

“General American Intellectual History”

Dan Bouk

Bibliography List

General American Intellectual History

McCullough, David. *Brave Companions*. New York: Touchstone, 1992.

This collection of essays looks at characters who have made a mark on the American landscape in areas like science, the frontier, engineering, the environment, and politics. The highlight of the book is a fascinating set of essays on Louis Agassiz, the father of glacial theory and an American icon, and one of his major influences, the naturalist Alexander von Humbolt.

Kazin, Alfred. *God and the American Writer*. New York: Vintage, 1997.

Kazin, a leading modern literary critic, explores religious faith, spirituality, and the concept of God in essays focusing on authors ranging from Hawthorne to Lincoln to Faulkner.

Boorstin, Daniel, Ed. *An American Primer*. New York: Meridian, 1995.

This is a collection of important works in the history of America, collected and edited by University of Chicago historian Daniel J. Boorstin. Accompanying each work are analyses by various historians.

Capper, Charles and David Hollinger, Ed. *The American Intellectual Tradition*. Vol I & II Third Edition. New York: Oxford University Press 1997.

This two volume set of excerpts and articles from American thinkers and writers attempts quite successfully to portray the course of American thought from the puritans through postmodernism.

Johnson, Paul. *A History of the American People*. New York: Harper Collins, 1997.

History is a massive work that tells the story of America with a special eye towards the impact of religion on the development of American thought, and America itself.

Ahlstrom, Sydney. *A Religious History of the American People*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.

In this work, the former chair of American and Modern Religious History at Yale explores the way that American thought was effected over its history by changing conceptions of Providence.

Early America

Miller, Perry. *Errand into the Wilderness*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996.

Perry Miller, often called the father of American intellectual history, focuses in this book on the earliest English settlers in America, looking at the evolution among them of American Puritanism and American democracy.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

This history of the American revolution is significant for attacking the widely held theory that it was the work of John Locke alone who provided the philosophical background for revolution. Wood gives much needed attention to the impact of Whig political theory.

Maier, Pauline. *American Scripture*. New York: Knopf, 1997.

American Scripture is a study of the Declaration of Independence. Maier looks at Jefferson's influences writing it, the editorial process, and the recasting of the declaration in successive generations, most notably by Abraham Lincoln.

Bradstreet, Anne. *To My Husband and other Poems*. New York: Dover, 2000.

This little collection of Anne Bradstreet's poetry offers a glimpse into the early blending of English and American. The poems are written with formal British structure, but talk about what was becoming the American experience.

May, Henry. *The Enlightenment in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.

Beginning with Newton and Locke, May looks at the enlightenment philosophers who influenced the early American republic and explores the variety of ways in which enlightenment ideals entered American thought.

Ellis, Joseph, Ed. *What did the Declaration Declare?* Boston: Bedford/St Martin's, 1997.

This thin volume contains a copy of Jefferson's text with revisions and textual analyses by Jefferson historians Dumas Malone, Carl Becker, Garry Wills, Joseph Ellis, and Pauline Maier.

Franklin, Benjamin. *The Autobiography and Other Writings*. New York: Signet, 1961.

This tale of the inventor, diplomat, and philosopher Benjamin Franklin gives valuable insight into one of the men who most shaped the American republic and the ideas that influenced him.

Jefferson, Thomas. *The Life and Selected Writings*. New York: Modern Library, 1993.

This collection includes Jefferson's autobiography, some private papers, and his scientific work, *Notes on the State of Virginia*. The latter was Jefferson's attempt to show the Old World that science and philosophy lived on in the Americas.

Betts, Edwin and James Bear, Jr. Ed. *The Family Letters of Thomas Jefferson*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995.

This volume contains letters written to and from Jefferson's wife, daughters, grandchildren, and other near relatives.

Cappon, Lester J. Ed. *The Adams-Jefferson Letters*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987.

Here are compiled all known letters written between Thomas Jefferson, Abigail, and John Adams. The subject matters ranges from specific political issues to abstract philosophy.

Romantics and Abolitionists

Bailey, David. *Shadow on the Church*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.

This first edition, with an inscription by the author, is an exploration of the interplay between evangelical Christianity and slavery in Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi.

Stowe, Harriett Beecher. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. New York: Signet, 1998.

This story of slaves and their owners on a southern plantation inflamed passions in the north against the peculiar institution. The book captures the ideas of the radical abolitionists who thought that slavery should be eliminated at all costs.

Wyatt-Brown, Bertram. *Lewis Tappan and the Evangelical War Against Slavery*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997.

This biography of the abolitionist Lewis Tappan looks at the philosophical, psychological, religious, and social framework of New England abolitionism.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *Selected Tales and Sketches*. New York: Penguin, 1987.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter*. New York: Dover, 1994.

Hawthorne writes intense and often disturbing stories that celebrate a democratic Christian humanism fully aware of the darkness of human nature. His works are prime examples of the romantic reaction to New England puritanism.

Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick*. New York: First Vintage Books, 1991.

Like Hawthorne, but with a more religious and classical flavor, *Moby Dick* is an amazing work of American romanticism and even an interesting study of New England whaling culture.

Cross, Coy F. *Justin Smith Morrill*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999.

This biography of Justin Morrill is hard to categorize. Morrill was neither an abolitionist, nor a modernist. I think he best fits in this category though, as something of a humanist: a man who sought to educate a country. This book is a first edition, signed by the author.

Rybczynski, Witold. *A Clearing in the Distance*. New York: Touchstone, 1999.

Fredrick Law Olmstead, the subject of this biography, influenced northern opinions about slavery with his newspaper articles written while touring the south, and later preserved classical and romantic ideals through the man-made wilderness of the parks he designed.

Modernism

Adams, Henry. *The Education of Henry Adams*. New York: Modern Library, 1999.

This autobiography of Henry Adams is the quintessence of American modernism. Adams, the society around him shaken by mechanization and the civil war, realizes that everything has somehow changed and that a new education is necessary for a new world.

James, William. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. New York: Mentor, 1958.

In this book the famous American philosopher and psychologist James makes an argument for establishing a new branch of science, a branch of psychology really, that attempts to understand the religious nature of humanity.

Adams, Charles Francis. *Charles Francis Adams*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1900.

Charles Francis Adams wrote this book about his father, who carried the same name. The elder Charles was a presidential candidate, a diplomat to England for Lincoln, and father of Henry Adams, the historian and modernist. This book is a first edition.

Howe, Mark D. *Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes: The Shaping Years*. Cambridge: Belknap, 1957.

This first edition of Howe's biography tracks Holmes' years fighting in the civil war and his training in the profession of the law. Holmes was a friend of William James and Charles Pierce. His legal decisions were flavored by his own version of pragmatic theory.

Eliot, T.S. *The Waste Land and Other Poems*. San Diego: Harvest, 1962.

Eliot, the great American poet who desperately wanted to be British, is best described as a reactor against modernism. His work represents the yearning to go back to days of firmer beliefs and a different aesthetic.

The Scientific, the Post-modern, and the Realist

Brown, Robert, Ed. *The Essential Reinhold Niebuhr*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.

This book is a collection of essays, sermons, and addresses by Reinhold Niebuhr, a theologian of neo-orthodoxy, whose work greatly influenced Martin Luther King Jr.

MacLeish, Archibald. *J.B.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986.

This play in verse, winner of a Pulitzer Prize, retells the story of Job in a modern American setting.

Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*. New York: Vintage, 1980.

Wright, Richard. *Native Son*. New York: Harper Collins, 1993.

These fiction works by Ellison and Wright examine the place of African Americans in modern society. They are romantic books, drawing on the traditions of Hawthorne and Dostoevsky, that added a new tone to the growing discussions of American plurality.

Adler, Margot. *Heretic's Heart*. Boston: Beacon, 1997.

This autobiography tells the story of a young woman growing up in New York, participating in the civil rights movement in Mississippi, and going to school at Berkeley in the sixties. It explores student thought regarding civil rights and the anti-war movement.

McCullough, David. *Truman*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992.

Historian David McCullough covers the life of President Harry Truman, a man born out of the thought of the American midwest forced to face the harshness of modern war and find new ways of thinking about the post-world war era. This copy is signed by the author.

Leopold, Aldo. *A Sand County Almanac*. New York: Ballantine, 1970.

This nature journal contains essays written while the author lived by Round River. It draws on the tradition of Thoreau, but with a more modern scientific and conservationist perspective.

Wilson, Edward O. *Naturalist*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1994.

This autobiography offers a fascinating look into modern biology, including the author's own theory of sociobiology. This book has personal significance as it was a gift from a high school science teacher.