



W.E.B. DuBois



Hannah Arendt



Noam Chomsky

History 600: Public Intellectuals in the U.S.

Prof. Ratner-Rosenhagen
Office: Mosse Hum. 4112
email: ratnerrosenh@wisc.edu
Prof. RR's Office Hours:
M 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

Lecturer: Ronit Stahl
Office: Mosse Hum. 4112
email: rystahl@wisc.edu
R.S.'s Office Hours: T 3-
5 p.m.

Class Meetings:
M 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Room: Mosse Hum. 5257

This course is designed for students interested in exploring the life of the mind in the twentieth-century United States. Specifically, we will examine the life of particular minds—intellectuals of different political, moral, and social persuasions and sensibilities, who have played prominent roles in American public life over the course of the last century. Despite the common conception of American culture as profoundly anti-intellectual, we will evaluate how professional thinkers and writers have indeed been forces in American society. Our aim is to investigate the contested meaning, role, and place of the intellectual in a democratic, capitalist culture. We will also examine the cultural conditions, academic and governmental institutions, and the media for the dissemination of ideas, which have both fostered and inhibited intellectual production and exchange.

Roughly the first third of the semester will be devoted to reading studies in U.S. and comparative intellectual history, the sociology of knowledge, and critical social theory. In addition, students will explore the varieties of public intellectual life by becoming familiarized with a wide array of prominent American philosophers, political and social theorists, scientists, novelists, artists, and activists. Students will use the first weeks of class to identify a public intellectual on whom they would like to write their final papers. Beginning week five, students will devote the bulk of their time to researching and writing their final paper on the life and thought of the intellectual of their choosing.

Assignments and Grading

The main assignment in this course is a 20-25 page research paper on a major twentieth-century American intellectual. In preparation for this final paper, students will have several weekly readings, as well as short writing, oral, and research assignments. For the weeks in which a common seminar reading is assigned, students will be expected to write paragraph-length questions based on those readings (noted with an *). Paragraph-length questions are due by 8 p.m. Sunday night (before Monday's class meeting). Writing your weekly questions

will prove to be a very useful strategy for synthesizing the reading and focusing your thoughts before coming to class.

All reading and writing assignments listed on the syllabus are mandatory. In addition, attendance is mandatory. If for any reason you are unable to come to class, please email me in advance to let me know. Unexcused absences and/or tardiness will result in a poor participation grade.

Grading will be based on class participation, weekly paragraph-length questions, encyclopedia entries, paper proposal and bibliography, and a final paper, with the breakdown as follows:

- 1. Participation & Attendance.** Informed and engaged contribution to class discussions. 20%
- 2. Paragraph-Length Questions.** Based on the readings for class. 10%
- 3. Encyclopedia Entries (paragraph-length) for 3 major U.S. thinkers.** 10%
- 4. Proposal and Bibliography for Final Paper.** Proposal should be 2-3 double-spaced pages/ bibliography of primary and secondary sources should be 1 single-spaced pages. 5%
- 5. Oral Presentations.** 10-minutes synopsis of final paper for classmates, plus Q & A. No grade.
- 6. Final Paper.** 20-25 page final research paper with bibliography. 55%



William James

Students with Disabilities: Please notify me early in the semester if you have a documented requirement for accommodation in this course. If you have any questions about this or require any assistance, feel free to contact me or the McBurney Disability Resource Center at 263-2741.



Lionel Trilling

Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore:

Steven Biel, *Independent Intellectuals in the U.S.* (1992)

Julien Benda, *Treason of the Intellectuals* (1927)

Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual* (1994)

Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (1962)

Russell Jacoby, *The Last Intellectuals: American Culture in the Age of Academe* (1987)

All other required readings (essays, articles, and book chapters) are on e-reserves. All of the required books are available on 3-hour reserve at the College Library.

Preparation for First Class Meeting on Jan. 28th:

In order to hit the ground running, your assignments for the first class meeting are:

1. Do all the readings listed for week 1 and submit by email (ratnerrosenh@wisc.edu) your 7-9 length questions based on the readings by **8 p.m. Sunday, January 27th**.
2. Familiarize yourself with some of the thinkers on the public intellectuals list and:
 - a. come prepared to discuss your impressions.
 - b. come with a list of 6 people on whom you would be interested to write your encyclopedia entries.
3. Review the course syllabus and come with any questions you may have about it.

Course Outline:

Week 1 (Jan. 28)-Course Introduction: History and Meaning of the “Intellectual”*



Betty Friedan

Emile Zola, “J’Accuse,” in Zola, *The Dreyfus Affair: “J’Accuse” and Other Writings*, Alain Pagès, ed. (Yale, 1996), pp. 43-52.

Christopher E. Forth, “Intellectuals, Crowds, and the Body Politics of the Dreyfus Affair,” *Historical Reflections/Reflexions Historiques*, 24 (Spring, 1998), pp. 63-92.

Raymond Williams, “Intellectual,” in *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976), pp. 169-171.

David Forgacs, “Introduction” to Antonio Gramsci, “Intellectuals and Education,” in *An Antonio Gramsci Reader* (Schocken, 1988), pp. 300-01.

Antonio Gramsci, “The Intellectuals,” from *Prison Notebooks* (Columbia, 1975; 1930-32), pp. 199-210.

Jeremy Jennings and Tony Kemp-Welch, “The Century of the Intellectual: From the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie,” in Jennings and Kemp-Welch, eds., *Intellectuals in Politics: From the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie* (Routledge, 1997), pp. 1-21.

Helen Small, “Introduction,” in Small, ed., *The Public Intellectual* (Blackwell, 2002), pp. 1-18.

From: *Prospect Magazine*, “Global Public Intellectuals Poll Results,” pages 20-23; and review the full results of the poll online at www.prospect-magazine.co.uk

Week 2 (Feb. 4) Emergence of the Public Intellectual in the U.S. & 1st Library Meeting*

Steven Biel, *Independent Intellectuals in the U.S.* (New York University, 1992).

Note: Today’s class will meet in Memorial Library, rm. 436.

Week 3 (Feb. 11) The Responsibility and Social Function of the Intellectual*

Julien Benda, *Treason of the Intellectuals* (1927)

Michael Walzer, "Introduction: The Practice of Social Criticism," from *The Company of Critics: Social Criticism and Political Commitment in the Twentieth Century* (Basic, 1988), pp. 3-28.



Susan Sontag

Encyclopedia entries due no later than this Friday, February 15th by 5 p.m. Please send them as a Word document per email to Professor Ratner-Rosenhagen, Ronit Stahl, and cc: the course listserve.



Garry Wills

Week 4 (Feb. 18) Independence and Belonging, Opposition and Advocacy: Dilemmas of the Intellectual*

Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual* (Vintage, 1994)

Cornel West, "The Dilemma of the Black Intellectual" and bell hooks, "Black Women Intellectuals," in West and hooks, eds., *Breaking Bread: Insurgent Black Intellectual Life* (South End, 1985), pp. 131-46, 147-65.

Week 5 (Feb. 25) American Anti-Intellectualism; Or, The Uses and Abuses of Intellect in the U.S.*

Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (Vintage, 1962).

Jacques Barzun, "Note to Reader," "Three Enemies of Intellect," "The Public Mind and Its Caterers," and "The Summing Up," from *The House of Intellect* (Harper & Bros., 1959), pp. vii-viii, 1-59, 250-262.

2-3 page proposal and bibliography (of primary and secondary sources) for final paper due Saturday, March 1st by 10 a.m. Please email to both instructors.

Week 6 (Mar. 3) No Class Today. Individual meetings this week with Professor Ratner-Rosenhagen and Ronit Stahl to discuss paper proposals.

Week 7 (Mar. 10) 2nd Library Meeting

Note: Today's class will meet in Memorial Library, rm. 436.

Week 8 (Mar. 17) SPRING BREAK --No Class



Edward Said

Week 9 (Mar. 24) Decline of the Public Intellectual*

Russell Jacoby, *The Last Intellectuals: American Culture in the Age of Academe* (Basic, 1987)
Jeremy Jennings, "Intellectuals and the Myth of Decline," and Alan Hudson, "Intellectuals for Our Times," in Dolan Cummings, ed. *The Changing Role of the Public Intellectual* (Routledge, 2005), pp. 8-23, 33-50.

Week 10 (Mar. 31) No Seminar Meeting; Course time devoted to independent research and writing



Edmund Wilson

Week 11 (Apr. 7) Primary Source Workshop
Bring in 1 of your primary sources to examine together with your classmates.



George Santayana

Week 12 (Apr. 14) Trouble-Shooting Workshop

Come prepared to discuss any substantive or structural problems you are having with your research and writing. You will be expected to help each other test and reformulate your ideas.

Week 13 (Apr. 21) Oral Presentations

Week 14 (Apr. 28) Oral Presentations

Week 15 (May 5) Oral Presentations

Final papers due Monday, May 12th at 10:00 a.m. in Prof. Ratner-Rosenhagen's office.



Robert Oppenheimer

Examples of 20th-Century Public Intellectuals in the U.S.

Jane Addams	Henry Louis Gates	Meridel Le Sueur	Adrienne Rich
Mortimer Adler	Peter Gay	Walter Lippmann	David Riesman
Kwame Anthony Appiah	Carol Gilligan	Seymour Martin Lipset	Richard Rodriguez
Hannah Arendt	Allen Ginsberg	Alain Locke	Richard Rorty
James Baldwin	Nathan Glazer	Mabel Dodge Luhan	Harold Rosenberg
Amira Baraka	Emma Goldman	Martin E. Marty	Walt Rostow
William Barrett	Paul Goodman	Margaret Mead	Philip Roth
Jacques Barzun	Doris Kearns Goodwin	C. Wright Mills	Constance Rourke
Daniel Bell	Stephen Jay Gould	Dwight MacDonal	Jeffrey Sachs
Robert Bellah	Clement Greenberg	Catharine MacKinnon	William Safire
Randolph Bourne	David Halberstam	Norman Mailer	Edward Said
Allan Bloom	Edith Hamilton	Thomas Mann	Michael Sandel
Harold Bloom	Learned Hand	Herbert Marcuse	Margaret Sanger
Sidney Blumenthal	Michael Harrington	Mary McCarthy	George Santayana
Sissela Bok	Friedrich Hayek	Marshall McLuhan	Elaine Scarry
Daniel Boorstin	Robert Heilbroner	Alexander Meiklejohn	Amartya Sen
Wayne Booth	Gertrude Himmelfarb	Louis Menand	Richard Sennett
Louis Brandeis	E.D. Hirsch, Jr.	H.L. Mencken	Judith Shklar
David Brooks	Christopher Hitchens	Arthur Miller	Susan Sontag
Van Wyck Brooks	Richard Hofstadter	C. Wright Mills	Shelby Steele
Norman O. Brown	Oliver Wendell Holmes	Martha Minow	Lincoln Steffens
William Sloane Coffin, Jr.	Sidney Hook	Ashley Montagu	Gertrude Stein
Henry Steele Commager	bell hooks	Barrington Moore, Jr.	I.F. Stone
Stanley Crouch	Irving Howe	Hans Morgenthau	Leo Strauss
Dinesh D'Souza	Robert Maynard Hutchins	Daniel P. Moynihan	Andrew Sullivan
Robert Coles	Michael Ignatieff	Louis Mumford	Allen Tate
Noam Chomsky	Jane Jacobs	Thomas Nagel	Paul Tillich
John Dewey	William James	Richard J. Neuhaus	Lionel Trilling
Joan Didion	John Kenneth Galbraith	Reinhold Niebuhr	John Updike
E.J. Dionne	Mike Gold	Robert Nozick	Gore Vidal
W.E.B. DuBois	Steven Jay Gould	Martha Nussbaum	Booker T. Washington
Freeman Dyson	Alfred Kazin	Joyce Carol Oates	Ida B. Wells
Albert Einstein	George Kennan	Cynthia Ozick	Cornel West
T.S. Eliot	Martin Luther King	Robert Oppenheimer	Morton White
Ralph Ellison	Alfred Kinsey	Camille Paglia	William H. Whyte
Jean Bethke Elshstain	Henry Kissinger	Orlando Patterson	Elie Wiesel
Barbara Ehrenreich	Jonathan Kozol	Steven Pinker	Leon Wieseltier
Amitai Etzioni	Naomi Klein	Norman Podhoretz	George Will
Susan Faludi	Irving Kristol	Richard Posner	Patricia Williams
Frances Fitzgerald	William Kristol	Ezra Pound	Garry Wills
Waldo Frank	Paul Krugman	Hilary Putnam	Edmund Wilson
John Hope Franklin	Thomas Kuhn	Robert Putnam	E.O. Wilson
Betty Friedan	Christopher Lasch	Philip Rahv	William Julius Wilson
Milton Friedman	Mary Lefkowitz	Ayn Rand	Naomi Wolf
Thomas Friedman	Max Lerner	Diane Ravitch	Tom Wolfe
Francis Fukuyama	Michael Lerner	John Rawls	C. Vann Woodward
David Galertner		Robert Reich	Malcolm X
John Kenneth Galbraith			Howard Zinn

For Further Reading:

- Hannah Arendt, "Truth and Politics," in Peter Laslett and W.C. Runciman, eds. *Philosophy, Politics, and Society*, 3rd series (Oxford, 1967), pp. 104-33.
- Thomas Bender, *Intellect and Public Life: Essays on the Social History of Academic Intellectuals in the United States*. (Johns Hopkins, 1997).
- R.S. Boynton, "The New Intellectuals," *Atlantic Monthly* (March 1995), pp. 53-70.
- Pierre Bourdieu, "The Corporatism of the Universal: The Role of Intellectuals in the Modern World," *Telos*, 81 (1989), pp. 99-110.
- Stefan Collini, *Public Moralists: Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain, 1850-1930* (Oxford, 1991).
- _____, *Absent Minds: Intellectuals in Britain* (Oxford, 2007).
- Venita Datta, *Birth of a National Icon: The Literary Avant-Garde and the Origins of the Intellectual in France* (SUNY, 1999).
- Venita Datta and Willa Silverman, "Introduction: New Approached to Intellectuals and the Dreyfus Affair," *Historical Reflections/Reflexions Historiques*, 24 (Spring 1998), pp. 1-6.
- Régis Debray, *Teachers, Writers, Celebrities: The Intellectuals of Modern France* (Verso, 1981).
- Alvin Gouldner, *Future of the Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class* (Oxford, 1979).
- Michael Ignatieff, "Decline and Fall of the Public Intellectual," *Queen's Quarterly*, 104/3 (1997), pp. 395-403.
- William Johnston, "The Origin of the Term 'Intellectuals' in French Novels and Essays of the 890s," *Journal of European Studies*, 4 (1974), pp. 43-56.
- Tony Judt, *French Intellectuals, 1944-1956* (University of California, 1992).
- Roger Kimball, *Tenured Radicals* (Harper Row, 1990).
- Christopher Lasch, *The New Radicalism in America, 1889-1963: The Intellectual as a Social Type* (Knopf, 1965).
- Bernard-Henri Lévy, ed., *What Good are Intellectuals?: 44 Writers Share Their Thoughts* (Algora, 2000).
- Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, Louis Wirth and Edward Shils, trans. (Harvest, 1936).
- Tamara Chaplin Matheson, "Embodying the Mind, Producing the Nation: Philosophy on French Television," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67 (April 2006), pp. 315-341.
- Peter Osborne, ed. *A Critical Sense: Interviews with Intellectuals* (Routledge, 1996).
- Richard A. Posner, *Public Intellectuals: A Study of Decline* (Harvard, 2001).
- Bruce Robbins, ed. *Intellectuals: Aesthetics, Politics, Academics* (University of Minnesota, 1990).
- Richard Rorty, Virginia Held, and Alasdair MacIntyre, "The Social Responsibility of the Intellectual," from APA Symposium in *Journal of Philosophy*, 80 (October 1983), pp. 572-91.
- Edward Said, "The Public Role of Writers and Intellectuals," in Helen Small, ed., *The Public Intellectual* (Blackwell, 2002), pp. 19-39.
- Shlomo Sand, "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Who is the True Intellectual of them All?: Self-Images of the Intellectual in France," in Jeremy Jennings, ed., *Intellectuals in Twentieth-Century France: Mandarins and Samurais* (Palgrave, 1992), pp. 33-58.
- Alan Wolfe, *An Intellectual in Public* (University of Michigan, 2003).