

SCHOOL OF POLITICS & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Academic Year 2022-2023, Semester B

POL323 Critical Currents in American Political Thought



(Aaron Douglas, "From Slavery to Reconstruction" 1934)

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Advice and Feedback Hours:

Tuesday 15.30-16.30 (Online by appointment) &

Wednesday 11.30-12.30 (In-person drop-in)

Welcome from the convenor

This is the module guide for POL323 Critical Currents in American Political Thought. My name is Joe and I am the convenor for this module—this means that I am responsible for the organisation and smooth running of the course. I will also be giving the lectures and teaching the seminars.

I am very excited about teaching you on this module. The aim of this module is to explore American political thought, focusing on critical currents that complicate and challenge conventional thinking about the meaning of individualism, community, freedom, and democracy in the United States of America. Over the semester we focus on influential authors, including essayists, philosophers, social reformers, and social scientists. In addition, we will examine the influence of these authors in the wider critical current of American political thought. Along the way you will develop a knowledge of the academic literature on American political thought, along with skills in the close reading of challenging texts, the critical analysis of complex ideas, and making well-supported theoretical arguments.

Throughout the module I will guide you through the material, but a big part of what you get out of it will come from your own independent study and there will be ample opportunity to explore your own interest within the material covered. You will find everything you need for this module in this guide and on the QMPlus page, so please do look through these resources carefully to ensure you understand what is required of you for the module. Once you have done this, please email me a picture of your favourite animal.

I have **advice and feedback hours** every week on Tuesday from 15.30-16.30 and Wednesday 11.30-12.30. My Tuesday advice and feedback hours are held online, via MS Teams, please email me to book an appointment. On Wednesdays, my advice and feedback hours are held in my office, Arts One 2.30a, and you can just drop-in, no need to book ahead. If you are unable to attend my scheduled advice and feedback hours, then it may be possible to set up a meeting at another time, which should be arranged via email.

The answers to most questions you have about the module can be found here or on QM Plus, so please check before emailing me. However, if you still can't find what you're looking for don't be afraid to ask.

One final note, I do not check or reply to work emails in the evenings or over the weekend, so keep this in mind if you need to get in contact.

Teaching and Learning Profile

a) Module description

This module examines critical traditions in American political thought, with specific authors and themes varying from year to year. Central themes this year include the promise and betrayal of freedom from the founding of the US to the present day, the tension between radical individualism and contested notions of community, and the constant struggle to maintain faith in the possibilities of democratic government and culture. The module will focus on close reading of primary texts, while also incorporating occasional reflections on American literature, music, and film.

b) Teaching Arrangements

There will be two components to the module:

- (i) A one-hour weekly lecture covering key ideas and themes for the week
- (ii) A one-hour weekly seminar based around group discussion of essential readings and weekly seminar questions

You are expected to attend all lectures and seminars. I will keep a register for the seminars and persistent non-attendance can lead to de-registration, which can prevent you from completing your studies at Queen Mary. If you are absent due to ill health or other problems, then please let me know.

c) Preparation

In the lectures I will introduce the thinkers and topics for each week, and while I will discuss aspects of the essential readings, I will not be summarising them or giving the “correct” interpretation of the thinkers and questions we are addressing. You will get the most out of the lectures if you come prepared and ask questions as we go— **please read prior to lecture**—I do not mind you raising your hand to ask a question or make a comment.

Seminars are held once a week and also last one hour. They are small group meetings based around specified texts and themes, and they are intended to supplement the lectures and provide an opportunity for deeper discussion of the readings. Seminars topics will broadly follow the lecture topics, but do be sure to check each week for the reading and preparation required for your seminar.

You **MUST** do the required preparatory work in advance of the seminar. All participants are expected to demonstrate careful reading for the week’s topic and willingness to contribute to seminar discussions.

This is an historically oriented and theoretical module, so there are some difficult texts. I do not expect you to understand everything you have read. The best discussions often arise from students identifying parts of texts they found difficult or controversial, rather than parts that are self-evident. Never feel inhibited about asking the meaning of words or passages—chances are that other students have the same question! It is important that you should have a (paper or electronic) copy of the readings and notes you have taken on the texts in your seminar

Also, a further reading list for each week is provided, be sure to consult this reading list throughout, but especially in preparation for your essay.

d) Communication

I will communicate via your QM email and via QMPlus. You need to check your email and the QMPlus module site regularly for messages and to access module materials.

Assessment Profile

a) **Formative assessment**

In seminars you will be required to:

- Answer weekly questions on essential readings starting from Week 2.

Questions should be answered before seminar and you may be called on in seminar. You should provide your best answer, but it is fine if you have further questions or your answer is incomplete, you will get feedback and learn through the discussion.

- Provide critical summaries of key readings at least twice during the semester.

Readings will be assigned in week 1. When you are assigned a reading, you will be expected to provide a summary of the key points and 1-2 questions about the reading or criticisms of the argument. You will present orally in seminar, but you should also provide a written summary (max 500 words).

b) **Summative Assessment**

Assessment for this module consist of two pieces of coursework:

Short Essay

You will write an essay of no more than 1000 words analysing one of the key thinkers covered in weeks 3-6 (Emerson or Addams).

Your essay should answer the following question:

How does Emerson OR Addams challenge notions of individualism and community central to American political thought?

Long Essay

You will write an essay of no more than 3000 words that (a) identifies a theme in American political thought from the module, (b) analysing how **at least two thinkers** address that theme, and (c) providing an analytical and evaluative argument. Essay topics must be approved by me, so be sure we have discussed your essay before beginning your research and writing.

c) **Deadlines**

- Short Essay – due by 1.00pm on Thursday 9 March 2023. [Week 7 – reading week]
- Long Essay – due by 1.00pm on Friday 14 April 2023. [Week 12]

d) Submission of coursework

You must submit one electronic copies of your assignments on QMPlus, details will be provided ahead of the deadlines.

e) Extensions

If you require an extension due to extenuating circumstances (EC), you must complete the relevant online EC form on MySIS. Full details can be found in the Student Handbook.

f) Referencing and Bibliography

The School of Politics and International Relations requires all students to use the Harvard system for referencing and bibliography. For details about how to reference and make a bibliography, please consult the SPIR Student Handbook.

g) Advice and Feedback

Feedback is a fundamental part of improving your academic work. However, feedback is much more than the mark or written comments on your assessments. This module will provide several opportunities for individual and group feedback. These include:

- Individual comments on your assignments, which will be available electronically via QMPlus

Please read these comments. Once you have read them, make sure you discuss the comments and feedback with me.

- Seminar feedback

General feedback on coursework will be given during the seminar after marking has been completed. This feedback will highlight common good practice and mistakes. It is important you note this feedback and take it on board for your future assessment. Time will be allocated for you to ask further questions about the coursework in the seminar if anything is unclear.

- Seminar guidance

Guidance for the coursework will be built into the seminars.

- QMPlus guidance

All group feedback on work and seminar guidance will be published on QMPlus. However, this should not be used as a substitute for attending seminars where you can ask questions and receive clear explanations.

- One-to-one guidance

I have weekly drop-in hours during term time. Use these hours! We can discuss ideas, essay plans, and address any questions or problems.

QMPlus

All module materials, including a copy of this module outline can be found on QMPlus. You should familiarise yourself with the QMPlus for POL323 as soon as possible, as further information concerning this module and office hours will be posted there. To access QMPlus (on or off campus) go to: <http://qmplus.qmul.ac.uk> . You will require your QM username and password. You should also use QMPlus to upload the electronic version your assignments and retrieve feedback on them. If you are having problems accessing/using QMPlus support and information can be found on the QMPlus home page or contact the School Office.

Plagiarism

QMUL defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as one's own irrespective of intention—this includes using AI writing software to generate your essay content. Close paraphrasing, copying from the work of another person, including another student or AI software, using those ideas without proper acknowledgement, or repeating work you have previously submitted without properly referencing yourself (known as 'self-plagiarism') all constitute plagiarism.

Plagiarism is a serious offence and all students suspected of plagiarism will be subject to an investigation. If found guilty, penalties can include failure of the module to suspension or permanent withdrawal from Queen Mary.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand plagiarism and how to avoid it. The recommendations below can help you in avoiding plagiarism.

- Be sure to record your sources when taking notes, and to cite these if you use ideas or, especially, quotations from the original source. Be particularly careful if you are cutting and pasting information between two documents, and ensure that references are not lost in the process.
- Be sensible in referencing ideas – commonly held views that are generally accepted do not always require acknowledgment to particular sources. However, it is best to be safe to avoid plagiarism.
- Be particularly careful with quotations and paraphrasing.
- Be aware that technology is now available at Queen Mary and elsewhere that can automatically detect plagiarism.
- Ensure that all works used are referenced appropriately in the text of your work and fully credited in your bibliography.

If in doubt, see your student handbook for further advice or ask me. Also, earlier I asked you to send me a picture of your favourite animal after you had read the module outline, instead I would like you to email me a picture of a dinosaur. And yes, I really do want you to do this.

Week 1 – Introduction to American Political Thought: American Origin Stories

By the end of this week you should be able to:

1. Understand the broad contours of American political thought, including various approaches to the topic.
2. Identify key themes in American political thought.
3. Identify key elements of the critical orientation to American political thought taken in this module.

Lecture:

In the lecture I will provide a broad introduction to American political thought, discussing its historical development and conventional ways of approaching the topic, as well as highlighting the approach taken on this module and the key themes we will focus on.

Seminar:

In our first seminar we will get to know each other, go over the structure of module, including assessments and expectations for the seminars. We will then read the US Declaration of Independence and have a brief discussion of its core political ideas and themes.

Essential reading:

Jefferson, Thomas, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison. *America's Founding Documents: The Declaration of Independence, The Articles of Confederation, The United States Constitution, The Federalist Papers, and The Bill of Rights* (Minneapolis: Lerner Publishing, 2018). [Ebook] – **Declaration of Independence**.

Kersch, Ken. *American Political Thought: An Invitation* (Cambridge and Medford: Polity, 2021). [Print and QMPlus] – **Chapter One**.

Further reading:

Bremer, Francis J. *John Winthrop: America's Forgotten Founding Father* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). [Ebook]

Ceaser, James W. "The Origins and Character of American Exceptionalism," *American Political Thought*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2012), 3-28. [QMPlus]

Frost, Bryan-Paul and Jeffrey Sikkenga, eds. *History of American Political Thought*, 2nd edition (London and New York: Lexington Books, 2019). [Print] – **See Parts One and Two**

Greenstone, J. David. "Against Simplicity: The Cultural Dimensions of the Constitution," *University of Chicago Law Review*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (1988), 428-449.

Hartz, Louis. *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought Since the Revolution*, (New York: Harvest Books, 1991). [Ebook and Print, various editions]

Kurth, James R. "A History of Inherent Contradictions: The Origins and End of American Conservatism," *Nosmos*, Vol. 56 (2016), 13-54.

Onuf, Peter S. "American Exceptionalism and National Identity," *American Political Thought*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2012), 77-100. [QMPlus]

Thomas, George. "The Founding, Constitutional Imperfection, and the Future of the American Experiment," *American Political Thought*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (2022), 481-498. [QMPlus]

Turner, Frederick Jackson. *The Frontier in American History*, (Open Road: New York, 2018). [Ebook and Print, various editions]

Winthrop, John. *A Model of Christian Charity* (1630).

Available at: <https://history.hanover.edu/texts/winthmod.html>.

Week 2 – Introduction to American Political Thought: American Horror Stories

By the end of this week you should be able to:

1. Understand the development of literature critical of conventional framings of American political thought, including work focused on settler colonialism, slavery and racism, gender and patriarchy, and class-based domination.
2. Identify key critical approaches to major themes in American political thought.
3. Begin to use critical texts to analyse and evaluate canonical readings in American political thought.

Lecture:

In the lecture I will discuss critical responses to conventional framings of American political thought, examining the way histories of indigenous displacement and genocide, as well as slavery and racial apartheid, have been obscured or marginalised. In addition, we will look at how class inequalities and patriarchal discrimination have undermined equal freedom as a founding American ideal.

Seminar:

In the seminar we will go over assigned questions on the Ambar reading. Then, assigned students will provide summaries and critical reflections on *The Federalist Papers* and Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. This will be followed by discussion reflecting on how conventional sources are challenged by critical perspectives in American political thought.

Essential reading:

Ambar, Saladin. *Reconsidering American Political Thought: A New Identity* (New York and Oxon: Routledge, 2020). [Print and QMPlus] – **Chapter One**.

*Hamilton, Alexander, James Madison, and John Jay. *The Federalist Papers*, edited by Ian Shapiro (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2009). [Ebook] – **Numbers 1-2, 9-11**.

*Tocqueville, Alexis de. *Democracy in America*, (London: Penguin, 2003). [Ebook and Print, various editions] – **Part One, Chapters Two, Three, and Four**.

Further reading:

Botting, Eileen Hunt and Christine Carey. "Wollstonecraft's Philosophical Impact on Nineteenth-Century American Women's Rights Advocates," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (October 2004), 707-722.

Brooks, Lisa. *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008). [Ebook]

Dahl, Adam. "Nullifying Settler Democracy: William Apess and the Paradox of Settler Sovereignty," *Polity*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (2016), 279-304.

Davis, Sue. *The Political Thought of Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Women's Rights and the American Political Tradition* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2008). [Ebook]

Eber-Schmid, Noah. "American Jacobinism: The French Revolution, American Anti-Jacobinism, and Antidemocratic Anxieties," *American Political Thought*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (Summer 2022), 320-346. [QMPlus]

Fields, Karen E. and Barbara J. Fields. *Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life* (London and New York: Verso, 2012). [Print and Ebook]

Greenstone, J. David. "Adams and Jefferson on Slavery: Two Liberalisms and the Roots of Civic Ambivalence," in Robert E. Calvert, ed. *"The Constitution of the People": Reflections on Citizens and Civil Society* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1991), 18-46. [Ebook]

Isenberg, Nancy. *White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America* (London: Atlantic Books, 2017). [Print]

Keller, Jonathan and Alex Zamalin. Eds. *American Political Thought: An Alternative View* (New York and London: Routledge, 2017). [Ebook]

McKenna, Erin and Scott L. Pratt. *American Philosophy: From Wounded Knee to the Present* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015). [Print] – **Chapters One and Three.**

Myrdal, Gunnar. *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*, (Transaction Publishers, 1996). [Ebook and Print, various editions]

O'Brien, Jean M. *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2010). [Ebook]

Pratt, Scott L. *Native Pragmatism: Rethinking Roots of American Philosophy* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002). [Ebook] – **Chapter One.**

Rana, Aziz. *The Two Faces of American Freedom*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010). [Ebook and Print, various editions]

Rogers, Melvin L. and Jack Turner. *African American Political Thought: A Collected History* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2021). [Ebook] – **Introduction, and Chapters One and Two.**

Shklar, Judith N. *Redeeming American Political Thought*, eds. Stanley Hoffman and Dennis F. Thompson (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998). [Print]

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

Week 3 – Ralph Waldo Emerson’s Radical Individualism

By the end of this week you should be able to:

1. Contrast Emerson’s individualism with conventional liberal individualism.
2. Evaluate Emerson’s claim that Americans, as individuals and as a society, should seek an “original relationship” with the world.
3. Connect Emerson’s transcendentalism to his political thought, including his scepticism of government authority.

Lecture:

In this week’s lecture I will introduce Emerson’s thought, putting his work in context both philosophically and politically. Then I will focus on his radical individualism and its relation to key themes in American political thought and political events in his own lifetime.

Seminar:

In the seminar we will go over assigned questions on Emerson’s essays “The American Scholar” and “Self-Reliance”. Then, assigned students will provide summaries and critical reflections on Shklar’s article “Emerson and the Inhibition of Democracy. This will be followed by discussion reflecting on how Emerson’s individualism resonates and challenges with conventional ideals of rugged individualism in American political thought.

Essential reading:

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. “The American Scholar” in *The Portable Emerson*, ed. Jeffrey S. Cramer (London: Penguin, 2014), 56-73. [Print; other print and online editions available through QMUL library as well]

Also available at <http://digitalemerson.wsulibs.wsu.edu>

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. “Self-Reliance” in *The Portable Emerson*, ed. Jeffrey S. Cramer (London: Penguin, 2014), 150-172. [Print; other print and online editions available through QMUL library as well]

Also available at <http://digitalemerson.wsulibs.wsu.edu>

*Shklar, Judith. “Emerson and the Inhibitions of Democracy,” *Political Theory*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (1990): 601–614.

Further reading:

Ambar, Saladin. *Reconsidering American Political Thought: A New Identity* (New York and Oxon: Routledge, 2020). [Print] – **Chapter Three**

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. “Politics” in *The Portable Emerson*, ed. Jeffrey S. Cramer (London: Penguin, 2014), 279-290. [Print; other print and online editions available through QMUL library as well]

Also available at <http://digitalemerson.wsulibs.wsu.edu>

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Uses of Great Men" in *The Portable Emerson*, ed. Jeffrey S. Cramer (London: Penguin, 2014). [Print; other print and online editions available through QMUL library as well]

Also available at <http://digitalemerson.wsulibs.wsu.edu>

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "American Civilization," *The Atlantic*, April 1862.

Frost, Bryan-Paul, "Religion, Nature, and Disobedience in the Thought of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau," in Bryan-Paul Frost and Jeffrey Sikkenga, eds. *History of American Political Thought*, 2nd edition (London and New York: Lexington Books, 2019), 367-387. [Print]

Green, Jeffrey Edward. "Self-reliance without self-satisfaction: Emerson, Thoreau, Dylan and the problem of inaction," *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (2021), 196-224.

Kersch, Ken. *American Political Thought: An Invitation* (Cambridge and Medford: Polity, 2021). [Print] – **Chapter Three**

McKenna, Erin and Scott L. Pratt. *American Philosophy: From Wounded Knee to the Present* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015). [Print] – **Chapter Five**

Neklason, Annika. "Ralph Waldo Emerson's American Idea," *The Atlantic*, 28 November 2019.

Shklar, Judith N. *Redeeming American Political Thought*, eds. Stanley Hoffman and Dennis F. Thompson (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998). [Print] – **Chapter Five**

West, Cornel. *The American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism* (Madison and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989). [Ebook] – **Chapter One**

Wolf, Jacob C. J. "Ralph Waldo Emerson: America's Prophet of Expressive Individualism," *Perspectives on Political Science*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (2021), 247-261.

Week 4 – Ralph Waldo Emerson, Democracy, and the Betrayal of Freedom

By the end of this week you should be able to:

1. Identify the tensions between Emerson's individualism and his commitment to democracy.
2. Analyse Emerson's ideas of complicity and responsibility in relation to his commitment to the abolition of slavery.
3. Evaluate Emerson's political thought, particularly the tension between his commitments to self-reliance and moral equality.

Lecture:

In this week's lecture we'll address Emerson's involvement in the political movement to abolish slavery in the US and how it completes his focus on individualism and limited government. We will also consider the importance he placed on the idea of complicity, and how this informs his politics, along with taking a critical look at the ambiguities in his democratic commitments.

Seminar:

In the seminar we will go over assigned questions on Emerson's essay "Man the reformer". Then, assigned students will provide summaries and critical reflections on Rattey's article "'Keeping the 'Perfect Sweetness...of Solitude': Toward a Consistent Emersonian Political Theory,'" and Turner's "Emerson, Slavery, and Citizenship". This will be followed by discussion reflecting on Emerson's place in the development of critical currents of American political thought.

Essential readings:

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Man the Reformer" in *Nature and Selected Essays*, ed. Larzer Ziff (London: Penguin, 1982), 129-148. [Print; online versions available via QMUL library]

*Rattey, Justin D. "Keeping the 'Perfect Sweetness...of Solitude': Toward a Consistent Emersonian Political Theory," *American Political Thought*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (2022), 73-95. [QMPlus]

*Turner, Jack. "Emerson, Slavery, and Citizenship," *Raritan*, Vol. 28, No. 2, (Fall 2008), 127-146.

Further readings:

Arsić, Branka and Cary Wolfe. Eds. *The Other Emerson* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2010). [Ebook]

Barndt, Susan McWilliams. *The American Road Trip and American Political Thought* (New York and London: Lexington Books, 2018). [Ebook] – **Chapters One and Two**

Cavell, Stanley. *Emerson's Transcendental Etudes* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003). [Print]

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "An Address... on the Anniversary of the Emancipation of the Negroes in the British West Indies" in *The Portable Emerson*, ed. Jeffrey S. Cramer (London: Penguin, 2014), 449-473. [Print]

Also available at <https://emersoncentral.com/texts/miscellanies/emancipation-in-the-british-west-indies/>

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "The Fugitive Slave Law—Address to Citizens of Concord" in *The Portable Emerson*, ed. Jeffrey S. Cramer (London: Penguin, 2014), 474-491. [Print]

Also available at <https://emersoncentral.com/texts/miscellanies/the-fugitive-slave-law/>

Park, Benjamin E. "Transcendental Democracy: Ralph Waldo Emerson's Political Thought, the Legacy of Federalism, and the Ironies of America's Democratic Tradition," *Journal of American Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (2014), 481-500.

Ritter, Eric. "Emerson's abolitionist perfectionism," *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, OnlineFirst (2021), 1-22.

Woodward-Burns, Robinson. "Solitude Before Society: Emerson on Self-Reliance, Abolitionism, and Moral Suasion," *Polity*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (2016), 29-54.

Week 5 – Jane Addams' Social Ethics and Vision of Community

By the end of this week you should be able to:

1. Understand and contextualise Addams' work in relation to the Hull House Settlement.
2. Analyse and evaluate her idea of social ethics, and its application in and through the settlement and labour movements.
3. Evaluate Addams' account of the necessity of greater social equality to realising democracy in America.

Lecture:

In this week's lecture I will introduce Jane Addams, discussing her biography, social work, and her contribution to American political thought. Then, we focus on her account of how social settlements and the labour movement aim to address individual and communal problems in a way that embodies the social ethics necessary to modern urban life.

Seminar:

In the seminar we will go over assigned questions on Addams' essays "The Subtle Problem of Charity", "A Modern Lear", and "If Men Were Seeking the Franchise". Then, assigned students will provide summaries and critical reflections on Elshtain's "Jane Addams and the social claim". This will be followed by discussion reflecting on Addams' contribution to our understanding of social democracy.

Essential readings:

Addams, Jane. "The Subtle Problems of Charity," in Jean Bethke Elshtain, ed., *The Jane Addams Reader* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 62-75.

Also available at <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/18013>

Addams, Jane. "A Modern Lear," in Jean Bethke Elshtain, ed., *The Jane Addams Reader* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 163-176.

Also available at <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/8932>

Addams, Jane. "If Men Were Seeking the Franchise," in Jean Bethke Elshtain, ed., *The Jane Addams Reader* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 229-234.

Also available at <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/8978>

*Elshtain, Jean Bethke. "Jane Addams and the social claim," *The Public Interest*, No. 145 (Fall 2001), 82-92.

Further readings:

Addams, Jane. "The Objective Value of a Social Settlement," in Jean Bethke Elshtain, ed., *The Jane Addams Reader* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 29-45.

Addams, Jane. *Twenty Years at Hull House* (Open Road Integrated Media, 2016). [Ebook – other print editions available in the library as well] – **Chapter Six**

Ambar, Saladin. *Reconsidering American Political Thought: A New Identity* (New York and Oxon: Routledge, 2020). [Print] – **Chapter Five**

Elshtain, Jean Bethke. “Jane Addams as Civil Theorist: Struggling to Reconcile Competing Claims,” in Bryan-Paul Frost and Jeffrey Sikkenga, eds. *History of American Political Thought*, 2nd edition (London and New York: Lexington Books, 2019), 535-552. [Print]

Fischer, Marilyn, Carol Nackenoff, and Wendy Chmielewski, eds. *Jane Addams and the Practice of Democracy* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009). [Ebook]

Knight, Louise W. *Citizen: Jane Addams and the Struggle for Democracy* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press). [Ebook]

McKenna, Erin and Scott L. Pratt. *American Philosophy: From Wounded Knee to the Present* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015). [Print] – **Chapters Four & Six**

Seigfried, Charlene Haddock. “Socializing Democracy: Jane Addams and John Dewey,” *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (1999), 207-230.

Villadsen, Kaspar. “Jane Addams’ Social Vision: Revisiting the Gospel of Individualism and Solidarity,” *The American Sociologist*, Vol. 49 (2018), 218-241.

Winkelman, Joel. “A Working Democracy: Jane Addams on the Meaning of Work,” *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 75, No. 3 (2013), 357-382.

Week 6 – Jane Addams, Conflict, and the Exclusions of Democracy

By the end of this week you should be able to:

1. Understand and analyse Addams' ideas on cultural pluralism racial inequality.
2. Evaluate Addams' account of the need for, and challenges, to developing a pluralistic notion of American identity.
3. Evaluate Addams' approach to racial conflict and the pursuit of racial equality.

Lecture:

In this week's lecture I will discuss Addams' political and intellectual influence, particularly in relation to conflicts over American identity that challenge her hopes for a more social democracy. We will examine how her insistence on the need for theory to speak from and to practice and lived experience shapes her approach to questions of identity and the limits of her approach.

Seminar:

In the seminar we will go over assigned questions on Addams' essays "Social Control" and "The Public School and the Immigrant Child". Then, assigned students will provide summaries and critical reflections on Fischer's "Addams on Cultural Pluralism, European Immigrants, and African Americans" and Sullivan's "Reciprocal Relations Between Races". This will be followed by discussion reflecting on Addams' contribution to American political thought, especially related to notions of political identity in a diverse society.

Essential readings:

Addams, Jane. "Social Control," *Crisis*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (January 1911): 22-23. [QMPlus]

Also available at <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/7274>

Addams, Jane. "The Public School and the Immigrant Child," in Jean Bethke Elshtain, ed., *The Jane Addams Reader* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 235-239.

Also available at <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/6946>

*Fischer, Marilyn. "Addams on Cultural Pluralism, European Immigrants, and African Americans," *The Pluralist*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Fall 2014), 38-58.

*Sullivan, Shannon. "Reciprocal Relations Between Races: Jane Addams's Ambiguous Legacy," *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Winter, 2003), 43-60.

Further readings:

Deegan, Mary Jo. "Jane Addams on citizenship in a democracy," *Journal of Classical Sociology*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (2010), 217-238.

Fenton, Jennifer Kiefer. "Storied Social Change: Recovering Jane Addams's Early Model of Constituent Storytelling to Navigate the Practical Challenges of Speaking for Others," *Hypatia*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (2021), 391–409.

Hamington, Maurice. "Public Pragmatism: Jane Addams and Ida B. Wells on Lynching," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2005), 167-174.

Hay, Carol. "Justice and Objectivity for Pragmatists: Cosmopolitanism in the Work of Martha Nussbaum and Jane Addams," *The Pluralist*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (2012), 86-95.

Schneiderhan, Erik. *The Size of Others' Burdens: Barak Obama, Jane Addams, and the Politics of Helping Others* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015). [Ebook]

Whipps, Judy B. "Jane Addams's Social Thought as a Model for a Pragmatist-Feminist Communitarianism," *Hypatia*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2004), 118-133.

Week 7 – READING WEEK

No lecture or seminar.

Your first assignment is due this week, so I advise working on this during reading week.

- **Short Essay, due 1.00pm on Thursday 9 March 2023.**

Week 8 – James Baldwin’s Search for Black American Identity

By the end of this week you should be able to:

1. Identify key themes in Baldwin’s writing connected to American identity and the persistence of racial hierarchies.
2. Analyse Baldwin’s understanding of the consequences racial injustice and his means for addressing such injustice in his early work.
3. Evaluate Baldwin’s call for reconciliation between blacks and whites in the US.

Lecture:

In this week’s lecture I will introduce Baldwin and discuss how to read him as a political thinker, as well as a novelist and popular essayist. We will then focus on Baldwin’s account of the experience of racial injustice as well as his influential advocacy for racial reconciliation and integration.

Seminar:

In the seminar we will go over assigned questions Baldwin’s *Notes of a Native Son*. Then, assigned students will provide summaries and critical reflections on Brendese’s “The Race for a More Perfect Union”. This will be followed by discussion reflecting on Baldwin’s analysis of racism and American identity.

Essential Readings:

Baldwin, James. *Notes of a Native Son* (London: Penguin, 2017). [Ebook and Print]
Especially, “Many Thousands Gone”, “Notes of a Native Son”, “A Question of Identity”, and “Stranger in the Village”.

*Brendese, P. J. “The Race of a More Perfect Union: James Baldwin, Segregated Memory and the Presidential Race,” *Theory & Event*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2012).

Further Readings:

Ambar, Saladin. *Reconsidering American Political Thought: A New Identity* (New York and Oxon: Routledge, 2020). [Print] – **Chapter Six**

Balfour, Lawrie. “‘A Most Disagreeable Mirror’: Race Consciousness as Double Consciousness,” *Political Theory*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (1998), 346-369.

Drabinski, John E. “James Baldwin: Democracy between Nihilism and Hope,” in Melvin L. Rogers and Jack Turner. *African American Political Thought: A Collected History* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2021), 481-496. [Ebook]

Field, Douglas, ed. *A Historical Guide to James Baldwin* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). [Print and Ebook]

Ghatage, Rohan. "Beyond Understanding: James Baldwin's Pragmatist Aesthetics," *James Baldwin Review*, Vol. 5 (2019), 73-95.

Jenkins, David. "James Baldwin and Recognition," *American Political Thought: A Journal of Ideas, Institutions, and Culture*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (2019), 82-107. [QMPlus]

Kersch, Ken. *American Political Thought: An Invitation* (Cambridge and Medford: Polity, 2021). [Print] – **Chapters Seven and Eight**

McBride, Dwight A., ed. *James Baldwin Now* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1999). [Print]

McKenna, Erin and Scott L. Pratt. *American Philosophy: From Wounded Knee to the Present* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015). [Print] – **Chapter Twenty-four**

McWilliams, Susan J., ed. *A Political Companion to James Baldwin* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2017). [Ebook]

Schlosser, Joel Alden. "Socrates in a Different Key: James Baldwin and Race in America," *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 3 (2013), 487-499.

Week 9 – James Baldwin, Social Transformation, and the Challenges of Racial Reconciliation

By the end of this week you should be able to:

1. Analyse Baldwin's account of the tension between integrationist and separatist responses to racial injustice by black Americans.
2. Evaluate Baldwin's analysis of the role of religion in fostering racial injustice in the United States.
3. Evaluate Baldwin's claim that it is the duty of white and black Americans to come together to overcome racial injustice.

Lecture:

In this week's lecture I will discuss the development of Baldwin's political thought from the 1960s, where he was centrally associated with the Civil Rights movement, through to the 1970s and 80s when he lost faith in liberal political ideas and criticised the patriarchy of the Black nationalist movement. We will then focus on his claim that overcoming racial injustice requires finding a form of reconciliation between White and Black Americans grounded in love to remake the violent society that harms both groups.

Seminar:

In the seminar we will go over assigned questions on Baldwin's essay "Down at the Cross". Then, assigned students will provide summaries and critical reflections on Beard's "James Baldwin on Violence and Disavowal" and Turner's "Baldwin's Individualism and Critique of Property". This will be followed by discussion reflecting on Baldwin's influence on American political thought more widely.

Essential readings:

Baldwin, James. *The Fire Next Time* (London: Penguin, 2017). [Print and Ebook]
Especially, "Down at the Cross"

*Beard, Lisa. "James Baldwin on Violence and Disavowal," in Susan J McWilliams, ed. *A Political Companion to James Baldwin* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2017), 337-360. [Ebook]

*Turner, Jack. "Baldwin's Individualism and Critique of Property," in Susan J McWilliams, ed. *A Political Companion to James Baldwin* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2017), 301-333. [Ebook]

Further readings:

Brim, Matt. *James Baldwin and the Queer Imagination* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2014). [Ebook]

Drexler-Dreis, Joseph. "James Baldwin's Decolonial Loves as Religious Orientation," *Journal of Africana Religions*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (2015), 251-278.

Field, Douglas. "Looking for Jimmy Baldwin: Sex, Privacy, and Black Nationalist Fervor," *Callaloo*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (2004), 457-480.

Field, Douglas. "Pentecostalism and All that Jazz: Tracing James Baldwin's Religion," *Literature & Theology*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (2008), 436-457.

Lyne, Bill. "God's Black Revolutionary Mouth: James Baldwin's Black Radicalism," *Science & Society*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (2010), 12-36.

Marshall, Stephen. *The City on the Hill from Below: The Crisis of Prophetic Black Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011. See, Chapter 4: "(Making) love in the dishonorable City: The Civic Poetry of James Baldwin".

Norman, Brian. "Reading a 'Closet Screenplay': Hollywood, James Baldwin's Malcolms and the Threat of Historical Irrelevance," *African American Review*, Vol. 39, No. ½ (2005), 103-118.

Norman, Brian. "Crossing Identitarian Lines: Women's Liberation and James Baldwin's Early Essays," *Women's Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (2006), 241-264.

Week 10 – Patricia Hill Collins’ *Black Feminist Thought*

By the end of this week you should be able to:

1. Identify the meaning of “black feminist thought” and the reasons it has been obscured and marginalised in the context of American political thought.
2. Analyse the way black women’s oppression devalues their intellectual and political activism.
3. Evaluate Collins’ account of the importance of self-definition and the creation of a black feminist tradition of political thought.

Lecture:

In this week’s lecture I will introduce the work of Patricia Hill Collins, before focusing on her enormously influential book, *Black Feminist Thought*. We will then focus on what Collins’ identifies as the distinguishing feature of black feminist thought and the challenges that dual oppression based on race and gender present to the development and recognition of black feminist thought.

Seminar:

In the seminar we will go over assigned questions on Collins’ *Black Feminist Thought*. Then, assigned students will provide a summary and critical reflection on Pérez and Williams’ “Black Feminist Activism”. This will be followed by discussion reflecting on how Collins addresses issues of racial and gender injustice at the centre of American political thought.

Essential readings:

Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (New York and London: Routledge, 2009). [Print and Ebook] – **Chapters One and Two**

*Pérez, Michelle Salazar and Eloise Williams. “Black Feminist Activism: Theory as Generating Collective Resistance,” *Multicultural Perspectives*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (2014), 125-132.

Further readings:

Ambar, Saladin. *Reconsidering American Political Thought: A New Identity* (New York and Oxon: Routledge, 2020). [Print] – **Chapter Seven**

Austin, Algernon. “Theorizing Difference within Black Feminist Thought: The Dilemma of Sexism in Black Communities,” *Race, Gender & Class*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1999), 52-66.

Chepp, Valerie. “Black feminist theory and the politics of irreverence: The case of women’s rap,” *Feminist Theory*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (2015), 207-226.

Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004). [Ebook]

Collins, Patricia Hill. *From Black Power to Hip Hop: Racism, Nationalism, and Feminism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006). [Ebook]

Cooper, Brittney C. "Love No Limit: Towards a Black Feminist Future (In Theory)," *The Black Scholar: Journal of Black Studies and Research*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (2015), 7-21.

Forum. "Thinking Intersectionally with Patricia Hill Collins," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2012), 442-473.

Kersch, Ken. *American Political Thought: An Invitation* (Cambridge and Medford: Polity, 2021). [Print] – **Chapter Eight**

Symposia. "The Contributions of Patricia Hill Collins," *Gender & Society*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2012), 14-72.

Symposia. "Patricia Hill Collins's *Black Feminist Thought*," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 13 (2015), 2314-2354.

Week 11 – Patricia Hill Collins, Empowerment, and Recovering Lost Lives

By the end of this week you should be able to:

1. Understand and analyse Collins' account of Black feminist epistemology as a critical social theory in her examination of violence.
2. Evaluate Collins' account of the centrality of lived experience / everyday experience to Black feminist thought, including contrasting it with Hartman's work recovering lost lives.

Lecture:

In this lecture we will continue to look at Collins' work, focusing on the intersecting forms of oppression revealed through Black feminist thought, forming what she calls a matrix of domination. This is then linked to the distinctive viewpoint Black women have when they are oppressed, giving rise to a Black feminist epistemology. We will finish by looking at Hartman's work recovering the experiences of black women erased from the historical archive.

Seminar:

In the seminar we will go over assigned questions on Collins' "On Violence, Intersectionality and Transversal Politics". Then, assigned students will provide summaries and critical reflections on Hartman's essays "The Anarchy of Colored Girls Assembled in a Riotous Manner" and "Litany for Grieving Sisters". This will be followed by discussion reflecting on the place of Black feminist thought in American political thought.

Essential readings:

Collins, Patricia Hill. "On Violence, Intersectionality and Transversal Politics," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 9 (2017), 1460-1473.

*Hartman, Saidiya. "The Anarchy of Colored Girls Assembled in a Riotous Manner," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 117, No. 3 (2018), 456-490.

*Hartman, Saidiya. "Litany for Grieving Sisters," *Representations*, Vol. 158, No. 1 (2022), 39-44.

Further readings:

Collins, Patricia Hill. "The tie that binds: race, gender and US violence," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 5 (1998), 917-938.

Hartman, Saidiya. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Hartman, Saidiya. "The Belly of the World: A Note on Black Women's Labors," *Souls*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (2016), 166-173.

Hartman Saidiya. *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2019). [Print and Ebook]

Hartman, Saidiya. *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2021). [Print and Ebook]

Johnson, Latoya. "From the Anti-Slavery Movement to Now: (Re)Examining the Relationship Between Critical Race Theory and Black Feminist Thought," *Race, Gender & Class*, Vol. 22, Nos. 3-4 (2015), 227-243.

Week 12 – Conclusion and Essay Advice

No lecture or seminar on Monday 10 April due to Easter Bank Holiday.

Your second assignment is due this week, so I offer additional advice and feedback hours on Tuesday 11 April (online) and Wednesday 12 April (in-person) to discuss your essays before submission.

- **Long Essay, due by 1.00pm on Friday 14 April 2023.**