

History 420: American Colonial History
Longmore - Fall Semester 2007

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 1:10-2:00 p.m.

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Office hours: by appointment

This course examines the historical processes of colonial empire, by focusing on the region historians refer to as Colonial British America. It compares the development of that imperial sector with other contemporaneous European colonial empires established in the Americas. Instead of recounting explorers and wars, the course analyzes the cultural systems involved in conquest and colonization. The course considers not only the policies and programs instituted by imperial leaders, but also the ways in which, from the 15th through the 18th centuries, millions of ordinary people---Native-Americans, Europeans and Euro-Americans, and Africans and African-Americans---came into contact in the North Atlantic basin and drew upon their previous experiences to fashion new patterns of social organization, economic activity, religious practice, familial and gender relations, and politics and governance. We will trace the development during this era of the characteristic features of American regional cultures and the distinctive themes of the long-term American historical experience. During the third quarter of the 18th century, the British imperial system became increasingly dysfunctional and, within a short time, broke apart as the North-American British colonial societies redefined themselves as a new nation, the United States of America. The course will conclude with an analysis of how empires disintegrate, how colonialism often gives rise to nationalism.

Requirements and Grading: The course grade will be based on class participation, two take-home mid-term essays, and a take-home final essay. Each exam will count as one-third of the course grade. The essays will respond to questions based on the readings and the class lectures.

Take-home Essay Examinations: Students are encouraged to submit the exam essays via e-mail. They must be readable in Word or WordPerfect. They should be sent to the e-mail address above.

Whether submitted through e-mail or in hardcopy, all essays must be prepared according to the following guidelines: Limit each essay to 4-5 pages in length. Essay exams will be typewritten in a 12-point easily readable font. Handwritten papers will not be accepted. Double-space all lines, including lines between paragraphs. Do not triple-space! Establish one-inch margins at the top, bottom and sides. Number pages in the bottom center. For hardcopies, staple pages sideways (vertically) in the upper left corner. Do not enclose the paper in a folder, binder, or plastic cover.

All essays should cite sources of quotations or important information or ideas in parentheses in the text, noting the author and page number only, e.g. (Smith, 231-32). Give full citations to these sources in a separate bibliographic section at the end of the essay.

The essays will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Argument/Organization. Does the essay address the significant historical and

historiographical issues raised in the exam question? Does it examine those issues by developing a coherent and convincing argument? Does the conclusion effectively sum up the argument?

2. Evidence/Analysis. Does the essay accurately use the primary source readings to support the argument? Does the writer demonstrate analytical and critical skills in using these sources? Does the paper take proper note of the sources' biases?

3. Historiography. Does the essay make use of the secondary source readings in building its argument? Does the writer demonstrate critical analytical skills in the use of secondary sources?

4. Expression. Does the writer use language skillfully and appropriately? In other words, does the writer use: a variety of sentence structures and appropriate vocabulary for a formal essay? Is the writing coherent? Do ideas flow clearly? Are they connected logically?

5. Form. Does the writer follow standard conventions of usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and a report of the incident to the chair of the history department for further disposition.

Disability-related Reasonable Accommodations: Students with verified disabilities who require reasonable accommodations are urged to arrange these matters with the instructor.

Readings:

Survey Textbook: Hoffer, Peter. **The Brave New World: A History of Early America**, second edition. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.

Additional Readings:

Berkin, Carol. **First Generations: Women in Colonial America**. New York: Hill and Wang, 1996.

Calloway, Colin G., ed. **The World Turned Upside Down, Indian Voices from Early America**. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 1994.

Franklin, Benjamin. **The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin**. Ed. Louis P. Masur. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 1993.

Longmore, Paul K. **The Invention of George Washington**. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999; originally published Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

Sewall, Samuel. **The Diary and Life of Samuel Sewall**. Ed. Mel Yazawa. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 1998.

Smith, Mark M., ed. **Stono: Documenting and Interpreting a Southern Slave Revolt**. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005.

Class Schedule:

- August 29. **Introduction: How Do You Build an Empire?**
- August 31. **Trans-Oceanic Imperialism**
Reading: Hoffer, **The Brave New World**, Ch. 2: “Europe in the Age of Discovery, 1400-1500”
- September 3. **LABOR DAY.** No class
- September 5. **The New Imperialism of Northwest Europe**
Reading: Hoffer, **The Brave New World**, Ch. 3: “The Spanish Century, 1492-1588”
- September 7. **Latecomers to Empire: The English**
Reading: Hoffer, **The Brave New World**, Ch. 4: “Rivals for the Northland, England and France”
- September 10. **European Implantations, The First Century**
Reading: Hoffer, **The Brave New World**, Ch. 5: “The Planter Colonies”
- September 12. **Before Columbus: Indigenous Cultures of North America**
Readings: Hoffer, **The Brave New World**, Ch. 1: “The First Americans”
- September 14. **Native American Holocaust**
Readings: Readings: Calloway, **The World Turned Upside Down**, 1-114
- September 17. **Cultural Collision and Negotiation**
Readings: Berkin, **First Generations**, Ch. 3: “The Sisters of Pocahontas....”
- September 19. **Bound for America: Indentured Servitude**
Readings: Berkin, **First Generations**, Ch. 1: “Immigrants to Paradise....”
- September 21. **Hands to Labor**
Reading: Hoffer, **The Brave New World**, Ch. 7: “The Middle Colonies”
- September 24. **It All Started on Fernando Po: The Origins of the Slave Plantation System**
Readings: Smith, Mark M., ed. **Stono: Documenting and Interpreting a Southern Slave Revolt**, 1-58
- September 26. **Of Chickens and Eggs: The Origins of American Slavery and Racism**
Reading: Smith, Mark M., ed. **Stono: Documenting and Interpreting a Southern Slave Revolt**, 59-107
- September 28. **American Paradox, American Tragedy**
Reading: Smith, Mark M., ed. **Stono: Documenting and Interpreting a**

Southern Slave Revolt, 108-24

October 1. **The Development of African-American Subcultures**

Reading: Berkin, **First Generations**, Ch. 5: "The Rhythms of Labor...."

First Take-Home Mid-Term Examination Handed Out

October 3. **World of Wonders: Early American "Religious" Perceptions**

Reading: Hoffer, **The Brave New World**, Ch. 6: A New England

October 5. **Colonial Religion and the Social Order**

Reading: **Diary and Life of Samuel Sewall**, 1-60

October 8. **Awakenings: Religion and the Republicanization of America**

Reading: **Diary and Life of Samuel Sewall**, 61-159

October 10. **Americanization of Religion**

Reading: **Diary and Life of Samuel Sewall**, 160-242

First Take-Home Mid-Term Examination Due

October 12. **Ideologies of Gender**

Readings: Berkin, **First Generations**, Ch. 2: "Goodwives and Bad...."

October 15. **The Patriarchal Family**

Reading: Berkin, **First Generations**, Ch. 4: "In 'a Babel of Confusion'...."

October 17. **Land of Sexual Equality? Women in 17th-Century America**

Reading: Berkin, **First Generations**, Ch. 6: "The Rise of Gentility...."

October 19. **Continuity or Change? Women in 18th-Century America**

Reading: Hoffer, **The Brave New World**, Ch. 10: "Provincial People and Places...."

October 22. **Movements and Migrations: Immigration to British North America**

Readings: Hoffer, **The Brave New World**, Ch. 11: "Common Pastimes and Elite Pursuits"

October 24. **American Pluralism in the Making: Colonial Ethnic Diversity**

Calloway, **World Turned Upside Down**, pp. 115-144

October 26. **Immigration and Land Speculation**

Reading: Reading: Calloway, **World Turned Upside Down**, pp. 146-169

October 29. **The American Way of Land**

Readings: Reading: Calloway, **World Turned Upside Down**, pp. 170-193.

October 31. **A Rising Empire in the West**

Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Ch. 1: "The Country of His Fathers"

November 2. **Abundant Land, Prolific People**

Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Ch. 2: "Honour and Glory"

November 5. **Gimme Land, Lots of Land**

Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Ch. 3: "the chief part of my happiness"

Second Take-Home Mid-Term Examination Handed Out

November 7. **Self-Sufficiency versus the Market? The Economy of Early America**

Reading: Franklin, **Autobiography**, pp. 1-80

November 9. **The Eighteenth-Century Consumer Revolution**

Reading: Franklin, **Autobiography**, pp. 81-164

November 12. **Veterans Day**. No class.

November 14. **An Empire of Commerce**

Reading: Hoffer, **The Brave New World**, Ch. 12: "Mercantilism and Markets"

Second Take-Home Mid-Term Examination Due

November 16. **Toward Economic Self-Determination**

Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Appendix: "...the foundations of useful knowledge..."

November 19-23. **Thanksgiving Recess**. No classes.

November 21. **Where You Sat Showed Where You Stood: Notions of Social Hierarchy in Colonial America**

Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Ch. 4: "the service done...merits reward"; Ch. 5: "be distinguished from the common run"

November 23. **A Matter of Degrees: The Decay of Hierarchy**

Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Ch. 6: "I deal little in Politics"; Ch. 7: "a free mind"

November 26. **From Deference Toward Democracy: Politics in Colonial America**

Reading: Hoffer, **The Brave New World**, Ch.8: "The Critical Years, 1675-1700"

- November 28. **Oceans Apart: Imperial versus Colonial Perceptions of the Empire**
Readings: Hoffer, *The Brave New World*, Ch. Nine: "The Empires Reinvented, 1660-1763"
- November 30. **Mounting Suspicions: Imperial-Colonial Relations, 1748-1763**
Reading: Longmore, *Invention of George Washington*, Ch. 8: "Some thing should be done"; Ch. 9: "a rising Empire"; Ch. 10: "is...anything to be expected from petitioning?"
- December 3. **Mounting Suspicions: Imperial-Colonial Relations, 1748-1763**
Reading: Longmore, *Invention of George Washington*, Ch. 11: "there is no relief but in their distress"; Ch. 12: "to excite others by our Example".
- December 5. **"A Posture of Hostility": The Impact of the Seven Years War**
Readings: Hoffer, *The Brave New World*, Ch. 13: "The Last War and the Lost Peace, 1754-1763"
- December 7. **Can the Center Hold? The Crisis of the British Empire, 1763-1774**
Reading: Longmore, *Invention of George Washington*, Ch. 13: "...can a virtuous Man hesitate in his choice?"; Ch. 14: "partiality...assisted by a political motive"
- December 10. **Colonialism Begets Nationalism: The American Revolution as a Nationalist Rebellion**
Reading: Hoffer, *The Brave New World*, Ch. 14: "A Nation in the Womb of Time, 1764-1775"
- December 12. Readings: Berkin, *First Generations*, Ch. 7: "Beat of Drama and Ringing of Bell"
- December 14. Readings: Longmore, *Invention of George Washington*, Ch. 15: "something charming...in the conduct of Washington"; Ch. 16: "God Save Great Washington! God Damn the King!"; Ch. 17: "first in the hearts of his countryman"
- December 17. **Conclusion: How to Dismember an Empire and Found a Nation**
Readings: Hoffer, *The Brave New World*, Ch. 15: Independence, War, and Republicanism; Epilogue: "The Way Ahead"; Berkin, *First Generations*, Epilogue: "Fair Daughters of Columbia...."
- Final Take-Home Examination Handed Out**
- December 22. **Take-Home Final Examinations due by 4 PM**