

A History of the Modern American Libertarian Movement

Student Taught Course, winter 2010

Student Instructor: Joe Antognini (senior, Astrophysics)

Sponsoring Professor: Robert Rosenstone

Course description:

The course will examine the major figures and ideas of the libertarian movement from the late 19th century until the present. The course will emphasize the dichotomies and controversies that have arisen among the various trends of libertarian thought. The course will consist of a one-hour lecture once a week in addition to reading assignments. Grades will be determined by attendance, participation, and an examination or essay.

Topics by week:

1. The Boston Anarchists: Lysander Spooner, Benjamin Tucker and Henry David Thoreau
2. The Austrian School: Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich Hayek
3. The early libertarian authors: Isabel Paterson, Rose Wilder Lane, Henry Hazlitt, Garet Garrett, and H.L. Mencken
4. The early libertarian organizations: FEE and the Volker Fund
5. Ayn Rand and the Philosophy of Objectivism
6. Murray Rothbard and Anarcho-Capitalism
7. The Chicago School: Ronald Coase, George Stigler, and Milton Friedman
8. The modern libertarian organizations: The Libertarian Party, Cato Institute, and Reason Magazine
9. Libertarianism of the left: Noam Chomsky and libertarian socialism
10. Paleolibertarianism: Lew Rockwell, Ron Paul, and the Ludwig von Mises Institute

Reading List:

There will be periodic excerpts from the secondary sources *Men Against the State* by James Martin, *Radicals for Capitalism* by Brian Doherty, and *It Usually Begins with Ayn Rand* by Jerome Tuccille. The primary sources are:

1. Spooner, "No Treason" Parts I -- VIII. (21 pages)
2. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* Chapters 6 & 7. (21 pages)
3. Hazlitt, *The Conquest of Poverty*, Chapter 18 (23 pages)
4. Read, "I, Pencil" (3 pages)
5. Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*, Part III, Chapter 7 (61 pages)
6. Rothbard, *The Ethics of Liberty*, Chapters 22 -- 24 (29 pages)
7. Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, Chapters 3 & 12 (25 pages)
8. Doherty, *Radicals for Capitalism*, pp. 389 -- 422 (33 pages)
9. Chomsky, "The Responsibility of Intellectuals", "The Relevance of Anarcho-Syndicalism", (29 pages)
10. Doherty, "Scenes from the Ron Paul Revolution" (10 pages)