

CORNELL UNIVERSITY
THE SOCIETY FOR THE HUMANITIES
ANDREW D. WHITE HOUSE
27 EAST AVENUE, ITHACA, NEW YORK 14853

607-256-1725 Fellows
607-256-1086 Director

In 1982-83 the focal theme of the Society for the Humanities will be the relations between the humanities and politics. The term politics certainly includes its more modern definition which centers attention on the state and conventional political processes. Here a problem would be the way in which political structures help to condition the humanities and their objects of study as well as what kinds of political implications the humanities may be argued to have. But politics is also intended to cover both older and newer conceptions of the political, including recent rearticulations of more traditional definitions of the res publica. In this sense, the significance of relations of power and authority in the organization of humanistic disciplines and in the determination of the nature of discourse in the humanities would be a relevant concern. Topics that suggest themselves include: the nature and functions of political culture, the role of "ideology" and its critique, political components in the definition of self and other in texts and in institutional life, and the interaction between cognitive and political factors in the development of disciplines and intellectual movements.

Thus the theme is broad enough to include traditional political history as well as inquiry into the relations between the humanities and public policy. It also includes such well-established areas of research as political theory, political philosophy, the political novel, the literature of minorities, and utopian thought. It addresses itself as well to those who would like to investigate older ideas of politics and to inquire into their empirical or normative bearing on later developments. Finally, it touches on the research of those who would either defend or criticize the expansion of the concept of politics to apply to areas not ordinarily thought of in political terms (e.g., discourse and sexuality).

June 1, 1981



CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The Society for the Humanities

Seminars for 1982-1983

Norman Kretzmann, acting director, fall 1982; Eric A. Blackall, director, spring 1983. Fellows for 1982-83: Barbara J. Bono (University of Michigan), Susan Buck-Morss (Cornell University), David Lieberman (St. Catharine's College, Cambridge), Mary Lydon (University of Wisconsin), Henry Munson, Jr. (University of California), John Najemy (Cornell University), Barbara J. Reeves (Harvard University).

The Society awards annual fellowships for research in the humanities in three categories: senior fellowships, faculty fellowships, and junior postdoctoral fellowships. The Fellows offer, in line with their research, informal seminars intended to be exploratory or interdisciplinary.

Unlike other courses, the seminars offered by the Society begin the second week of each semester. These seminars are open to graduate students and suitably qualified undergraduates. Students wishing to attend should telephone the Society (256-4725) early in the first week of the term to arrange a short interview with the Fellow offering the course. There are no examinations, and it is at the discretion of the Fellow whether to require only oral reports, or, in addition, a research paper. Students wishing credit for the course should formally register in their own college. Persons other than those officially enrolled may attend as visitors with permission of the Fellow.

The Society's focal theme during the 1982-83 year will be the relations between the humanities and politics.

All seminars are held in the A. D. White Center for the Humanities, 27 East Avenue.

101 Freshman Seminar. Science as Literature: Science as Metier. Fall and spring. 3 credits.

T R 10:10-11:25. J. Lumley

Robert Ornstein claims that science turns the impossible into the boring. Einstein contends that science, in its purest form, uncovers "the grandeur of reason incarnate in existence." In readings ranging from Darwin to Einstein to Asimov, we shall try to discover how a discipline can be so variously defined and described.

102 Freshman Seminar. Science as Literature: The Impact of Science on Self-Image. Spring. 3 credits.

MWF 9:05. J. Lumley

Man's rational perception of his place in nature frequently clashes with his emotional need to elevate himself above nature. In the last 350 years, science has had the uncomfortable habit of dethroning him as master of the universe. In this course, with readings from Galileo, Darwin, Freud, and others, we shall follow man's journey from a position of dominance in a geocentric, divinely ordered universe to that of a genetically programmed organism in a decaying biosystem. We shall examine how well, or how completely, he has accommodated his dreams to the new worlds born of science.

381-382 War as Myth and History in Postwar Japan (The Frederick G. Marcham Seminar) 381, fall; 382 spring. 4 credits per term.

Fall: T R 1:25-2:15. Spring: irregular class meetings; students will pursue independent work in consultation with the instructors and the class will meet for special events and presentations by class members. B. de Bary, J. V. Koschmann.

How is the "war story" told in postwar Japan? The course will examine persisting manifestations of the war memory in contemporary Japanese cultural life, with emphasis on ways in which the story of World War II has been retold, reinterpreted, and given new symbolic and factual significance in light of changing historical circumstances. Class discussion will focus on the interpretation of texts, ranging from political thought and history to fiction, film and poetry.

413-414 "The heart of my mystery': The Alliance of Sexuality and Power in the Principal Plays of William Shakespeare." 413, fall; 414, spring. 4 credits each term.

M 3:35-5:20. B. Bono

In the first term we will consider 10-12 plays which focus on the efforts of male authority figures to control the world of their play. In the second term we will complement this analysis with a study of 10-12 plays which speak more centrally to the implied sexual crisis at the heart of the problem of authority, and illustrate it with particular attention to male-female relationships. Principal methods: historical criticism, genre criticism, metacriticism, in support of exploratory ventures into psychoanalytic, feminist and audience/reader response criticism. Students may enroll in either semester or both.

415-416 Scientists and Political Revolutions. 415, fall; 416, spring. 4 credits each term.

T 3:35-5:20. B. Reeves

Through the study of the involvement of scientists in political revolutions in the modern era we will explore the relationships between science and political institutions, ideologies, and values. The course will consider the roles of scientific knowledge and institutions in guiding or limiting the search for new foundations

for the political order. We will also focus on contrasts between revolutionary scientific ideologies intended to promote change and restoration scientific ideologies concerned to reestablish and maintain order within science and thus available for exploitation as justification for the new political order. In the fall, topics will include the English Civil War and the Glorious Revolution, the American Revolution, and the French Revolution; in the spring, the Revolution of 1848, the Russian Revolution, and the Nazi Revolution. Students may enroll in either semester or in both.

417 Eighteenth-Century Scottish Moral Science. Fall. 4 credits.

R 3:35-5:20. D. Lieberman

The social speculation of the eighteenth-century Scottish moralists provides a leading example of the Enlightenment attempt to treat now independent intellectual disciplines — politics, economics, history, religion, scientific discovery, aesthetics and literary criticism—within a unified science of human nature. The seminar will examine the contributions of Francis Hutcheson, David Hume, Adam Smith, Henry Home and John Millar, as well as the social and cultural conditions which helped to frame their philosophic enterprises.

418 Self-Interest and Social Theory. Spring. 4 credits.

R 3:35-5:20. D. Lieberman

The model of the individual social actor as a rational utility-maximiser motivated by self-interest continues to inform micro-economics and economic theories of politics. The seminar will examine some of the earliest attempts to utilize the model for systematic social analysis in the works of Claude Helvetius, Jeremy Bentham and James Mill. It will consider the psychological theory on which the model was grounded, the programmes for political and legal reform it was claimed to sanction, and its related impact on the emerging discipline of political economy.

419 Feminist Theory: Franco-American Currents. Fall. 4 credits.

T 1:25-3:10. M. Lydon

The aim of this course will be to explore the complex relationships that both unite and separate American and French feminisms. Our itinerary will inevitably lead us round that great promontory, Freud: safe anchorage for some feminists (mostly continental), treacherous reef for others (mostly American). One of the main questions the course will address is: "What is the position of the feminist scholar in relation to the Franco-American currents which now create such a powerful undertow in literary theory and in the academic world at large?" This is simply a localised version of the questions posed by Virginia Woolf in Three Guineas (1938): "What is this 'civilisation' in which we find ourselves? What are these ceremonies and why should we take part in them? What are these professions and why should we make money out of them? Where in short is it leading, the procession of the sons of educated men?"

420 On the Bias: New Designs on Literary Criticism. Spring. 4 credits.

T 1:25-3:10. M. Lydon

"Tell all the Truth but tell it slant — Success in Circuit lies." Literary criticism has always had its work cut out for it, but the complexity of its task has rarely been so apparent as it is today. Should the critic adopt Dickinson's strategy or should she repudiate obliquity in favour of straight confession? Both styles are currently in vogue. We will examine the fashion in which they cross and overlap with the objective not only of tracing a pattern but of producing new designs. Reading for the course, which will take up some of the threads of

"Feminist Theory: Franco-American Currents" (Semester 1), will include literary, philosophical and psychoanalytical texts as well as literary criticism.

421 Islamic Fundamentalism. Fall. 4 credits.

R 1:25-3:10. H. Munson

The seminar will focus on Islamic fundamentalist ideology as articulated by Khomeini, al-Banna and Mawdudi. We will consider the social and cultural roots of this ideology with particular attention to popular Islamic culture and the impact of western domination since the nineteenth century.

422 Religion and Politics. Spring. 4 credits.

R 1:25-3:10. H. Munson

The seminar will focus on fundamentalist movements in Islam, Judaism and Christianity, with some attention to millenarian movements in the Third World as well. We will examine the social and cultural matrices of such movements and a number of analyses that have been undertaken to explain them.

423 Cultural History as a Subversive Activity. Fall. 4 credits.

W 1:25-3:10 S. Buck-Morss

If the past cultural "treasures" have become the inheritance of the rulers, how might a critical humanist read the bourgeois intellectual tradition against the grain of its collusion with domination? Subversive strategies of interpretation will include: Theodor Adorno on Bach and Wagner, Walter Benjamin on Baudelaire, Roland Barthes on Balzac, John Berger on Rembrandt and Picasso, Michel Foucault on Velasquez, Adorno and Max Horkheimer on Odysseus and Kant, Adrienne Rich on Bronte and Dickinson.

424 A Case Study in Materialist Pedagogy: Nineteenth-Century Paris. Spring. 4 credits.

W 1:25-3:10 S. Buck-Morss

Benjaminian approaches to the images and texts of Paris in the era of high capitalism. Cultural documents will include architecture, city planning, commercial art, political cartoons, and photographs, as well as historical and literary texts.

425-426 The Language(s) of Politics in the Renaissance. 425, fall; 426, spring. 4 credits each term.

W 3:35-5:20. J. M. Najemy

The political experience of the Italian city-republics was represented and transformed through a variety of "foreign" idioms, or languages: in particular, those of the Aristotelian polis, of Roman rhetoric, *virtus*, and law, and of Christian sin and redemption. This seminar will explore the creative tensions generated by the adaptation of these languages to a political culture whose roots lay in the communal and corporate traditions of the Italian middle ages. The objectives will be: 1) to test the hypothesis of a language of political experience existing apart from (or prior to the imposition of) these idioms; 2) to sample the reception of foreign idioms into republican discourse; and 3) to investigate this confrontation of political languages (which took place in two actual languages, Latin and Italian) in selected texts. The fall term will deal with the period 1250-1400, focusing on the generation of Dante and Marsilius of Padua. The spring term will cover the period 1400-1530, from the Florentine civic humanists to Machiavelli and his contemporaries. Students may enroll in either semester or both.