

Fall 2017
MW 12:00-1:15 PM
Robinson B 208
Office Hours: MT 2-3 PM

Randolph Scully
Robinson B 375A
rscully@gmu.edu

HISTORY 403: ERA OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, 1763-1800

What was the American Revolution? How revolutionary was it? For whom? This course considers these questions by considering the many transformations of politics, society, and culture that collectively made up the American Revolution. We will trace the course of the Revolutionary Era from the imperial crisis of the 1760s through the election of Thomas Jefferson in 1800 and the “settling” of the Revolution in the early nineteenth century. In the process, we will consider the actions and ideas of political leaders along with the experiences of other Americans—poor farmers and urban artisans, women of different classes, slaves and free African Americans, Native Americans, and more—and the ways in which they both shaped and were affected by the changes of the Revolutionary Era.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Class Participation and Preparation: This course is heavily based on discussion—your attendance and active participation are crucial to its success. Not coincidentally, participation is a significant portion of your grade. Evidence of preparation (i.e. having done and thought about the reading and any discussion questions), quality of discussion, engagement with other students’ ideas, and appropriate behavior all factor into the class participation grade. Obviously, if you are not in class, you are not participating. Please see the Participation Rubric posted on Blackboard for a guide to expectations.

Preparation also includes bringing a copy of the reading, something to write with, and paper to write on in order to be ready for any in-class writing or exercises we may do. (This is subject to accommodation for students with disabilities that may interfere with their ability to write using traditional media.)

Short Exercises: Each week (except when a longer essay is due) there will be a brief written assignment based on the readings or other exercises (in or out of class) used to encourage thought and discussion. Details and instructions for each specific short exercise will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard. Often these will simply be reactions to the reading; other times they might be explorations of primary sources available through various databases; sometimes they might be brief thought pieces asking you to reflect on what we’ve done so far. They don’t usually require much sustained writing, but they should be the result of significant consideration and effort. These will be graded on a check-plus, check, or check-minus scale, with a check-plus being the equivalent of an A, a check the equivalent of

a B, and a check-minus the equivalent of a C. Work that falls short of that standard will not receive credit.

Please note: Short exercises may not be turned in late—they're due at class time on the day for which they are assigned. I will drop the two lowest grades on these, so there is a bit of a built in cushion for unavoidable, unplanned absences. If you know ahead of time you will be absent on a day when a short exercise is due, you may email the completed assignment *before* class.

Also note: When assigned ahead of time, these must be word processed and printed. In-class exercises may be hand-written. In both cases, make sure to put your name on it.

Essays: You will write two five- to six-page essays based on course materials, one in the first half of the semester and one in the second half. *Details of these assignments will be distributed in class.*

Final Exam: There will be a final exam in the course on Monday, December 18, from 10:30 AM to 1:15 PM. Exact format TBD, based on class interest, dynamics

Grading:

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Participation | 20% |
| Short Exercises | 20% |
| Papers (together) | 40% |
| Final | 20% |

IN-CLASS BEHAVIOR

Behaviors such as frequent tardiness, leaving early, packing up to leave before class is over, sleeping, eating, talking when others are speaking, texting, checking email, using social media, and doing work for other classes are signals to me and to the rest of the class that you do not take the course seriously. All of these have a strong negative effect on your own learning as well as on your classmates' ability to concentrate in class. These behaviors will adversely affect your participation grade.

LAPTOP & DEVICE USAGE GUIDELINES

Recent research suggests that taking notes by hand is significantly more effective than typing on a computer—it requires more effort to think about what you are hearing and figure out what's important to write down, and thus promotes greater retention of class material. Laptops can provide nearly endless possibilities for distraction—not just for the student but for others in the class as well. It is also extremely distracting for the professor when it is obvious someone is looking at something on their computer rather than paying attention to class—we can usually tell. So please take some time to consider whether that laptop is necessary or if it will prove a hard-to-resist distraction.

If you do decide to use a laptop in class, you must **TURN OFF YOUR WIFI CONNECTION WHILE IN CLASS** in order to avoid the distractions mentioned above.

I reserve the right to ask people to close their computers for periods of the class, to switch seats, or to turn off their computers if they prove distracting to you, me, or your classmates.

LATE PAPER POLICY

All assignments are officially due in hard copy at the beginning of class on the day they are due (although in practice they're usually collected at the end of class). Essays turned in later the same day are subject to a penalty of three (3) points (out of 100). Essays turned in the following day are subject to a five-point (5) penalty. Each subsequent day, a similar 5 point penalty will accrue, which means eventually the penalty would outweigh the total value of the assignment. Don't let this happen.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE I GET THE PAPER. If you do not turn in the paper in class, you assume all risk of any mischance. Papers are not considered to be turned in until I hold them in my hands, or, in the case of electronic submissions, when I email you to confirm trouble-free receipt. If you turn in your paper electronically, please save and send your paper as a Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), PDF, or Rich Text Format (.rtf) document. You assume all risk of unopenable or missing attachments.

Extensions will be granted at my discretion in appropriate circumstances IF YOU CONSULT WITH ME BEFORE THE DUE DATE. In appropriate circumstances and entirely at my discretion, I will negotiate a new due date for papers that are already late, assessing a fixed penalty rather than the daily one outlined above. BUT, failure to meet the new deadline will result in failure (no credit) of the assignment.

In general, if you have any kind of problem that interferes with your work for the class, please consult with me as soon as possible.

HONOR CODE AND PLAGIARISM STATEMENT

All work in this course is governed by the George Mason University honor code:

*To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.***

More information can also be found at the GMU [Office of Academic Integrity](#).

OTHER POLICIES AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Administrative Dates

Last day to add & to drop with no tuition penalty: Tuesday, September 6

Last day to drop with 33% tuition penalty: Tuesday, September 20

Final Drop Deadline, with 67% tuition penalty: Friday, September 30

Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ods.gmu.edu) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

GMU Email Accounts

Students must use their MasonLive email accounts to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See masonlive.gmu.edu for more information.

Useful Resources

Writing Center (writingcenter.gmu.edu): A114 Robinson Hall, (703) 993-1200.

Counseling and Psychological Services (caps.gmu.edu): SUB I, Room 3129, (703) 993-2380.

University Catalog: catalog.gmu.edu.

Other university policies: universitypolicy.gmu.edu.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The following books are required reading for this class, and are available for purchase at the GMU Barnes and Noble in the Johnson Center:

- Calloway, Colin. *The Victory With No Name: The Native American Defeat of the First American Army*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Young, Alfred F., Gary B. Nash, and Ray Raphael, eds. *Revolutionary Founders: Rebels, Radicals, and Reformers in the Making of the Nation*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011. (Vintage Books paperback edition, 2012.)

Additional required readings are listed on the syllabus and are available via Blackboard or through GMU's subscriptions to various online databases, which can be accessed via the GMU Library's homepage (library.gmu.edu).

Other readings may be handed out in class or distributed electronically, and those will also be considered part of the required reading.

You should always bring a hard copy of the reading to refer to in class.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

(NOTE: this schedule is subject to change due to a variety of factors—weather, illness, class interest, etc... Any changes will be announced in class, and an updated syllabus will be uploaded to Blackboard. Please make sure to keep informed about any changes.)

WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION

M, Aug. 28: Course Introduction: What Was the American Revolution?

Explore (in class... and afterwards, if you are interested)

- [Michael Hattem's Timeline of the Historiography of the American Revolution](#)

W, Aug. 30: The Colonies in the Aftermath of the Seven Years' War

- Woody Holton, "The Ohio Indians and the Coming of the American Revolution in Virginia," *Journal of Southern History* 60:3 (August 1994): 453-479.

WEEK TWO: SUGAR AND STAMPS: EARLY PHASES OF IMPERIAL CRISIS

M, Sept. 4: No Class—Labor Day

W, Sept. 6: Two Communities Protest the Stamp Act

Reading

- Alfred F. Young, "Ebenezer Mackintosh: Boston's Captain General of the Liberty Tree," in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 15-33.
- Rhys Isaac, "Lighting the Fuse of Revolution in Virginia, May 1765: Rereading the 'Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies,'" *William and Mary Quarterly* 68:4 (October 2011): 657-670.

WEEK THREE: THE IMPERIAL CRISIS AS A CONSUMER REBELLION

M, Sept. 11: Commercial Contexts and Resistance to British Policy

Reading

- [The Adverts 250 Project](#): Visit the site, read the "About" section, and read all posts (both the advertisements themselves and any interpretive text) from the past week (roughly Sept. 3 to Sept. 10). Feel free to read more, if you get interested.
- T.H. Breen, "Baubles of Britain: The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 119 (May 1988): 71-104.

W, Sept. 13: The Trouble with Tea

Reading

- Jane T. Merritt, "Tea Trade, Consumption, and the Republican Paradox in Prerevolutionary Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 128:2 (April 2004): 117-148.

WEEK FOUR: RADICALIZATION OF RESISTANCE**M, Sept. 18:** Resistance and Violence**Reading**

- Benjamin Irvin, “Tar, Feathers, and the Enemies of American Liberties, 1768-1776,” *New England Quarterly* 76:2 (June 2003): 197-238.
- T.H. Breen, “Samuel Thompson’s War: The Career of an American Insurgent,” in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 53-66.

W, Sept. 20: The Failure of Conciliation**Reading**

- Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776) (selections TBD).
- Jill Lepore, “A World of Paine,” in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 87-96.

WEEK FIVE: DECLARING INDEPENDENCE**M, Sept. 25:** Declaring Independence**Reading**

- Primary Sources, TBD (Local Declarations)
- Primary Source: Declaration of Independence

W, Sept. 27: Challenges of Fighting the War**Reading**

- Philip Mead, “‘Adventures, Dangers and Sufferings’: The Betrayals of Private Joseph Plumb Martin, Continental Soldier,” in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 117-134.
- Michael A. McDonnell, “‘The Spirit of Levelling’: James Cleveland, Edward Wright, and the Militiamen’s Struggle for Equality in Revolutionary Virginia,” in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 135-154.

WEEK SIX: EXPERIENCING WAR IN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**M, Oct. 2:** Family, Community, and RevolutionMovie in-class: *Mary Silliman’s War* (1994)**W, Oct. 4:** Tensions on the Homefront

Conclusion of movie; combined discussion with reading, below:

Reading

- Barbara Clark Smith, “Food Rioters and the American Revolution,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 51:1 (January 1994): 3-38.

WEEK SEVEN: THE WAR OF THE REVOLUTION**T (Tuesday), Oct. 10:** Disruptions of Slavery During the War**Reading**

- Cassandra Pybus, “Mary Perth, Harry Washington, and Moses Wilkinson: Black Methodists Who Escaped from Slavery and Founded a Nation,” in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 155-168.

- Matthew Spooner, “The Problem of Order and the Transfer of Slave Property in the Revolutionary South,” in *The American Revolution Reborn*, edited by Patrick Spero and Michael Zuckerman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), pp. 231-247.

W, Oct. 11: Atlantic Diplomacy & the Revolution

- Lecture by Larrie Ferreiro, author of *Brothers at Arms: American Independence and the Men of France and Spain Who Saved It* (New York; Alfred A. Knopf, 2016). LOCATION TBA

WEEK EIGHT: CRISIS, CONVENTION, CONSTITUTION

M, Oct 16: Governing a New Nation

Reading

- Primary Sources TBD (Articles of Confederation, State Constitutions)
- Gregory Nobles, “ ‘Satan, Smith, Shattuck, and Shays’: The People’s Leaders in the Massachusetts Regulation of 1786,” in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 215-231.

W, Oct. 18: Debating and Ratifying the Constitution

Reading

- Primary Sources, TBD (U.S. Constitution, Selections from the *Federalist* essays, George Mason’s objections)

WEEK NINE: THE 1790s

M, Oct. 23: The Hamiltonian Program

Reading

- Max Edling, “ ‘So Immense a Power in the Affairs of War’: Alexander Hamilton and the Restoration of Public Credit,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 64:2 (April 2007): 287-326.

W, Oct. 25: Radicalism and Reaction in the 1790s

Reading

- Matthew Rainbow Hale, “On Their Tiptoes: Political Time and Newspapers during the Advent of the Radicalized French Revolution, circa 1792-1793,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 29:2 (Summer 2009): 191-218.
- Terry Bouton, “William Findley, David Bradford, and the Pennsylvania Regulation of 1794,” in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 233-251.

WEEK TEN: A JEFFERSONIAN REVOLUTION IN 1800?

M, Oct. 30: Alien and Sedition Acts

- Jeffrey L. Pasley, “Thomas Greenleaf: Printers and the Struggle for Democratic Politics and Freedom of the Press,” in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 355-373.

W, Nov. 1: The Election of 1800 and the Transformation of Local & National Politics

- Joanne B. Freeman, "Corruption and Compromise in the Election of 1800: The Process of Politics on the National Stage," in *The Revolution of 1800: Democracy, Race, and the New Republic*, ed. James Horn, Jan Ellen Lewis, and Peter Onuf (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002), pp. 87-120.
- Alan Taylor, "The Plough-Jogger: Jedediah Peck and the Democratic Revolution," in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 375-387.

WEEK ELEVEN: WOMEN, POLITICS, RIGHTS, AND REVOLUTION**M, Nov. 6:** Women's Rights?

- Rosemarie Zagarri, "The Rights of Woman," chapter one of *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), pp. 11-45.
- Sheila Skemp, "America's Mary Wollstonecraft: Judith Sargent Murray's Case for the Equal Rights of Women," in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 289-303.
- Primary Sources: Abigail and John Adams's "Remember the Ladies" exchange.

W, Nov. 8: Revolutions in Family and Emotional Life?**Reading**

- Susan E. Klepp, "Revolutionary Bodies: Women and the Fertility Transition in the Mid-Atlantic Region, 1760-1820," *Journal of American History* 85:3 (December 1998): 910-945.

WEEK TWELVE: RECONFIGURATIONS OF SLAVERY IN THE NEW NATION**M, Nov. 13:** Contesting Slavery and Forming Communities in the North and South**Reading**

- Richard S. Newman, "Prince Hall, Richard Allen, and Daniel Coker: Revolutionary Black Founders, Revolutionary Black Communities," in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 305-321.
- Philip Hamilton, "Revolutionary Principles and Family Loyalties: Slavery's Transformation in the St. George Tucker Household of Early National Virginia," *William and Mary Quarterly* 55:4 (October 1998): 531-556.

W, Nov. 15: The Intensification of Slavery in the South**Reading**

- Steven Deyle, "The Irony of Liberty: Origins of the Domestic Slave Trade," *Journal of the Early Republic* 12:1 (Spring 1992): 37-62.

WEEK THIRTEEN:**M, Nov. 20:** No Class—Out of Town**W, Nov. 22:** No Class—Thanksgiving Break

WEEK FOURTEEN: FACING A NEW NATION IN THE WEST**M, Nov. 27:** Ambitions in the Ohio Country**Reading**

- Colin Calloway, *The Victory with No Name*, pp. 3-92.

W, Nov. 29: Native Resistance**Reading**

- Colin G. Calloway, *The Victory with No Name*, pp. 93-128.

WEEK FIFTEEN: PURSUING & RESISTING CONTINENTAL EMPIRE**M, Dec. 4:****Reading**

- Colin G. Calloway, *The Victory with No Name*, pp. 129-164.

W, Dec. 6: Make-up and Review**FINAL EXAM:** Monday, December 18, 10:30 AM to 1:15 PM