

POLITICS AND CULTURE 790: 304: 01 Summer 2008

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

As America makes the transition to a nation with no single ethnic group in a majority, Americans, like citizens of many other nations, are locked in a debate about what it means to be an "American". This course begins by examining the differences and similarities between American political culture and the political cultures of other nations. Is American political culture unique? Can we identify a traditional set of common political values and attitudes that have bound our nation together to create *E Pluribus Unum*? Should these values, which underlie our political culture, change as our population becomes more diverse? Will our commitment to diversity undermine, or enhance, our cohesion as one nation? The course will also analyze and examine how America changed, why America changed, identify the forces changing America and assess the various conceptions of the America of Tomorrow.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

COURSE TEXTS:

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., The Disuniting of America (W. W. Norton , latest edition)

Additional reading extracts available on course web site

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to:

- a. attend class on 4 dates: Monday June 23, Tuesday July 8 , Wednesday 16 and Thursday July 17 (FINAL EXAM)
- b. Participate in 2 web chat sessions: Wednesday July 2 and Thursday July 10 (10 points each= 20 points)
- c. Complete 3 online assignments (10 points each= 30 points)
- d. Final Exam: 50 points

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

(An updated reading list can be obtained on the course web site: URL to be given out in class)

Diana West, The Death of the Grown –Up: How America’s Arrested Development is Bringing Down Civilization (St. Martin’s Press, 2007)

Dowell Myers, Immigrants and Boomers: Forging a New Social Contract for the Future of America (2007)

Jean Twenge, Generation Me: Why Today's Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled--and More Miserable Than Ever Before: Books: Jean M. Twenge (Free Press, 2006)

Philip K Howard, The Death of Common Sense

Amartya Sen, Identity & Violence :The Illusion of Destiny (W.W Norton, 2006)

David Noble and George Lipsitz, Death of a Nation (University of Minnesota Press, 2002)

John McWhorter, Losing the Race (2000)

Roger Kimball, The Long March (Encounter, 2000)

Gertrude Himmelfarb, One Nation Two Cultures (N.Y.: Alfred Knopf, 1999)

William G. Brown and Derek Bok, The Shape of the River: Long Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions (N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1998)

Francis Fukuyana, The Great Disruption (N.Y.: The Free Press, 1999)

David Landes, The Wealth and Poverty of Nations (1998)

Samuel Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations (1994)

Alvin and Heidi Toffler, Creating a New Civilization: The Politics of the Third Wave (1994)

Peter Brimelow, Alien Nation (1995)

Robert Bork, Slouching Towards Gomorrah 1996

David Hackett Fischer, The Great Wave, 1996

William Strauss and Neil Howe, The Fourth Turning (Doubleday, 1996)

Jim Sleeper, Liberal Racism (Viking, 1997)

E. D. Hirsch, Cultural Literacy.

Myron Magnet, The Dream and the Nightmare - The Legacy of the Sixties for the Underclass (1993).

Jared Taylor, Paved with Good Intentions, 1993.

Lawrence Mead, The New Politics of Poverty in America, 1993.

Richard Bernstein, Dictatorship of Virtue, Knopf, 1995.

George Will, The Leveling Wind, Viking, 1994.

Robert Hughes, The Culture of Complaint.

William Bennett, The Book of Virtues (1994).

Charles Murray, Losing Ground (1984).

Richard Hernstein and Charles Murray, The Bell Curve, 1994.

William Julius Wilson, The Truly Disadvantaged (1987).

Nicholas LeMann, The Promised Land (1992).

James Traub, The City on a Hill (1994).

Charles Sykes, A Nation of Victims

Lynn Cheney, Telling the Truth: Why our Culture and Our Country Have Stopped Making Sense (1995)

David Blakenhorn, Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem (1994)

Ken Auletta, The Underclass

Stephanie Coontz, The Way We Never Were: Families and the Nostalgia Trap

Michael Land, The Next American Nation (1995)

Dinesh D'Souze, The End of Racism (1995)

Thomas Sowell, Race and Culture: A World View (1995)

David Armor, Forced Justice: School Desegregation and the Law (1995)

Paul Craig Roberts and Lawrence Stratton, The New Color Line: How Quotas and Privilege Destroy Democracy (1995)

Stephanie Koontz, The Way We Really Are (1997)

COURSE OUTLINE

1. How America has changed
2. Why America has changed
3. What does it mean to be "an American"?
4. Forces changing America: Academia and the Media
5. Forces changing America: The New Civil Rights Movement
6. Forces changing America: Immigration
7. Pros and cons of Immigration
8. What will the America of Tomorrow look like? Three scenarios