

History 305/705
Fall 2014
CAS 226
TTh 11-12:30

Professor Charles Capper
Office: HIS 502
Telephone: 353-8318
E-mail: capper@bu.edu
Office Hours: TTh 12:30-2

American Thought and Culture, 1776 to 1900

REQUIRED READING

David A. Hollinger and Charles Capper, eds., *The American Intellectual Tradition*, Vols. 1 and 2, Sixth Edition (Oxford)
James Fenimore Cooper, *The Prairie* (Penguin)
Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance* (Norton)
Walt Whitman, *The Complete Poems* (Penguin)
Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Penguin)
Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (Viking-Penguin)
Harold Frederic, *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (Viking-Penguin)

History 305/705 and 306/706 investigate the history of ideas underlying religious, philosophical, scientific, artistic, political, and social practice in the United States. Both courses emphasize major thinkers and movements in their social and cultural contexts. Both classes also engage two fundamental questions about their subject. One concerns its definition: given America's great diversity of identity groups and deep roots in European intellectual cultures, how is it legitimate to speak of an "American intellectual tradition"? The other question has to do with historical approach: how does the study of reflective and expressive thought illuminate the larger culture of the United States?

THEMES AND TOPICS: History 305 examines how major American thinkers and intellectual movements constructed an "exceptional" national identity by adjusting their culture's provincial Protestant and Enlightenment traditions to the challenges of transnational democratic, Romantic, and secular modes of thinking. The entanglement of "freedom" and "slavery" in early American thought is another theme of the course. Specific topics include Transcendentalism, evangelical and liberal Protestantism, pro- and anti-slavery thought, philosophical idealism and literary realism, and Darwinism and evolutionary social science.

READING: The required reading for History 305 are primary documents, including essays, addresses, book excerpts, pictures, novels, and poetry. Graduate students in History 705 are also required to do the reading in secondary sources listed in "*Recommended Reading*."

BOOKS AND ARTICLES: All required books are available at the BU Barnes and Noble bookstore. Links to electronic versions of articles from journals (e-journals) and essays from books (e-reserve) may be found on the BU Libraries website. For an overview of

American intellectual history in this period, students might find it useful to consult the relevant volumes in Lewis Perry, General Editor, *Twayne's American Thought and Culture Series (1991-2010)*.

DISCUSSIONS AND QUESTIONS: In order to make lectures optimally useful and discussions possible, it is essential that reading assignments be done *before* the date indicated. Class discussions will be emphasized on certain dates, but comments and questions will be encouraged throughout the term. There will also be a time at the end of most classes for students to ask questions about the reading and lecture.

SHORT PAPERS: Students will be required to write two 5-6 page papers. Each is an analysis and comparison of *all* or at least most of the reading assignments for a particular day. The object is not to just summarize or paraphrase the readings but to *analyze* them. This means picking out the main arguments or themes, evaluating how they're supported logically and/or rhetorically, how they compare (in similarity or difference) with each other in these respects, and how they fit (or don't fit) into the topics or movements we've discussed in the course. The first paper can be on any required reading assignment through that of **Oct. 9** and should be turned in no later than the beginning of class on the day the assignment will be discussed. The second short paper can be on any assignment from **Oct. 16** to **Nov. 25** and will likewise be due in class on the day it is assigned.

TERM PAPER: This paper is an essay of 10-12 pages on a single book by an American thinker. It should address the question, "*What marks this book as a product of its intellectual time?*" You may choose any book listed in the "Chronologies" sections of *AIT1* and *AIT2* with four qualifications: 1.) The book must be by an American author. 2.) Its initial publication date should be roughly between 1776 and 1900. 3.) Preferably it should not be one that includes a selection from the required reading, although exceptions can be made. 4.) It should not be a commonly assigned book that the student has already read. Before selecting your book, you need to check with me either in person or by email about your selection. In making a preliminary assessment of possible books, you might find it helpful to consult a dictionary of American thinkers and ideas, such as Richard Wightman Fox and James T. Kloppenberg's *Companion to American Thought (1995)*. The focus of your paper should *not* be on your intellectual's biography but on his or her ideas. You should not try to fit your book into the history of particular social and political events of its era, although you may allude to them. Rather you should select a central intellectual problem, question, theme, or movement alive at the time and position your book in relation to it, using evidence drawn from relevant documents in *AIT1* and *AIT2*. Papers will be due in class **Dec. 2**.

CITATIONS: Citation form should be consistent and generally follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*. If you frequently cite the same text, you can place a shortened version of its author and title in parentheses at the end of a quotation or sentence and before the period and create a bibliography of full citations at the end of the paper.

EXAMS: There will be a quiz and a final.

LATE WORK: Make-ups will not be given nor will late papers be accepted except in the case of extraordinary emergencies or a severe illness. I need to be informed in advance unless the event's suddenness makes that impossible. Generally, a makeup date will be scheduled within a week.

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is arguably the most serious ethical violation that a scholar or student can commit. Read the Academic Conduct Code to understand the college policy on plagiarism. All cases of its suspected perpetration, as well as all other acts of suspected academic misconduct, will be referred to the Dean's Office. If found guilty, a student will receive the maximum punishment allowed at the university.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION: Attendance at all classes is required and unexplained absences will lower a student's final grade. Class participation in the form of questions and comments may raise it by as much as a half-grade.

ETIQUETTE: To preserve a classroom atmosphere conducive to collective learning, turn off cell phones and use laptop computers only for taking notes on the classroom lecture and discussion. Laptop use should not interfere with your ability to interact with the instructor and other students.

GRADE BREAKDOWN: 30% on the two short papers, 10% on the quiz, 30% on the term paper, and 30% on the final.

GRADUATE STUDENTS: HI 705 graduate students are required to do the recommended reading and to write an additional historiography paper on one of the topics in the course.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READING

Sept. 2 Intellectual History and the Themes of the Course

Recommended:

David A. Hollinger, "Historians and the Discourse of Intellectuals," in Hollinger's *In the American Province: Studies in the History and Historiography of Ideas* (1985), 130-51, 210-15

Sept. 4 Theories of Revolutionary Republicanism

Reading:

AIT, xi-xiv, 111-14

John Adams, *A Dissertation on the Canon and the Feudal Law*, in *AITI*, 128-38

Thomas Paine, Selection from *Common Sense*, in *AITI*, 139-46

Thomas Jefferson, The Declaration of Independence, in *AITI*, 147-50

Judith Sargent Murray, "On the Equality of the Sexes," in *AITI*, 177-84

Recommended:

James T. Kloppenberg, "The Virtues of Liberalism: Christianity, Republicanism, and Ethics in Early American Political Discourse," *Journal of American History*, 74 (June 1987), 9-33

Ruth H. Bloch, "The Gendered Meanings of Virtue in Revolutionary America," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 13 (1987)

Sept. 9 **Debates over Republican Constitutionalism***Reading:*

Alexander Hamilton, "Constitutional Convention Speech on a Plan of Government," in *AITI*, 135-40

"Brutus," in *AITI*, 157-67

James Madison, *The Federalist*, "Number 10" and "Number 51" in *AITI*, 168-76

Sept. 11 **John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and the Fate of the Republican Enlightenment***Reading:*

John Adams to Samuel Adams and to Thomas Jefferson, in *AITI*, 185-94

Thomas Jefferson, Selection from *Notes on the State of Virginia*, and

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, to Benjamin Rush, and to Thomas Law, in *AITI*, 195-216

Recommended:

Henry F. May, "After the Enlightenment: A Prospectus," in Henry F. May, *The Divided Heart: Essays on Protestantism and the Enlightenment in America* (1991), 179-96, 210-13

David A. Hollinger, "The Accommodation of Protestant Christianity with the Enlightenment: An Old Drama Still Being Enacted," in Hollinger's *After Cloven Tongues of Fire: Protestant Liberalism in Modern American History* (2013), 1-17

Sept. 16 **James Fenimore Cooper's *The Prairie* and Romantic Literary Nationalism***Reading:*

James Fenimore Cooper, *The Prairie*

Recommended:

Perry Miller, "The Romantic Dilemma in American Nationalism and the Concept of Nature," in Perry Miller, *Nature's Nation* (1967), 197-207

Sept. 18 **William Ellery Channing, Nathaniel Taylor, and Charles Finney and the Reawakening of Protestant Theology***Reading:*

AITI, 3-5, 219-22

William Ellery Channing, "Unitarian Christianity," in *AITI*, 223-235
 Nathaniel William Taylor, Concio ad Clerum, in *AITI*, 236-50
 Charles Grandison Finney, "What a Revival of Religion Is," in *AITI*,
 251-61

Recommended:

Mark A. Noll, "Common Sense Traditions and American Evangelical Thought," *American Quarterly*, 37 (Summer 1985), 216-238

Sept. 23 **Evangelical Perfectionism and Critiques of Race and Gender in John Humphrey Noyes, William Lloyd Garrison, and Sarah Grimké**

Reading:

John Humphrey Noyes, Selection from *The Berean*, in *AITI*, 262-69
 William Lloyd Garrison, Selection from *Thoughts on Colonization*, in
AITI, 270-83

Sarah Grimké, Selection from *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes, and the Condition of Woman*, in *AITI*, 284-97

Sept. 25 **George Bancroft, Orestes Brownson, and the Problem of "The People" in Democratic Ideology**

Reading:

George Bancroft, "The Office of the People in Art, Government, and Religion," in *AITI*, 298-307

Orestes Brownson, "The Laboring Classes," in *AITI*, 308-23

Sept. 30 **Harmony and Hierarchy in Whig Social Thought of Catharine Beecher and Henry C. Carey**

Reading:

Catharine Beecher, Selection from *A Treatise on Domestic Economy*, in
AITI, 324-37

Henry C. Carey, Selection from *Harmony of Interests*, in *AITI*, 338-48

Oct. 2 **Ralph Waldo Emerson and Transcendentalist Philosophy**

Reading:

AITI, 351-53

Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Divinity School Address" and "Self-Reliance," *AITI*, 354-80

Recommended:

Charles Capper, "'A Little Beyond: The Problem of the Transcendentalist Movement in American History,'" *Journal of American History* (Sept. 1998), 502-39

Oct. 7 **Margaret Fuller, Henry David Thoreau, and Transcendentalist Politics**

Reading:

Margaret Fuller, Selection from *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, in

AITI, 396-414

Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government," in *AITI*, 415-28

Recommended:

John L. Thomas, "Romantic Reform in America," *American Quarterly* (Winter 1965), 656-81

Oct. 9 **Romanticism and Socialism in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance***

Reading:

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance*

Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, "A Glimpse of Christ's Idea of Society" and "Plan of the West Roxbury Community," *AITI*, 381-95

LAST DAY TO TURN IN FIRST SHORT PAPER

Oct. 14 **No Class (Follow Monday Schedule)**

Oct. 16 **Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, and the Two Souls of Democratic Romanticism**

Reading:

Herman Melville, "Hawthorne and His Mosses," in *AITI*, 439-49

Walt Whitman, *The Complete Poems*, 37, 63-124, 275-84, 351-59, 741-73

Oct. 21 **Horace Bushnell, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and Humanitarianism in Sentimental Protestant Christianity**

Reading:

Horace Bushnell, "Christian Nurture," *AITI*, 429-38

Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Oct. 23 **Slavery and the Making of Southern Conservatism in John C. Calhoun, Louisa McCord, and George Fitzhugh**

Reading:

AITI, 453-55

John C. Calhoun, Selection from *A Disquisition on Government*, in *AITI*, 456-66

Louisa McCord, "Enfranchisement of Woman," in *AITI*, 467-79

George Fitzhugh, Selection from *Sociology for the South*, in *AITI*, 480-90

Recommended:

Lacy K. Ford, Jr., "Inventing the Concurrent Majority: Madison, Calhoun, and the Problem of Majoritarianism in American Political Thought," *Journal of Southern History*, 60 (Feb. 1994), 19-58

Oct. 28 **Racial Constructs and the Politicization of Antislavery in Martin Delaney, Frederick Douglass, and Abraham Lincoln**

Reading:

Martin Delany, Selection from *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States*, in *AIT1*, 491-507

Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" in *AIT1*, 508-21

Abraham Lincoln, "Speech at Peoria, Illinois," "Address Before the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society," "Address Delivered at the Dedication of the Cemetery at Gettysburg," and "Second Inaugural Address," in *AIT1*, 522-37

Oct. 30 **Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* and the Ironies of Literary Realism**

Reading:

AIT, 3-5

William Dean Howells, "Pernicious Fiction," in *AIT2*, 51-54

Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Recommended:

Miles Orvell, "The Romance of the Real," in Miles Orvell, *The Real Thing: Imitation and Authenticity in American Culture, 1880-1940* (1989), 103-37

Nov. 4 **The Concept of Culture and the Rise of the Research University**

Reading:

Thomas Wentworth Higginson, "A Plea for Culture," in *AIT2*, 12-15

Recommended:

Daniel Walker Howe, "American Victorianism as a Culture," *American Quarterly*, 27 (December 1975): 507-32

Nov. 6 **Charles Peirce's Pragmatism and the Idea of Science**

Reading:

Charles Peirce, "The Fixation of Belief," in *AIT2*, 16-26

Nov. 11 **The Darwinian Controversies**

Reading:

Asa Gray, "Review of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*," in *AIT2*, 6-11

Nov. 13 **Biblical Criticism and the Dilemmas of Liberal Protestantism**

Reading:

Charles Augustus Briggs, Selection from *Biblical Study*, in *AIT2*, 37-41

Recommended:

D. H. Meyer, "American Intellectuals and the Victorian Crisis of Faith," *American Quarterly*, 27 (1975), 585-603

Nov. 18 **Josiah Royce, William James, and the Problem of Liberal Belief**

Reading:

William James, "The Will to Believe," in *AIT2*, 69-82
 Josiah Royce, "The Problem of Job," in *AIT2*, 83-95

Recommended:

David A. Hollinger, "Justification by Verification: The Scientific Challenge to the Moral Authority of Christianity in Modern America," in Hollinger's *After Cloven Tongues of Fire: Protestant Liberalism in Modern American History* (2013), 82-102

Nov. 20 **Harold Fredric's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and End of Protestant Innocence**

Reading:

Harold Frederic, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*

Nov. 25 **Social Science and the "Social Darwinism" of William Graham Sumner, Lester Frank Ward, and Thorstein Veblen**

Reading:

William Graham Sumner, "Sociology," in *AIT2*, 27-36
 Lester Frank Ward, "Mind as a Social Factor," in *AIT2*, 42-50
 Thorstein Veblen, Selection from *The Theory of the Leisure Class* in *AIT*, 132-46

LAST DAY TO TURN IN SECOND SHORT PAPER

Nov. 25-Nov. 30 **Thanksgiving Recess**

Dec. 2 **Gender Theories of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Charlotte Perkins Gilman**

Reading:

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Solitude of Self" and Selection from *The Woman's Bible*, in *AIT2*, 55-59
 Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Selection from *Women and Economics*, in *AIT2*, 96-102

TERM PAPERS DUE

Dec. 4 **Henry Adams, George Santayana, and the Revolt against the Nineteenth Century**

Reading:

Henry Adams, "The Dynamo and the Virgin," in *AIT2*, 103-07
 George Santayana, "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," in *AIT2*, 108-20

Recommended:

John Higham, "The Reorientation of American Culture in the 1890s," in
John Higham, *Hanging Together: Unity and Diversity in American
Culture* (2001), 173-98

Dec. 9 **Review**

Dec. 12 GRADUATE HISTORIOGRAPHY PAPERS DUE: by 9:30 AM in my box in
the History Department.

Dec. 16 **FINAL** (12:00 PM-2:00 PM)