

*Questionnaire*

**Session 1                      The Past as Prologue (1):  
The “Red Scare’s” Legacy**

Introduction                  Bernd Greiner  
Chair                              Susan Neiman

\*In his study *Political Hysteria in America* (1971), Murray B. Levin used the “Red Scare” of the early 1920s as a case in point to ponder the democratic capacity for repressing and paralyzing left-of-center movements. Seen in the light of recent studies on cultural history, on the history of ideas and emotions, what can be said about Levin’s observations and theses?

\*What about the notion of an American proneness to political hysteria? To what extent does it fit into the paradigm of “American exceptionalism?”

\*What can be said about the entangled history of fear, political deviation and social reform?

\*How and to which extent did the legacy of the “Red Scare” affect the rise and demise of the New Deal?

**Session 2                      Compromising the “New Deal” (1):  
Race, Class, Gender and Social Reform**

Introduction                  Marilyn B. Young  
Chair                              Volker Depkat

\*Ira Katznelson recently argued that from its very beginning, the New Deal’s reform agenda was trapped in a “Southern Cage” – both in terms of its domestic and foreign policy agenda. How solid is this interpretation?

\*What other political and structural liabilities come to mind to explain the turbulent history of the New Deal, especially with regard to its confines?

\*How can we explain the quick exhaustion of the various voices of progress and protest – left, right, and populist?

\*In what way did “American Exceptionalism” contribute to the containment of left, radical or socialist initiatives?

\*What was the impact of civil society-based “entrepreneurs of fear” (e.g. the American Legion or various nativist, especially anti-Japanese associations) and their loyalty-campaigns?

\*What about Ira Katznelson’s notion that the concept of “common good” was inadvertently damaged, if not ruined by the ways and means in which New Deal

reforms were implemented – i.e. by “balkanizing” the politics of domestic policy-making in the US?

\*In what respect does the New Deal testify to the flexibility and adaptability of the American political system to crisis-related challenges and instabilities?

**Session 3**                      **Compromising the New Deal (2):  
Fear and National Security**

Introduction                      Peter Kuznik

Chair                                Klaas Voss

\*On the eve of World War II, the question of national security was arguably the most controversial issue in American politics. How did this discourse impact the New Deal’s reform agenda?

\*What was the relative importance of the loyalty campaigns before Pearl Harbor?

\*What can be said about the political clout and bureaucratic leverage of the internal security apparatus before and after Pearl Harbor?

\*In what way did changing notions of security impact political discourses, concepts of societal organization and ways of participation? To what extent were the limits of political legitimacy renegotiated?

\*What were the mechanisms to reconcile an agenda of domestic reform with the rationale of a nascent “National Security State?”

\*In terms of political agency, who contributed to the security discourse and in what way, and who was excluded or stood aloof?

\*How do postwar politics of emotion and securitization tie in with deep-seated traditions of American history?

**Session 4**                      **The Past as Prologue (2)  
The Cold War and the End of Reform**

Introduction                      Ellen Schrecker

Chair                                Bernd Greiner

\*Did the Cold War actually usher in the end of New Deal reforms? Or had the “dual state” – procedure oriented in domestic affairs and emergency fixated in foreign relations – taken roots beforehand?

\*What exactly caused the transformation of “New Deal-liberals” into “Cold War-liberals?” What were the various stages of this transition?

- \*Which actors and what dynamics tipped the scales in domestic affairs and by what means?
- \*How did loyalty campaigns, security discourses and McCarthy-styled politics in the long run influence the labor movement, grass-roots politics, civil rights activists and civil society at large?
- \*What is the long-lasting legacy of the combined welfare- and warfare state?
- \*Looking back on the history of reform in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, where is the New Deal to be located? Does it stand for a new age of politics or rather for an exception to the rule?
- \*Does American Cold War-paranoia stand for a unique “culture of fear”? In comparison to other (Western) political cultures, what are the differences and similarities?

### *Suggested Reading*

Murray B. Levin, *Political Hysteria in America. The Democratic Capacity for Repression*. New York: Basic Books, 1971; 220-54

Ira Katznelson, *Fear Itself. The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time*. New York: Liveright, 2013; 12-25, 475-86

Jonathan Bell, *The Liberal State on Trial. The Cold War and American Politics in the Truman Years*. Columbia University Press, 2004; 1-46

Landon R. Y. Storrs, *The Second Red Scare and the Unmaking of the New Deal Left*. Princeton University Press 2013; 177-204, 259-64