

**History 420: American Colonial History**  
Longmore - Fall Semester 2004

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 experience 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. Class participation will count as 25% of the course grade. Each exam will count as 25% 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: Richard Middleton. **Colonial America: A History** (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, third edition revised, 2002).

### Additional Readings:

Bernard Bailyn. **The Peopling of British North America** (New York: Vintage, 1988).

Carol Berkin and Leslie Horowitz, eds. **Women's Voices, Women Lives: Documents in Early American History** (Northeastern University Press, 1998).

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

Edward Countryman, ed. **How Did American Slavery Begin?** (Boston: St. Martins, 1999).

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

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

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

**Class Schedule:**

- August 25. **Introduction: How Do You Build an Empire?**
- August 27. **Trans-Oceanic Imperialism**  
Reading: Middleton, Chapter 1
- August 30. **The New Imperialism of Northwest Europe**  
Reading: Middleton, Chapter 3
- September 1. **Latecomers to Empire: The English**  
Reading: Middleton, Chapter 4
- September 3. **European Implantations, The First Century**  
Reading: Middleton, Chapter 5
- September 6. **LABOR DAY.** No class
- September 8. **Before Columbus: Indigenous Cultures of North America**  
Readings: Middleton, Chapter 2
- September 10. **Native American Holocaust**  
Readings: Middleton, Chapter 15
- September 13. **Cultural Collision and Negotiation**  
Readings: Calloway, **The World Turned Upside Down**, 1-114
- September 15. **Bound for America: Indentured Servitude**  
Reading: Middleton, Chapter 6.
- September 17. **Hands to Labor**  
Reading: Middleton, Chapter 7.
- September 20. **It All Started on Fernando Po: The Origins of the Slave Plantation System**  
Readings: Berlin, "Was the Early 'European Atlantic' also an African Atlantic?"; Washington, "Who Enslaved Whom?" – all in Countryman, ed. **How Did American Slavery Begin?**
- September 22. **Of Chickens and Eggs: The Origins of American Slavery and Racism**  
Reading: Countryman, "Introduction: The Origins of Slavery"; Leon Higginbotham, Jr., "How did the Subject of Slavery enter American Law?" in Countryman, ed. **How Did American Slavery Begin?**

September 24. **American Paradox, American Tragedy**  
Readings: Jordan, "How Did North America's Absolute Racial Division Begin?";  
Morgan, "Did American Freedom Rest upon American Slavery?" – both in  
Countryman, ed. **How Did American Slavery Begin?**

September 27. **The Development of African-American Subcultures**  
Reading: Middleton, Chapter 14

**First Take-Home Mid-Term Examination Handed Out**

September 29. **Ideologies of Gender**  
Readings: Middleton, Chapters 11-12

October 1. **NO CLASS.**

October 4. **The Patriarchal Family**  
Reading: Berkin and Horowitz, eds. **Women's Voices, Women Lives**, 1-92

**First Take-Home Mid-Term Examination Due**

October 6. **Land of Sexual Equality? Women in 17th-Century America**  
Readings: Berkin and Horowitz, eds. **Women's Voices, Women Lives**, 93-158

October 8. **Continuity or Change? Women in 18th-Century America**  
Readings: Berkin and Horowitz, eds. **Women's Voices, Women Lives**, 159-203

October 11. **World of Wonders: Early American "Religious" Perceptions**  
Reading: Middleton, Chapter 9

October 13. **Colonial Religion and the Social Order**  
Reading: **Diary and Life of Samuel Sewall**, 1-135

October 15. **Awakenings: Religion and the Republicanization of America**  
Reading: **Diary and Life of Samuel Sewall**, 136-249

October 18. **Americanization of Religion**  
Reading: Middleton, Chapter 13

October 20. **Movements and Migrations: Immigration to British North America**  
Readings: Bailyn, **Peopling of British North America**, pp. 1-44

October 22. **American Pluralism in the Making: Colonial Ethnic Diversity**  
Readings: Middleton, Chapter 10

October 25. **Immigration and Land Speculation**  
Reading: Bailyn, **Peopling of British North America**, pp. 45-86

October 27. **The American Way of Land**  
Readings: Bailyn, **Peopling of British North America**, pp. 87-131

October 29. **A Rising Empire in the West**  
Readings: Middleton, Chapter 10

November 1. **Abundant Land, Prolific People**  
Readings: Middleton, Chapter 17

**Second Take-Home Mid-Term Examination Handed Out**

November 3. **Gimme Land, Lots of Land**  
Reading: Calloway, **World Turned Upside Down**, pp. 115-193.

November 5. **Self-Sufficiency versus the Market? The Economy of Early America**  
Reading: Franklin, **Autobiography**, pp. 1-80

**Second Take-Home Mid-Term Examination Due**

November 8. **The Eighteenth-Century Consumer Revolution**  
Reading: Franklin, **Autobiography**, pp. 81-164

November 10. **An Empire of Commerce**  
Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Chapter 1

November 12. **Toward Economic Self-Determination**  
Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Appendix

November 15. **Where You Sat Showed Where You Stood: Notions of Social Hierarchy in Colonial America**  
Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, 2-3

November 17. **A Matter of Degrees: The Decay of Hierarchy**  
Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, 4-5

November 19. **From Deference Toward Democracy: Politics in Colonial America**  
Reading: Middleton, Chapter 16

November 22. **Oceans Apart: Imperial versus Colonial Perceptions of the Empire**  
Readings: Middleton, Chapter 18

November 24. **THANKSGIVING**. No class.

November 26. **THANKSGIVING**. No class.

- November 29. **Mounting Suspicions: Imperial-Colonial Relations, 1748-1763**  
Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Chapters 6-7
- December 1. **Advising Day**. No class.
- December 3. **“A Posture of Hostility”: The Impact of the Seven Years War**  
Readings: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Chapters 8-10;  
Middleton, Chapter 19
- December 8. **Can the Center Hold? The Crisis of the British Empire, 1763-1774**  
Reading: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Chapters 11-13;  
Middleton, Chapter 20
- December 10. **Colonialism Begets Nationalism: The American Revolution as a Nationalist Rebellion**  
Readings: Longmore, **Invention of George Washington**, Chapters 14-17
- December 10. **Conclusion: How to Dismember an Empire and Found a Nation**  
  
**Final Take-Home Examination Handed Out**
- December 17. **Take-Home Final Examinations due in History Department by 4 PM**