Note: This is a draft syllabus. The final version will be available by the start of the term. One thing that won’t change is the list of required books, so you may want to start shopping for them. I’ve used all but Lepore, The Whites of their Eyes, in past years, so used copies are probably available locally.

**Draft Syllabus: History 350--Winter 2011**

**American Radicalism**

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Class meets: MW 12:00-13:20 in 207 Chapman

History 350 (American Radicalism) focuses on issues, activities and ideas concerning movements for social and cultural change in the United States from the American Revolution through about 1900. This course does not assume previous course work in American history; there are no prerequisites. (A second course, History 351, covers movements and ideas from the early twentieth century to the present. It isn’t offered this year, but I expect to teach it in 2011-12.)

Please look the syllabus over soon. You'll find it contains various web links as well as information about readings, requirements and class sessions. By the time of each class session, you'll find a link here to the outline for that class. The notes on the web are meant as a framework for your own notetaking and consideration of course material. They're *not* a substitute for class attendance and doing the assignments.

**Books:**

The following books are required. They should all be available at the U of O Bookstore. Paine and Oates may also be available at used bookstores nearby. Used copies of all of them are also likely to be available at local bookstores or on the web.  
Jill Lepore, *The Whites of their Eyes: The Tea Party’s Revolution and the Battle over American History*  
Stephen B. Oates, *The Fires of Jubilee*  
Vivian Gornick, *The Solitude of Self: Thinking about Elizabeth Cady Stanton*  
Martin Duberman, *Haymarket: A Novel*

I've also ordered some copies of two different novels, William Styron, *The Confessions of Nat Turner*, and Frank Harris, *The Bomb*. You'll need one only if you choose a particular paper topic options. Don't buy it until you've decided that option is the one you want to choose.

**Requirements:**

A. A midterm exam, **Monday, February 7**. Midterm is worth about 25% of your grade.
B. A short paper (4-7 pages typed double-spaced) worth about 25%, due Wednesday, March 2 at class time. Instructions and paper topic options will be available early in the term.

C. A final exam, Friday, March 18, 10:15 a.m., worth about 50%. (That’s the Registrar’s Office’s bright idea, not mine.) You’ll have the choice of an in-class exam or a take-home final exam. The take-home will have to be submitted any time before 10:15 March 18, before the in-class final begins.

D. Useful class participation (quality, not quantity) will weigh in your favor in borderline cases.

Class Sessions and Reading Assignments:

Note: I’ll post links to each class session’s outline on this syllabus before (or soon after) the class. This syllabus will also link to information about assignments, study questions, etc.

January 3: Introduction--Some Themes and Controversies
Read: Daniel Pope, "Introduction: The Nature and Significance of American Radicalism." This is a brief introduction I wrote to a collection of articles on radical movements in American history. You’re welcome to disagree with it; I’m not sure how much I agree with it myself anymore.

In this session, we’ll discuss some definitions, note some themes in the history of American radicalism, and discuss claims that American history is marked by the absence of significant radical movements.

January 5-12: American Revolution or War for Independence?
Read: Lepore, The Whites of Their Eyes; Start reading Paine, Common Sense; Declaration of Independence; brief excerpts from John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon

No class January 19--Martin Luther King Jr. holiday

January 19-24: Tom Paine--the Nation's First Radical?
Read: Finish Paine, Common Sense and read some of his brief writings--follow these links below:
   1. Paine's "An Occasional Letter on the Female Sex" (1775)
   2. Paine's letter on "African Slavery in America" (1775)
   3. Excerpts from Paine's pamphlet on "Agrarian Justice" (1797)

Tom Paine's life and ideas make him in a very real sense the world's first professional international revolutionary. We will look at his life experiences and his political and intellectual contributions, examining in particular the ideology of artisan republicanism he espoused. Where would he stand on political and social issues today?

January 26-February 2: Slave Revolts and the Case of Nat Turner
Read: Oates, The Fires of Jubilee (entire book);
We will look at the varying patterns of slave revolts in the Western Hemisphere and then discuss the Nat Turner revolt, examining motives, tactics and results. What is the relationship between individual psychology and group action? Does Turner serve well as an inspiration for movements of the oppressed? We'll also look at John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, Virginia, another attempt to attack slavery by force, paying special attention to issues of race and gender.

February 7: MIDTERM EXAM

February 9: Democracy in America
I’ll devote one class session to Alexis de Tocqueville, the French aristocrat who visited the United States in the 1830s and wrote what still is one of the most influential interpretations of American politics and society, *Democracy in America*. What implications does Tocqueville have for our understanding of radicalism in nineteenth century America?

February 14-23: Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Women's Rights, Anti Slavery, Racism and the Right to Vote
Read: Gornick, *The Solitude of Self*
The movement for the immediate abolition of slavery in the three decades before the Civil War was the setting for new kinds of activism among both white and African-American women. But the anti-slavery movement itself split around 1840 over what role women should play in the movement. In the years following the Civil War and the defeat of slavery, the movement for women's rights had to decide whether to support citizenship and voting rights for African-American men or to insist that women's rights required equal and immediate attention. Once again, racism and conflict over women's place divided movements for social change. In the late nineteenth century, advocates of women's suffrage debated strategies and rationales for gaining the right to vote. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the most dynamic and philosophically profound advocate of women's rights in her era, confronted these and other issues for more than half a century.

February 28-March 9: Haymarket: Anarchism, Socialism and Radical Labor in Industrializing America
Read: Duberman, *Haymarket*
Throughout the nineteenth century the United States remained predominantly rural and agricultural. But especially after the Civil War, industrial capitalism made its mark dramatically on the nation. Conflict between labor and capital became perhaps the central issue in American society. In these sessions, we'll look at a major episode, the Haymarket "Massacre" of 1886. The event illuminates the development of anti-capitalist radical labor movements in the United States and the "Red Scare" that attempted to crush them in the aftermath of Haymarket.

Some Notes on the Course:
A. The syllabus here is rather tentative. There may be digressions and alterations along the way.
B. Unfortunately, the length of the assigned readings varies from topic to topic. Try to plan ahead, so that you don't find yourself too burdened when you have other commitments. You will find the class sessions more fruitful if you keep up with reading assignments.

C. The political and ethical implications of the topics which we study should be of personal as well as academic concern to you. Therefore, class discussion and your own thoughtful evaluation of the material covered are essential parts of the course. On several Wednesdays during the term, I’d like to stay around after class for informal discussion on a purely voluntary basis. More about this soon.