

**History 309: Seminar on Radical Movements in United States History.**

**Kenyon College Department of History, Fall, 2008**

Prof. Roy T. Wortman Office: Ascension 10. E-mail: [Wortman@kenyon.edu](mailto:Wortman@kenyon.edu). Phone: ext 5319

**Readings (in order of assignments):**

Paul Avrich, *The Haymarket Tragedy*

Nick Salvatore, *Eugene V. Debs: Citizen and Socialist*

Paul Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background*

Emma Goldman, *My Disillusionment in Russia*

Sam Tannenhaus, *Whittaker Chambers: A Biography*

John Patrick Diggins, *Up From Communism; Conservative Odysseys in American Intellectual Development*

And films and handouts as available.

---

The success of each seminar depends in great part on the active involvement of all members. It is not a spectator sport or a passive listening exercise. Toward this end, faithful attendance, per college standards, and participation, including discussion leadership, are crucial. I cannot excuse absences; that domain is within the Dean's Office. Students with excused status are responsible for making up missed work and assignments. In the rare event I must cancel a class—this happened only twice in my 37 years at Kenyon-- I will hold a make-up session for you.

There will be no lengthy lectures in the seminar, but I will offer "mini-lectures" to set topics within historical context. Students are invested with a stake in the seminar and actively partake in discussion leadership. Discussion lead-off students will each distribute a written one-page reaction paper together with a list of two to three broad-based questions relating to the readings due in seminar. On the basis of experience, the rest of the discussion should flow from the lead questions generated by the lead-off students. Grades are earned by the individual student on the basis of her or his involvement in the seminar (one-third); a written reading analysis paper, submitted on time (one third); and the research paper (one-third). The reading analysis paper can be on any of the books for this seminar **except** Emma Goldman's *My Disillusionment in Russia*. **Reading analysis papers are due within seven days of the completion of the book by the seminar.** Suggestions for the reading analysis paper will be given out in class. Reading analysis and research papers are to be submitted in hard copy format; I cannot accept e-mail attachments, fax, or USPO or private carrier delivery (Federal Express, UPS, etc.) during the regular school semester. Exceptions to this include the grade of "Incomplete," should a student, for reasons of illness or other hardship, be away from campus.

The research topic will be selected by the student in joint consultation with the instructor. I will devote two days for individual counseling with students in the seminar. Use at least a total of fourteen sources, including at least three to six primary sources; the availability of primary sources will depend on the nature of your topic, with some topics generating more, and others

less. Be wary of web-based sources unless they come from a legitimate institution which is aware of scholarly integrity and obligations. Your best bet in web-based sources is to check with Ms Nina Clements, history liaison librarian, in Olin Library. You should also take advantage of Ms Clements' expertise in assisting you with sources for your topic. A full, **final draft** of your paper is **due on: first option, Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>; second option, Dec 10<sup>th</sup>; third option, by Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>**. Research papers submitted by December 3<sup>rd</sup> will be returned to you within a week, with ample written comments. Papers submitted after Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> are in no way disadvantaged, but I cannot guarantee return of papers with as many written comments as for those submitted by Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>. **Invitation to submit rough drafts** of your research paper: I will be pleased to look at and comment on a portion of your rough draft of your research paper if you submit to me **by Nov 19<sup>th</sup>**. You may also have the Writing Center scan your drafts before you develop your final copy.

---

Sep 3: Introduction to the seminar. Definition of topics; European and United States background; segments of film, as available.

Sep 10: **The Anarchist strand: Background. Assignment: *Haymarket Tragedy*, preface, 3-177.**

Sep 17: **Rage: "Propaganda by Deed:" *Haymarket, II*: Assignment: *Haymarket Tragedy*, 181-278; 381-427; 446-457. For next seminar, Sep 24: Word-process a one to two page essay** outlining your own interests in American history, politics, and culture. I will use these essays as a means of developing a research topic with you when we meet for individual sessions on Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Asc 10. Do not lock into any single topic at this stage: list several interests, and use the mini-essay as a "dream sheet" for topics you would like to explore in this seminar

Sep 24: **Brief oral report to seminar** on your essay on possible topics. **Indigenous Socialism: Roots in American Religious, Labor, and Cultural Traditions: Assignment: Salvatore, *Debs*, 1-177. Sign up for an individual counseling session Oct 1<sup>st</sup> or 2d.** You'll have *two* weeks to read part two of Salvatore, *Debs*, due for Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>.

Oct 1: **Individual advising sessions** on research topics, evening of Wed., Oct 1<sup>st</sup> and afternoon of Thur., Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Oct 8: **Brief report** to seminar on the **topic you have selected. *Debs, II: Continued*: Salvatore, 178-345.** Nina Clements will meet with seminar at 8:50 to discuss research strategies to help you with your topics.

[Oct 9 and 10: October Reading Days]

Oct 15: **The Eclectic Individualist and the Bolshevik Experiment: Encounter with "the Fatality of Dictatorship."** Goldman, *My Disillusionment in Russia*, vii-xxii; 1-57; 90-104; 122-133; 160-185; 193-220; 242-263. Start of Film and discussion on the Lyrical Left in the era of Debs, Goldman, and Woodrow Wilson.

Oct 22: Continuation of film. **Anarchism Resurfaces: Rethinking Sacco and Vanzetti.**  
Historical Background: Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background*, 1-217.

Oct 29: **Due in class: a rough outline**, sketching your road map for tentatively organizing your paper: **copy one for each member of the seminar. From Communism to Disengagement: Whittaker Chambers, I: The Red Background.** Read the brief WH Auden poem before the table of contents in Tannenhaus, *Chambers*; and Tannenhaus, *Chambers*, 2-119.

Nov 5: **Chambers, II. From Disengagement to Conservatism: Convert and Crusader.**  
Tannenhaus, *Chambers*, 123-278.

Nov 12: **Chamber, III: The Struggle for the Soul of America:"** Tannenhaus, 279-305; 484-515.

Nov 19: **"The final struggle will be between the communist and the ex-communist."**—Ignazio Silone, 1949. **Finding Closure: from Marxist to Conservative Imperative.** Diggins, *Up From Communism*, Preface; introduction, 1-14; 74-159. **Due in class: a rough draft two-page sample**, double-spaced, from any section of your paper

[Nov 22- Nov 29: Thanksgiving Break]

Dec 3: **Toward Conservatism and the Postwar Right: "To the *National Review*." The New Challenge and "The Third World War."** Diggins, *Up From Communism*, 233-302; 340 – 370; 387 -456.

Dec 10: **Presentations of research findings to date: A one- page abstract and brief oral synopsis**, no more than five minutes. WP and copy for each member of seminar. Finale: Wrapping up the seminar: issues and questions raised.