Resources

The following are the core literature in American political culture, many of which are referenced in the reading guide under each topic. Most of the readings may be found on Library Reserve (R), online, or as Handouts in [Canvas](#).

¹ One credit hour of this course is online *via* [Canvas](#).

Bellah, Robert N. et al. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. 1985. New York & Cambridge: Harper & Row. (ISBN 0-06-097027)

Coben, Stanley & Lorman Ratner, eds. 1983. *The Development of an American Culture*. Edited with an Introduction by Coben and Ratner. New York: St. Martin's.
Devine, Donald J. 1972. *The Political Culture of the United States*. Boston: Little, Brown.
Ellis, Richard J. 1993. *American Political Cultures*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.
Hofstadter, Richard. 1963. *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. New York: Vintage.
Huntington, Samuel P. 1981. *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap/Harvard University Press.
Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1996. *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword*. New York & London: W.W. Norton.
Norton, Anne. 1994. *Republic of Signs: Liberal Theory and American Popular Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Putnam, Robert D. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York & London: Simon & Schuster.

Excellent historical accounts:

Hofstadter, Richard. 1973. *The American Political Tradition*. With a Foreword by Christopher Lasch. New York: Vintage
Kelley, Robert. 1979. *The Cultural Pattern in American Politics: The First Century*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

The classic treatment of American political culture is: Alexis de Tocqueville's, Democracy in America (Mentor Books edition), ISBN 0-451-62320-7).

COURSE OBLIGATIONS AND POLICIES

How to Succeed in This Course

Submit assignments by the due dates, attend class regularly and on time, exercise due diligence in the assigned weekly readings, and participate fully in the discussions, presentations, and other activities. You will not be penalized for your views, but are expected to support them with evidence from the readings and to respect other perspectives and points of view. Deep reflection is valued in this course. Regular attendance and timely arrival are expected. *Your final grade will likely suffer, if you are habitually late or absent.*

Policy on Late Assignments

Excepting cases of serious illness or family emergency, late assignments cannot be accepted. If you are unable to sit a prescribed exam or test because of serious illness or family emergency, you should contact the instructor immediately by telephone or call the Division Office (425) 564-2331. Proof, such as a doctor's note, will normally be required in such cases. **The final exam (3/20) cannot be re-scheduled.**

GRADING CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

Weighted Grade Distribution

Class Work/Participation	20%
Discussions (Canvas)	25%
Review Essay	25%
Final Exam	30%

The following are the grade allocations and corresponding grade points:

90-100 A	(4.0)
87-89	A- (3.7)
84-86	B+ (3.3)
80-83	B (3.0)
76-79	B- (2.7)
72-75	C+ (2.3)
68-71	C (2.0)
64-67	C- (1.7)
60-63	D+ (1.3)
50-59	D (1.0)
Below 50	F (0.5)

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

All provisions of the Bellevue College regulations concerning cheating and plagiarism apply and are enforced. Please read carefully the Social Science Division Policy statement at the MyBC course site. I encourage you to visit during office hours (see MYBC for schedule)--or to make an appointment for a mutually convenient meeting time.

It is very important to follow the accepted rules of academic writing and citation: If you get an idea from any source (book, journal, magazine, newspaper, or the Internet), you *must* give the author(s) credit, even if you do not use a direct quotation. Excellent citation and other help can be found in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers* and the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) [<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>]. Use either the Modern Language Association (MLA) or American Psychological Association (APA) citation style.

SPECIAL NEEDS

If you require accommodation based on a documented disability or have vital emergency medical information to share, please inform the instructor right away. To register as a special-needs student, contact the Disability Resource Center (www.bellevuecollege.edu/dss) in B-132, Tel.: 425.564-2498/TTY Line: 425. 564-4110).

CAMPUS SUPPORT SERVICES

You are highly encouraged to take a Library Media Center (LMC) tour to learn how and where to find books, journal articles, abstracts/collections, A-V materials, newspapers, and to use the other rich resources. The LMC (www.bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/) is also a handy gateway to other Washington libraries and resources. You may also be interested in BC's Academic Success Center (<http://bellevuecollege.edu/academicsuccess/>).

Further information about the academic calendar, enrollment, examination schedules, etc. may be found in the Credit-Class Schedule for Winter 2011, available on the BC web page (www.bellevuecollege.edu).

DEADLINE TO WITHDRAW WITHOUT A "W" POSTED TO TRANSCRIPT IS OCT. 1 BY MIDNIGHT (ONLINE) OR BY 5:00 P.M. (IN PERSON).

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAY(S): Oct. 9 & 26; Nov. 12, 22, 23.

COURSE TOPICS, AGENDA, AND READING GUIDE

Note: The schedule may vary, depending on the progress and needs of the course--as well as on other factors, such as emergency college closures—and we are unlikely to cover all these topics. Lecture/discussions are designed to complement, not replace, the readings for which you are responsible.

PART A: AMERICAN POLITICAL CULTURE

Introduction: Political Culture and Political Life

Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Ch. 1 & 2, pp. 1-36. ISBN: 0860915468. (R²)

Kelley, Robert. 1993. "Political Culture." In *Encyclopedia of American Social History*.

Mary Kupiec Cayton, Elliot J. Gorn, Peter W. Williams, eds. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Vol. III: 2269-N81. ISBN 0-684-19246-2 (Reference Book, 1st Floor)

Morone, James A. "The Struggle for American Culture." *PS Online*, Sep. 1999.

1. The Progressive Theme in American Political Culture

Turner, Frederick Jackson. "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." In George Rogers Taylor, ed. 1972. *The Turner Thesis in American History*, 3d. ed. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath. (R)

Beard, Charles. "Framing the Constitution;" "Nature of Political Parties," ch. 10 & 12. In William Beard, 1957. *The Economic Basis of Politics and Related Writings*. New York: Vintage.

*Recommended:*³

"Seventeenth Century Origins of American Culture," in Coben and Ratner, eds., Ch. 1: 16-42.

"Lessons of History," in Putnam, Ch. 23: 367-401.

"The Basic Requisites of Political Culture," in Devine, Ch. 3: 77-134.

2. The Liberal Idea in American Political Culture

Huntington, Samuel P. 1981. *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap/Harvard University Press, Ch. 1, 2.

Hartz, Louis. "The Concept of a Liberal Society", Ch. 1. In *The Liberal Tradition in America*, pp. 3-34. (R)

Smith, Rogers M. "Beyond Tocqueville, Myrdal and Hartz: The Multiple Traditions in America," *American Political Science Review* 87, No. 3, September 1993, pp. 549-566. (R)

Stevens, Jacqueline & Rogers Smith, "Beyond Tocqueville, Please!" *The American Political Science Review*, 89, No. 4. (Dec., 1995), pp. 987-995. (R)

Recommended:

Hofstadter, Richard. *The American Political Tradition*, Introduction

Steinmo, Sven. "American Exceptionalism Reconsidered: Culture or Institutions," in *The Dynamics of American Politics: Approaches and Interpretations*, ed. Lawrence C. Dodd and Calvin Jillson, 1994, pp.106-131.

Norton, Anne. *Republic of Signs: Liberal Theory and American Popular Culture*, Introduction, chapters 1 & 2, pp. 1 - 86.

² "R" after a reference means that the item has been placed on BC Library Reserve.

³ Recommended readings are not required but are for those who wish to explore the topic further.

Film: "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" (1939)

3. Political Authority

Huntington, Chs. 3-4.

4. Virtue and Corruption

Media Probes: Political Spots—The Thirty Second Candidate

http://www.pbs.org/30secondcandidate/from_idea_to_ad/watch2.html

5. Anti-Intellectualism

Hofstadter, Chs. 2, 6, 12

6. A Civic Religion?

Kennedy, John F., "Inaugural Address." In *Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States*. Washington, D.C.; GPO, 1989, pp. 305-08. Or: Lott, Davis Newton. 1969. *The Presidents Speak: the Inaugural Addresses of the American Presidents, from Washington to Nixon*. Annotated by D.N. Lott, 3rd. ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston. (JFK's Inaugural Address, Jan. 20, 1961) **R** Note: Also available on-line in text form at: Bartleby.com [<http://www.bartleby.com/124/>] and in video at YouTube [http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=B247883C1EB850D1]
Bellah, Robert, "American Civil Religion," *Daedalus*, Winter 1967. Reprinted in Russell E. Richey & Donald G. Jones, eds. 1974. *American Civil Religion*. Harper & Row.

7. One Culture or Many?

Glazer, Nathan, "The Emergence of an American Ethnic Pattern." In Nathan Glazer, 1975. *Affirmative Discrimination: Ethnic Inequality and Public Policy*. New York: Basic Books. **(R)** -- also in Takaki (1994)
Takaki, Ronald, "Reflections on Racial Patterns in America." In Ronald Takaki, ed. 1994. *From Different Shores: Perspectives on Race and Ethnicity in America*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press. **(R)**
Recommended:
Steinberg, Stephen. 2001. *The Ethnic Myth: Race, Ethnicity, and Class in America*. Boston: Beacon Press.

8: The Paranoid Theme

Hofstadter, Richard, "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," pp. 3-40. In Richard Hofstadter, 1967. *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and other Essays*. New York: Vintage. **(R)** Also in: *Harper's Magazine*, November 1964, pp. 77-86.
(http://karws.gso.uri.edu/JFK/conspiracy_theory/the_paranoid_mentality/The_paranoid_style.html)
Possible film excerpts: Joseph McCarthy & Joseph Welch. "Army-McCarthy," Hearings, 1954. In **Great American Speeches: 80 Years of Political Oratory**
(<http://www.pbs.org/greatspeeches/>)

9: Patriotism

Sennett, Richard, "The Identity Myth," *New York Times*, Jan. 30, 1994: E17
Rorty, Richard, "The Unpatriotic Academy," *New York Times*, Feb. 13, 1994: E15.
Reprinted in Richard Rorty, 1999. *Philosophy and Social Hope*, New York: Penguin. (ISBN 0140262881)
Film: Douglas Macarthur, "Old Soldiers Never Die" (1951).

10: Individualism and Community

Arieli, Yehoshua, "Individualism and National Identity," pp. 167-87. In Richard O. Curry & Lawrence B. Goodheart, eds. 1991. *American Chameleon: Individualism in Trans-National Context*. Kent, Ohio: Kent University Press.

Monroe, James, 1990. *The Democratic Wish*. New York: Basic Books.

11: Equality and Inequality

Alger, Horatio, 1985.

PART B: PATTERNS OF PROTEST AND CRITIQUE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

1. **The Socialist Left**

Eric Foner, "Why is there no Socialism in the United States?" *History Workshop* 17, Spring 1984:57-80.

Seymour Martin Lipset & Gary Marks. 2000. *It Didn't Happen Here: Why Socialism Failed in the United States*. New York & London: W.W. Norton. (ISBN 0-393-04098-4)

Also useful: Chandler, Marc, "Why Socialism failed in the United States," *Frontier*, 33, No. 14, Oct. 19-Nov. 4, 2000.

(<http://frontierindia.scriptmania.com/FNV13CONTENT.htm>)

2. **The Populist Strand**

William Jennings Bryan, "Cross of Gold" speech, 1896. In William Jennings Bryan, 1896. *The First Battle: A Story of the Campaign of 1896*. Chicago: W.B. Conkey.

Audio Excerpt: William Jennings Bryan, "Cross of Gold" speech, 1896 (recorded circa 1920s).

Film Excerpt: Franklin D. Roosevelt, First Inaugural Address, 1933, Charles E. Coughlin (Madison Square Garden rally, 1935), Huey Long (Universal Newsreel Broadcast, 1935); "Share the Wealth," 1935, Gerald L.K. Smith: "The Bug-grumping Politicians," 1935). In **Great American Speeches: 80 Years of Political Oratory**. (LMC Sound Recording, 1958; Call No. PR-1170)

3. **The Libertarian Tradition**

Film: Berkley in the Sixties

4. **The Civil-Rights Movement**

Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letters from Birmingham Jail," 1963. In Martin Luther King, Jr., 1963. *Why we can't wait*. New York: Harper & Row.

Film Excerpts: Martin Luther King, Jr., "When a man has already died," 1965; "I Have a Dream," 1963. In **Great American Speeches: 80 Years of Political Oratory**.

5. **Multiculturalism & Cultural Nationalism**

Sennet, Richard, 1994. "The Identity Myth," *New York Times*, January 30, 1994.

West, Cornell, "The Struggle for America's Soul." Review of *The Good Society*, by Robert Bellah *et al.*, *The New York Times*, Sept. 15, 1991, p. BR 13.

Film excerpt: Malcolm X, Easter Speech in Harlem, 1964. In **Great American Speeches: 80 Years of Political Oratory**, Films Media Group, DVD ISBN 978-1-4213-1500-3, 1995.

6. **Communitarianism**

Berry, Wendell, 1990. "The Work of Local Culture," In *What are People for? Essays by Wendell Berry*. San Francisco: North Point Press. (NIL)

Bellah, Robert *et al.*, "The Good Society," *The Responsive Community* 1, No. 3, Summer 1991: 1-15.

7. **The Christian Right**

Blaker, Kimberly, ed. 2003. *The Fundamentals of Extremism: The Christian Right in America*. New Boston, Michigan: New Boston Books.

Guth, James, "The Politics of the New Christian Right." In Allen Cigler & Durbette Loomis, eds. 1983. *Interest Group Politics*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Huang, Jende. "The Fundamentals of Extremism: The Christian Right in America." *The Humanist* 63, No. 5 Sept. /Oct. 2003: 44. – A short review essay

Lienesch, Michael. 1995. *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the new Christian Right*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press.

Wilcox, Clyde. "Laying up Treasures in Washington and in Heaven: The Christian Right and Evangelical Politics in the Twentieth Century and Beyond." *Magazine of History* 17, No. 2, Jan. 2003: 23-30.

_____. "Whither the Christian Right? The Elections and Beyond." In Stephen J. Wayne & Clyde Wilcox, eds. 2002. *The Elections of the Century and What it Tells us about the Future of American Politics*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe.

8. **The Anti-Statist Right; the Statist Right; Political Speech**

Reagan, Ronald, 1983. "A Time for Choosing," in *A Time for Choosing: The Speeches of Ronald Reagan 1961-1982*. Chicago: Regnery Gateway.

Film excerpts: Barry Goldwater, "Extremism is no Vice," 1964; Ronald Reagan, "A Time for Choosing," 1964. In **Great American Speeches: 80 Years of Political Oratory**--A collection of 35 political speeches given by two dozen American leaders, including Theodore Roosevelt, Huey Long, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Richard Nixon, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., Ronald Reagan, Malcolm X, Barbara Jordan and others . (Pieri and Spring Productions, 1995).

Huntington, Ch. 8

Jamieson, Kathleen Hall. *Eloquence in an Electronic Age: The Transformation of Political Speechmaking*. Oxford & New York: Oxford U.P., 1988, Ch. 1, 3-4, 7-9. (ISBN 0195063171)

Summing Up/Conclusions

Whither American Political Culture?

Division of Social Science

Political Science & International Studies Program
Fall 2012