

DRAFT

SYLLABUS

“THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY”

(PSC 475M-575M)

FALL 2002

Tuesdays from 6:15-9:15 p.m.

Merrill Hall Auditorium (Room 250)

(Three Credit Hours)

“The Future of American Democracy” is a lecture/seminar course open to undergraduate students (Political Science 475M) and graduate students (Political Science 575M) for alphabetically-graded credit.

(Alternatively, a variation of this course—“America’s National Experiment in Democratic Ideals”, PSC 476M and PSC 576M—may be taken for pass-fail credit.

Students may enroll in either course, but not both. Consult with Instructor for details and proper registration.)

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This syllabus and additional information regarding "The Future of American Democracy" (including updates) are available on JSU's website at:

The Course:

“The Future of American Democracy”—a special Jacksonville State University offering as part of its Eminent Scholars Program—is a provocative assessment of America’s national experiment in democratic ideals. Dr. Glen Browder, drawing largely upon his academic, political, and personal background, will challenge conventional thinking about America with critical but constructive analysis.

The course will combine three different educational elements: (1) Dr. Browder will share, in a series of public lectures, his unconventional analysis of the current state and future prospects of American democracy; (2) he and enrolled students will engage in seminars on American democracy; and (3) he will direct individualized student research projects on American democracy.

The general public is invited to attend the lectures, which will be presented in various forums throughout Alabama. Tentatively scheduled are Anniston (September 9), Huntsville (September 16), Birmingham (September 23), Montgomery (September 30), and Mobile (October 7). Dr. Browder and enrolled students will convene at JSU for their seminars.

Enrolled students (in PSC 475M-575M and the alternative PSC 476M-576M) will be expected to bring to this course requisite background and commitment commensurate with their academic expectations—either alphabetical credit or pass-fail credit—with each student’s final grade based on enrollment status and participation as follows. For successful alphabetical credit ("A", "B", "C", or "D") in PSC 475M-575M, the student must attend at least two of the public forums and three-fourths of the class meetings, engage in the seminars, and complete an individualized research project (a 10-page paper). For “pass” credit in PSC 476M-576M, the student must attend at least two of the public forums and three-fourths of the class meetings, engage in seminars based on the course text, and contribute in some meaningful manner to the research projects. Of course, anyone in the JSU community is encouraged to audit the course or to attend selected lectures and class meetings in accord with university policy.

Course Text:

Glen Browder, *The Future of American Democracy: A Former Congressman’s Unconventional Analysis* (University Press of America, 2002).

Course Outline, Schedule, and Meeting Site:

The class will meet for twelve seminars—on Tuesdays from 6:15-9:15 p.m. in Merrill Hall Auditorium (Room 250)—according to the following course outline. Some adjustments in the outline, schedule, and meeting site may have to be made during the semester.

Tuesday, September 3, 2002

Introduction to course.

“Browder’s Thesis of American Democracy” (Text p. 1)

Discussion of individualized course projects.

Class assignments for next meeting.

Tuesday, September 10, 2002

“Is America Dying?”

(An unconventional analysis of transforming American democracy.)

(Chapter One in text, pp. 5-26)

- A. The American national dream is turning into national democratic distemper.
- B. It is time for a Tocquevillian assessment of the “Great Experiment” of American democracy.
- C. The objective: “To learn what we have to fear or to hope from its progress.”

Tuesday, September 17, 2002

“How Dare I Ask Such An Outrageous Question About America?”

(The discomfiting venture of a veteran politician, political scientist, and “American Dreamer”)

(Chapter Two in text, pp. 27-44)

- A. A political-academic-personal introduction.
- B. The discomfiting nature of my rhetorical inquiry.

Tuesday, September 24, 2002

“A Systems Theory of Transformational America.”

(What do I mean by “America”, “American Democracy”, and “Dying”?)

(Chapter Three in text, pp. 45-64)

- A. “America”: A national experiment in democratic ideals.

- B. “American Democracy”: The magical mix of people, politics, and government through which we pursue democratic ideals.
- C. “Dying”: American democracy no longer works the way it used to, and we seem to be tiring of the Great Experiment itself.
- D. A systems theory of transformational America.

Tuesday, October 1, 2002

“Propositional Observations of Transforming American Democracy.”
(Why and how—arguably—is America dying?)
(Chapter Four in text, pp. 65-80)

Propositional Observation Number One:

“The favorable systemic environment of American democracy has disappeared.”

1. Our original, open, natural environment encouraged freedom, individualism, and independence—but that environment closed long ago.
2. The popular expansion of national public authority fostered equality, security and justice—but that expansion appears to have reached its limits.
3. America’s next democratic frontier?
4. America’s historic democratic boom may—or may not—have busted.

Tuesday, October 8, 2002

Propositional Observation Number Two:

“We have entrapped American democracy within a philosophical civil war.”
(Chapter Five in text, pp. 81-100)

1. America is engaged in a philosophical civil war over democratic ideals, cultural values, and principles of governance.
2. We now are conducting an intense national debate over America’s basic cultural values (“culture wars”).
3. We also are re-examining our traditional system of limited

representative governance (“neopopulist democratization”).

4. This is a different and ominous challenge for American democracy.

Tuesday, October 15, 2002

Propositional Observation Number Three:

“American democracy no longer works the way it has in the past.”

(Chapter Six in text, pp. 101-128)

1. The American people are losing their civic virtue.
2. The political machinery of American democracy is broken.
3. American government is functioning in unacceptable manner.
4. We are witnessing the revolutionary rise of “electronic democracy”.
5. Demographic, economic, and technological trends are exacerbating our political troubles.
6. Declensional tendencies of American democracy.

Tuesday, October 22, 2002

Propositional Observation Number Four:

“America seems to be tiring of its historic Great Experiment.”

(Chapter Seven in text, pp. 129-148)

1. The American people evidence mixed commitment to their national democratic endeavor.
2. The American polity increasingly inclines toward alternative ideas about governance.
3. Tired America appears to be questioning the Great Experiment at a critical point in American history.

Tuesday, October 29, 2002

“How Serious Is America’s Democratic Illness?”

(Systemic realities and alternative scenarios.)

(Chapter Eight in text, pp. 149-166)

- A. America apparently has reached a critical juncture of systemic destiny.
- B. Conventional assurances of American democracy's enduring strength.
- C. Unconventional interpretations of democratic destiny.
- D. Alternative scenarios for an uncertain future: Disintegration ("Death of America"), Deformation ("Amerika" / "USSA"), Transition ("The American Federation"), or Transformation ("New America")?

Tuesday, November 5, 2002

"What Might America Look Like—If We Continue Our Current Course—In 2050?" (A speculative projection: "The American Federation")
(Chapter Nine in text, pp. 167-186)

- A. Centrifugal dynamics are reshaping the American political system.
- B. A contemporary vision of our democratic future (the California analogy).
- C. America may become "The American Federation" by the middle of the Twenty-First Century.

Tuesday, November 12, 2002

"The Future of American Democracy?"
(The challenge of "New America")
(Chapter Ten in text, pp. 187-216)

- A. A transformational review.
- B. A transformational juncture (Election 2000).
- C. A transformational challenge ("National Democratic Renaissance").
- D. And some transformational predictions about the evolving direction of American democracy.
- E. An even greater Democratic Experiment?
- F. "Quelle Grand Expérience!"

Tuesday, November 19, 2002

Student Presentations

Additional activity for enrolled students may be scheduled by Dr.Browder)

READING MATERIAL.

All students are expected to read and understand the appropriate parts of the course text prior to each seminar. In addition, the following list includes reading material which the instructor considers pertinent to the public lecture series and seminars. Students are not expected to read all of these materials. However, specific materials will be assigned to individual students for reports back to the class; and students may find this list useful in their individualized course projects.

Adams, James Truslow. *The Epic of America* (1931). Little, Brown and Company.

Almond, Gabriel, and Sidney Verba. *Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (1963). Little, Brown and Company.

Almond, Gabriel A., Sidney Verba. *The Civic Culture Revisited* (1980). Sage Publications Inc.

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Barber, Benjamin R. *A Passion for Democracy: American Essays* (2000). Princeton University Press.

Barlett, Donald L., and James B. Steele. *America: What Went Wrong* (1992). Andrews and McMeel.

Barlett, Donald L., and James B. Steele. *America: Who Stole the Dream?* (1996). Andrews and McMeel.

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Barzun, Jacques. *From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life, 1500 to Present* (2000). Harper Trade Publishers.

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Beck, Paul Allen, and Marjorie Randon Hershey. *Party Politics in America* (Ninth edition, 2001). Longman.

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Bennett, Stephen Earl, and Linda L. M. Bennett. "What Political Scientists Should Know about the Survey of First-Year Students in 2000", in PS: Political Science and Politics (June, 2001).

Bennett, W. Lance. News - The Politics of Illusion (1996). Longman Publishing Group.

Blakey, Edward J. and Mary Gail Snyder. Fortress America: Gated Communities in the United States (1997). Brookings Institution Press.

Bloom, Allan. The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students (1988). Simon and Schuster Trade.

Bok, Derek. The Trouble With Government (2001). Harvard University Press.

Bok, Derek. The State of the Nation (1997). Harvard University Press.

Bovard, James. Freedom in Chains: The Rise of the State and the Demise of the Citizen (1999). St. Martin's Press Inc.

Bovard, James. Lost Rights: The Destruction of American Liberty (1995). St. Martin's Press

Inc.

Box, Richard C. *Citizen Governance: Leading American Communities into the 21st Century* (1998). Sage Publications.

Brecke, Ronald F. *A Republic, If You Can Keep It* (1999). Lexington.

Broder, David S. "A Cloud Over Thanksgiving", in *The Washington Post*, (November 21, 2000).

Broder, David S. *Democracy Derailed: Initiative Campaigns and the Power of Money* (2000). Harcourt.

Broder, David. "Californocracy in Action", in *The Washington Post* (August 13, 1997).

Browder, Glen. *The Future of American Democracy: A Former Congressman's Unconventional Analysis* (2002). University Press of America.

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Bryce, James. *The American Commonwealth* (1888). Liberty Fund.

Bush, George. "Inaugural Address" (January 20, 1989).

Bush, George W. "Inaugural Address" (January 20, 2001).

Carter, Stephen L. *Civility: Manners, Morals, and the Etiquette of Democracy* (1998).
HarperCollins Publishers.

Chancellor, John. *Peril and Promise: A Commentary on America*. (1990). Harper Trade
Publishers.

Chittum, Thomas W. *Civil War II: The Coming Breakup of America* (1997). American Eagle
Publications.

Clinton, William Jefferson. "State of the Union Message" (January 23, 1996).

Cohen, Richard E. "When There's Too Much Of A Good Thing", *National Journal* (June 18,
1994).

Crabtree, Susan. "CBC Lashes Out At Bush", in *Roll Call* (December 18, 2000).

Crevecoeur, Hector St. John de. *Letters from an American Farmer* (1912, 1997). Oxford
University Press.

Crozier, Michel, Joji Watanuki, and Samuel P. Huntington. *The Crisis of Democracy Report on*

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Dietze, Gottfried. America's Political Dilemma (1968). University Press of America.

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Dionne, E.J., Jr. They Only Look Dead: Why Progressives Will Dominate the Next Political Era (1996). Touchstone.

Dionne, E.J., Jr. Why Americans Hate Politics (1991). Simon and Shuster.

Dionne, E.J., Jr. "The Civics Deficit", in *The Washington Post* (November 30, 1999).

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Drew, Elizabeth. *The Corruption of American Politics: What Went Wrong and Why* (1999).
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Easton, David. *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (1965). John Wiley and Sons.

Eberly, Don E. *America's Promise: Civil Society and the Renewal of American Culture* (1999).
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Edsall, Thomas Byrne, and Mary D. Edsall. *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics* (1991). Norton Publishers.

Edwards, Lee. *The Conservative Revolution* (1999). Simon and Schuster Trade.

Ehrenhalt, Alan. *Democracy in the Mirror: Politics, Reform, and Reality in Grassroots America* (1998). Congressional Quarterly.

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Eisenstadt, S.N. *Paradoxes of Democracy: Fragility, Continuity, and Change* (1999). Johns Hopkins University Press.

Elshtain, Jean Bethke. *Democracy on Trial* (1995). Basic Books.

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Erikson, Robert S., and Kent L. Tedin. *American Public Opinion* (Fifth Edition, 1995). Allyn and Bacon.

Esman, Milton J. *Government Works: Why Americans Need the Feds* (2000). Cornell University Press.

Fallows, James. *Breaking the News: How the Media Undermine American Democracy* (1996). Random House Inc.

Foner, Eric. *The Story of American Freedom* (1999). Norton Publishers.

Frey, William H., and Ross C. DeVol. "America's Demography in the New Century" (2000). Milken Institute.

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Friel, Brian. *Why People Don't Trust Government* (1997). Harvard University Press.

Fukuyama, Francis. *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992). Free Press.

Fuller, Graham. *The Democracy Trap: Perils of the Post-Cold War World* (1991). Dutton/Plume Publishers.

Fullinwider, Robert K. *Civil Society, Democracy, and Civic Renewal* (1999). Rowman and Littlefield.

Galbraith, John Kenneth. *The Culture of Contentment*. (1992). Houghton Mifflin Co.

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Hall, John A., and Charles Lindholm. *Is America Breaking Apart?* (1999). Princeton University Press.

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Harris, John. "Roadblocks Ahead For Governing", in *The Washington Post* (November 9, 2000).

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Howard, Philip K. *The Death of Common Sense: How Law Is Suffocating America* (1996).

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Jacoby, Russell. *The End of Utopia: Politics and Culture in an Age of Apathy* (2000). Basic.

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Johnson, Paul. *A History of the American People* (1998). HarperCollins.

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Judis, John B. *The Paradox of American Democracy: Elites, Special Interests, and the Betrayal of Public Trust* (2000). Pantheon Books.

Kamber, Victor. *Poison Politics: Are Negative Campaigns Destroying Democracy?* (1997). Perseus Books.

Kaplan, Robert. *An Empire Wilderness: Travels into America's Future* (1998). Random House.

Kaplan, Robert. *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post Cold War* (2000). Random House Value Publishing.

Kaplan, Robert. "Was Democracy Just a Moment?", in *Atlantic Monthly* (December 1997).

Kaplan, Robert. "The Return of Ancient Times", in *Atlantic Monthly* (June 2000).

Karatnycky, Adrian. "The 2000-2001 Freedom House Survey of Freedom", Freedom House (July 25, 2001).

Katz, Jon. "Birth of a Digital Nation", in *Wired Magazine* (April, 1997).

Kennan, George F. *At a Century's Ending: Reflections, 1982-1995* (1996). Norton Books.

Kennan, George F. *Around the Cragged Hill: A Personal and Political Philosophy* (1993). Norton Books.

Kennon, Patrick. *The Twilight of Democracy* (1995). Doubleday and Company.

Kettl, Donald F. "Is the Past Prologue?" in *Governing* (December, 2000).

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Lasch, Christopher. *Revolt of the Elites: And the Betrayal of Democracy* (1995). Norton Books.

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Lazare, Daniel. *The Frozen Republic: How the Constitution Is Paralyzing Democracy* (1996). Harcourt Brace and Company.

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United* (1999). Ivan R. Dee Publishers.

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