

BEYOND THE NEW DEAL ORDER

A Conference at the University of California, Santa Barbara

September 24-26, 2015

Call for Papers

When Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle edited *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order* in 1989, they made the concept of a political and social “order” central to an interpretative framework that reperiodized U.S. history, from the election of Franklin Roosevelt, through Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society and on to the Ronald Reagan’s victory in 1980. The New Deal was not just a presidential moment, but a far larger construction - a combination of ideas, policies, institutions, cultural norms and electoral dynamics - that spanned several decades and sustained a hegemonic governing regime. *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order* offered a unique way to conceptualize the history of social reform and political conflict in the 20th century, and it quickly emerged as the dominant narrative within and against which a new generation of scholars have sought to investigate the foundation, evolution, limits and decline of the New Deal. More than a quarter century after the book’s appearance, the concept of a multi-decade, political-social New Deal order still pervades our historical understanding of 20th century America.

Our conference, “Beyond the New Deal Order,” draws upon the new ways of thinking about politics, ideas, economy, gender, race and ethnicity, and the U.S. role in the world that have emerged in recent historical scholarship to interrogate the foundational suppositions put forward by Fraser, Gerstle and their co-authors more than a quarter century ago. Is the concept of a New Deal order still a viable way of framing the reform impulses unleashed in the Depression decade and continuing through the 1960s and even after? How does the New Deal order fit into the larger sweep of American history, including what historian Richard Hofstadter once called “the American political tradition?” And finally, did the New Deal order actually fall, or, given the demographic reconfiguration of the American electorate and the emergence of movements and coalitions organized outside or in opposition to the New Deal framework, would “transformation” rather than “fall” be a better word to describe how such an order continues to function in the 21st century?

We invite panel and paper submissions for possible presentation at the conference. We are especially interested in broad and inclusive submissions that focus upon the following themes:

How has the changing structure of capitalism, in the U.S. and the world, contributed to the fate of the New Deal order?

Has a new political order, neoliberal or otherwise, taken shape in the United States?

How have political parties evolved during and after the New Deal order?

The New Deal order considered as a global project, and its relationship to American power, military, political, and ideological.

Populisms of the Left and Right.

Race and democracy in New Deal politics and political economy.

The gendered politics of the American state and its social policy.

The New Deal and its opposition as ideological and intellectual projects.

The U.S. “Labor Question,” from the Great Depression to the Great Recession.

Please send a two paragraph précis and a short c.v. by February 1. Some funding for graduate students and those with limited travel budgets may be available. Send proposals to Kristoffer Smemo at ksemo@umail.ucsb.edu.

For the planning committee:

Nelson Lichtenstein and Alice O’Connor, UCSB, co-conveners; Steve Fraser, The Murphy Institute, CUNY; Gary Gerstle, University of Cambridge; Romain Huret, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales; and Jean-Christian Vinel, Université Paris-Diderot.