

CONSERVATISM IN MODERN AMERICA
Spring 2021

Political Science 238

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In this class, we will canvas and critically reflect on the political thought that shaped the political understandings of post-World War II American conservative movement. We will consider, amongst other things, foundational understandings concerning God, place, and the state, alongside areas to which they have been applied in U.S. political life, including economics, race, and a selection of contemporary public policies.

Covid-19 Logistics:

Class Meetings/Attendance: This class will be taught via Zoom, live and synchronous, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3- 4:15 PM, EST. Except in cases of illness or other important life issue, students are expected to regularly attend class on Zoom at the usual time.

I expect your live, real-time face to be visible live on Zoom (rather than a screen saver or logo). It is important for the dynamics of the class that I and the other students in the class be able to see you, just as we would in a live, in-person class. Exemptions will be granted for legitimate reasons on a case-by-case basis.

Notification re Recordings: This class will be recorded. The purpose of this is to provide access to material for students enrolled in this class who miss the session for an excused absence (such as illness or technical difficulty). While all of the recordings will be stored within the Canvas site, they *will only be available for viewing by individual permission to course students with excused absences*.

Canvas: We will make use of the course Canvas page. Most significantly, many of the readings in this class are posted on the course Canvas page: **you will find any reading in the class listed that is not in a required-for-purchase book posted in the Modules section of the course Canvas page.** We may also use the Announcements and Discussion boards. I will be posting some of the outlines, terms, and lists that I would normally write on the classroom blackboard on Canvas. We may use that page in other ways as well, as needed.

Office Hours: I will not be in my office in McGuinn this semester. I will, however, hold virtual office hours by appointment. I should be quite available and accessible for these, other than during the day on Tuesdays and Thursdays, when I am either teaching or preparing to teach both of my classes. You should email me -- best -- or otherwise speak to me to set up a time to talk.

I am available, moreover, to meet with students in person, by appointment, one-on-one. These meetings can be either with regard to the class itself, or just for us to meet and get to know each

other. We talk about anything you would like to talk about, or that comes up. Any such in person meeting, however, will need to be outdoors, masked, and at an appropriate social distance. Obviously, given the cold, this is less likely to be an option at the beginning of the semester, and more likely as the weather gets warmer over time.

I live near campus, so it is not especially burdensome for me to meet you in person outdoors. These meetings would likely take place on a campus lawn (such as on the lawn, or in the new park, near the gym, on the Brighton campus near the Art Museum), near the Reservoir, or the yard of my apartment. Please email or speak to me if you would like to meet in person.

Teaching Assistant: X will be the Teaching Assistant for the course. His role in this particular class, however, will involve light, mostly administrative, assistance with a selection of course tasks. I will be personally grading the assignments, including papers and quizzes.

Preparation for Class: The class will be part lecture and part discussion. Students are expected to attend all classes, to do all assigned readings prior to class, and to be ready to discuss the readings and the questions they raise during our class meetings. I reserve the right to call on any student in class at any time.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is violated by any dishonest act committed in an academic context, including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism (attempting to pass the work of others off as your own, in any way in any part of an assignment), and submitting for credit in this class work done for another class.

The University's policy on Academic Integrity may be found at www.bc.edu/integrity. Ask me if you have any questions about academic integrity; the Political Science Department also offers a quiz and discussion at <http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/cas/polisci/integrity/quiz.html>.

All suspected violations will be reported to the Dean in accordance with University policy. A final grade of "F" for the course will be given in the event of a violation of academic integrity."

Disability Accommodations:

If you are a student with a documented disability seeking reasonable accommodations in this course, please contact X at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities and ADHD. For other students with medical, physical, psychological, and temporary disabilities should register with the Disability Services Office. Go to the following link for more details to register: <https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/offices/student-affairs/sites/student-outreach-and-support-services/disability-services.html>

Required Books:

Richard Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (University of Chicago, 1948/1984)
Barry Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (Princeton, 1960/2007)

Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (University of Chicago, 1962/2020)
James Q. Wilson, *Thinking About Crime* (Basic Books, 1975/2013)
Francis Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Crossway 1981)
Thomas Sowell, *Civil Rights: Rhetoric or Reality?* (William Morrow, 1984)
Thomas Sowell, *The Quest for Cosmic Justice* (Touchstone, 1999)

Course Requirements: Two Quizzes (30%); Two (2) Papers (50%); Class Attendance/Participation/Ungraded Exercises (20%).

Conservatism in Modern America

WEEK ONE

Introduction -- Taxonomy, Development, and Current Events

Luke Mogelson, “Nothing to Lose But Your Masks” *New Yorker* (August 2020)

Timothy Lombardo, “What are White Workers Thinking?” *Hardcrackers* (June 2020)

Jennifer Medina, “How Democrats Missed Trump’s Appeal to Latino Voters” *New York Times* (November 2020)(CV)

Michael Anton, “The Flight 93 Election,” *Claremont Review of Books* (September 2016)

WEEK TWO -- *The Conservative Mind*

Richard Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (1948):

Ch. 1: The Unsentimental Sentiment

Ch. 2: Distinction and Hierarchy

Ch. 3: Fragmentation and Obsession

Russell Kirk, *The Conservative Mind* (1953):

Ch. 1: The Idea of Conservatism

Ch. 2: [Edmund] Burke and the Politics of Prescription

Michael Oakeshott, “On Being Conservative” (1956)

Willmoore Kendall, “What is Conservatism?” (1963)

WEEK THREE -- Individualist Liberalism

William Graham Sumner, *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other* (1883)

Herbert Hoover, “Rugged Individualism” (1928)

Ayn Rand, “The Nature of Government” (from *The Virtue of Selfishness*) (1961)

Whittaker Chambers “Big Sister is Watching You,” *National Review* (1957)

Frank S. Meyer, “Conservatism” (1966)

Friedrich Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960)
Postscript - “Why I am Not a Conservative”

WEEK FOUR -- American Conservatism

Buckley, National Review Mission Statement (1955)

Albert Jay Nock, “Isaiah’s Job” (1956)

Barry Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (1960):
Ch. 1: The Conscience of a Conservative”

Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), “The Sharon Statement” (1960)

Ronald Reagan, “A Time for Choosing” (1964)

Irving Kristol, “Confessions of a True, Self-Confessed - Perhaps the Only -- ‘Neoconservative’” (1979)

Tea Party Platform (2013)

WEEKS FIVE/SIX -- *Place*

John Crowe Ransom, “Reconstructed but Unregenerate” (from *Twelve Southerners, I’ll Take My Stand* (1930))

Richard Weaver, “The Tennessee Agrarians” (1952)

Richard Weaver, “Agrarianism in Exile” (1950)

Richard Weaver, “Two Types of American Individualism” (1963)

Robert Nisbet, *The Quest for Community* (1953)

Ch. 1 - The Loss of Community

Ch. 2 - The Image of Community

Conclusion

From Outside the Movement: Ralph Ellison, “Harlem is Nowhere” (*Harper’s* 1964))

Southern Manifesto (1956)

William F. Buckley, Jr., “Segregation and Democracy” *National Review* (1956)

William F. Buckley Jr., “Return to States Rights,” *National Review* (1956)

William F. Buckley, Jr., “Why the South Must Prevail,” *National Review* (1957)

Barry Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (1960):

Ch. 3 -- States Rights

Ch. 4 -- And Civil Rights

James Jackson Kilpatrick, “The Case for States’ Rights” (1962)

Russell Kirk, “The Prospects for Territorial Democracy in America” (1962)

Martin Diamond, “What the Framers’ Meant by Federalism” (1962)

Clarence Manion, *The Conservative American* (1964)

Ch. 8 -- Action Defiles the Word

Ch. 11 -- The Restoration of the States

From Outside the Movement: Hannah Arendt, “Reflections on Little Rock” *Dissent* (1959)

Hank Williams, Jr., “If the South Woulda Won”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDkyL9c0QdY>

WEEK SEVEN -- God (Foundations/Transcendence)

Francis Cardinal Spellman, *The Road to Victory* (1942)

Ch. 1 - Our God Given Rights

Ch. 5 - Freedom to Do What is Right

Ch. 9 - Two Anchors - Patriotism and Religion

John Courtney Murray, SJ, *We Hold These Truths: A Catholic Reflection on the American Proposition* (1960)

Francis Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (1981)

Ch. 1 -- The Abolition of Truth and Morality

Ch. 2 -- Foundations for Faith and Freedom

Ch. 6 -- An Open Window

Ch. 7 -- The Limits of Civil Obedience

Ch. 8 -- The Use of Civil Disobedience

Ch. 9 -- The Use of Force

Richard John Neuhaus, *The Naked Public Square* (1984)

William Barr, Speech at the University of Notre Dame Law School (2019)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM87WMrCWM>

Senator Josh Hawley (R-Mo.), Commencement Address at King’s College, NYC (2019)

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?460355-1/senator-josh-hawley-commencement-speech-kings-college>

Justice Samuel Alito, Speech to The Federalist Society (2020)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMnukCVIZWQ>

WEEK EIGHT -- The State

Albert Jay Nock, *Our Enemy, the State* (1935)

Ch. 1

Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (1944)

Introduction

Ch. 3 -- Individualism and Collectivism

Ch. 5 -- Planning and Democracy

Ch. 6 -- Planning and the Rule of Law

Murray Rothbard, *For A New Liberty: A Libertarian Manifesto* (1973)

Ch. 3 -- The State

Herbert Storing, “The Problem of Big Government” (1962)

Nathan Glazer, “The Limits of Social Policy” *Commentary* (1971)

WEEK NINE -- Market Freedom and Capitalism

From Outside the Movement: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, “Speech at Oglethorpe University” (1932)

Mount Pelerin Society, Statement of Aims (1947)

Henry Hazlitt, *Economics in One Lesson* (1961)

Milton and Rose Friedman, *Free to Choose* (1980)

Ch. 1 - The Power of the Market

Ch. 2 - The Tyranny of Controls

Irving Kristol, “On Corporate Capitalism in America” (1975)

WEEK TEN -- Communism

James Burnham, *Communism: The Struggle for the World* (1947/1967)

Joseph McCarthy, Speech at Wheeling, West Virginia (1950)

Robert A. Taft, *A Foreign Policy for Americans* (1951)
Ch. 8 - The Battle Against Communist Ideology Throughout the World

Whittaker Chambers, *Witness* (1952)
Forward in the Form of a Letter to My Children

John Birch Society, *The Blue Book* (1960) [Robert Welch]

Barry Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (1960)
Ch. 10 -- The Soviet Menace

Willmoore Kendall, "McCarthyism: The Pons Asinorum of American Conservatism" (1963)

WEEK ELEVEN -- Liberals/The Left

Max Eastman, *Reflections on the Failure of Socialism* (1955)
Ch. 1 - Both Hopes are False
Ch. 3 - The Real Guarantee of Freedom
Ch. 5 - The Delinquent Liberals
Ch. 10 - Socialism and Human Nature

Clarence Manion, *The Conservative American* (1964)
Ch. 1 - The Thunder on the Right
Ch. 2 - The Development of Modern Liberalism

Irving Kristol, "Socialism: An Obituary for an Idea" (1976)

Irving Kristol, "The Adversary Culture of Intellectuals" (1979)

Thomas Sowell, *The Quest for Cosmic Justice* (1999)
Ch. 1- "The Quest for Cosmic Justice"
[Skim rest of book, and read a few discussions/illustrations
that you find interesting to share with the class]

WEEKS TWELVE/THIRTEEN

Problems and Public Policies

I. Race and Civil Rights

Richard Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (1948)
Ch. 4: Egotism in Work and Art

Harry V. Jaffa, "The Emancipation Proclamation" (1963)
James Jackson Kilpatrick. "View from a Southern Exposure" (1963)

Walter Berns, “Racial Discrimination and the Limits of Judicial Remedy” (1963)

George Wallace, Inaugural Gubernatorial Address (1963)

Ernest Van den Haag, “Negroes and Whites: Claims, Rights, and Prospects” (1965)

George Schuyler, “The Case Against the Civil Rights Bill” (1963)

George Schuyler, “The Rising Tide of Black Racism” (1967)

Norman Podhoretz, “My Negro Problem -- and Ours” (1963)

Ayn Rand, “Racism” (in *The Virtue of Selfishness*)(1961)

Thomas Sowell, *Civil Rights: Rhetoric or Reality?* (1984)

Ch. 1 -- The Civil Rights Vision

Ch. 2 -- From Equal Opportunity to ‘Affirmative Action’

Ch. 4 -- The Special Case of Blacks

Ch. 6 -- Rhetoric or Reality?

Jefferson Cowie, “The Hard Hat Riot Was a Preview of Today’s Political Divisions”

EACH STUDENT SHOULD CHOOSE ONE OF THE BELOW POLICY AREAS

II. Poverty and Public Assistance (Welfare)

Barry Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (1960):

Ch. 7 -- Taxing and Spending

Ch. 8 -- The Welfare State

Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (1962)

Ch. 11 - Social Welfare Measures

Ch. 12 - Alleviation of Poverty

III. Crime and Public Order

James Q. Wilson, *Thinking About Crime* (1975/1983/2013)

Ch. 3 -- Thinking About Crime

Ch. 4 -- The Police and Crime

Ch. 5 -- Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety

Ch. 8 -- Incapacitation

Ch. 12 -- Crime and American Culture

Ch. 13 -- Crime and Public Policy

Walter Berns, “For Capital Punishment” (1979)

WEEK FOURTEEN

Trumpism, and American Conservatism's Future

Roy Acuff, "Stuck Up Blues"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMFAgWEaI9I>

Donald Trump, Inaugural Address (2017)

Pete Wehner, "For Conservatives to Have Any Hope, Trump has to Lose," *New York Times*, (August 24, 2020).

Jonathan Van Maren, "The Realignment is Real," *The American Conservative* (November 12, 2020).

Ben Hachten, "It's Not Your Father's GOP," *The American Conservative* (November 11, 2020)

Elaina Plott, "Win or Lose, It's Donald Trump's Republican Party," *New York Times Magazine* (November 1, 2020).

Lisa McGirr, "Trump is the Republican Party's Past, and its Future," *New York Times* (January 13, 2021)

Timothy Snyder, "American Abyss," *New York Times* (January 9, 2021)