

History 618: **THE AGE OF JACKSON, 1815-1854**
Fall 2017

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This course surveys a period of intense change in American social, political, religious, and economic life. We will focus both on major events and important topics to try to understand the forces which shaped this period. Course objectives are to foster a greater understanding of this period, to survey past and present interpretations of it, and to further students' analytical and writing abilities. Students should attend regularly, as class participation is important.

In addition to the take home midterm and final, students will be expected to fulfill two other activities. One of these is to take leadership of discussion for the first 20-30 minutes of class. One or two students will lead the discussion – having each first emailed by 10 pm the preceding Sunday evening to the class a minimum of five important questions from to be considered.

Students will also give an in-class report on a book linked to the readings (see below for suggestions). This is a way to extend the class's collective knowledge of historiography. An analytical book review of 6 to 9 double-spaced, typed pages that compares the week's assigned reading with the chosen book will be due one week after the oral report. Ph.D. students will write a longer review that contrasts three books with the assigned reading. A penalty of 1/2 letter grade per day will be assessed on late papers unless arrangements have been made with the instructor.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703 993 2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Students who have any questions or difficulties with the class materials should drop by during office hours or schedule an appointment.

Academic integrity is a part of the George Mason honor code. Students may neither give nor receive help during examinations. A student must have done all of the research and writing on a paper to which her/his name is signed. Students who use the words of others must place the borrowed language in quotation marks or a block quotation and indicate the source in a footnote or endnote. Plagiarism is defined in the GMU

honor code as “presenting as one’s own, the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.” Honor violations will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity and the Honor Committee for adjudication; and penalties can be severe.

Grades will be based on the following criteria:

midterm exam (take home):	25%
analytic book review	25%
final exam:	35%
class participation (inc. discussion leadership & oral report)	15%

Required readings:

(various articles available on JSTOR and paperback books available from campus bookstore)

Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*

Robert Pierce Forbes, *The Missouri Compromise and Its Aftermath: Slavery and the Meaning of America.*

Kerry Trask, *Black Hawk: The Battle for the Heart of America*

Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore*

Alasdair Roberts, *America's First Great Depression: Economic Crisis and Political Disorder after the Panic of 1837*

Jonathan Earle, *Jacksonian Antislavery and the Politics of Free Soil, 1824-1854.*

Karen V. Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*

Mary Kelley, *Learning to Stand and Speak: Women, Education, and Public Life in America's Republic*

Eric Foner, *Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad*

Carol Faulkner. *Lucretia Mott's Heresy: Abolition and Women's Rights in Nineteenth-Century America*

Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom*

Aug. 28 Introduction to Course. The End of the First Party System

Sept. 4 LABOR DAY – NO CLASS
5 LAST DAY TO ADD CLASS

11 The Age of Jackson?: Major Overviews. Read Howe, chs. 1-6, and Daniel Feller, “The Market Revolution Ate My Homework,” *Reviews in American History*, 25 (Sept.1997), 408-15.

- 18 The Missouri Compromise. Read Forbes.
Possibilities for Review: Drew McCoy, *Last of the Fathers*;
 Matthew Mason, *Slavery and Politics in the Early American Republic*; William W. Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*
- 25 Jacksonian Politics and Native Americans. Read Trask; Howe, chs. 7-9
Possibilities for review: Robbie Ethridge, *Creek Country*;
 Michael Green, *The Politics of Indian Removal*; Stephen. Warren, *The Shawnees and Their Neighbors*
- Sept. 29 **LAST DAY TO DROP CLASS**
- Oct. 2 The Depression of 1837. Read Roberts, and Howe, ch. 10-11.
Possibilities for Review: Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Bank War*; Jessica Lepler, *The Many Panics of 1837*; Stephen Mihm, *A Nation of Counterfeiters*
- Oct. 10 (Tuesday meeting) Jacksonian Politics and Antislavery Politics. Read Earle; Howe, chs. 12, 13
Possibilities for Review: Leonard L. Richards, *Life and Times of Congressman John Quincy Adams* Richard Sewell, *Ballots for Freedom*; Edward Widmer, *Young America*
- Oct. 16 Industrialization and Jacksonian Workers. Read Rockman; Howe, ch. 14-15.
Possibilities for Review: Edward Pessen, *Most Uncommon Jacksonians*; Bruce Laurie, *The Working People of Philadelphia*; Peter Way, *Common Labor*; Carol Sheriff, *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress*. **RECEIVE TAKE HOME MIDTERM**
- Oct. 23 **NO CLASS. TURN IN MIDTERM EXAM**
 30 Women, Education, and Intellectual Life. Read Kelley; Howe, ch. 16
Possibilities for Review: Patricia Cline Cohen, *The Murder of Helen Jewett*; Thomas Dublin, *Transforming Women's Work* Anne C. Rose, *Transcendentalism as a Social Movement*
- Nov. 6 Women and Community. Read Hansen.
Possibilities for Review. Hal Barron, *Those Who Stayed Behind*; Catherine Kelly, *In the New England Fashion*; John Mack Faragher, *Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie*

Nov. 13 Texas and the Mexican American War. Read Howe, chs. 17-20 and finale

Possibilities for Review: Timothy J. Henderson, *A Glorious Defeat: Mexico and Its War with the United States*; Richard Winders, *Mr. Polk's Army*; Amy Greenberg, *A Wicked War*

Nov. 20 The Compromise of 1850 and African Americans Communities. Read Foner.

Possibilities for Review: Holman Hamilton, *Prologue to Conflict*; Stephen A. Vincent, *Southern Seed, Northern Soil: African-American Farm Communities*; Thomas Buchanan, *Black Life on the Mississippi*

Nov. 27 Antislavery, Reform, and Women. Read Faulkner, chs. 1-10 and epilogue.

Possibilities for Review: Judith Wellman, *The Road to Seneca Falls*; Lori Ginzberg, *Untidy Origins*; Elizabeth Varon, *We Mean to be Counted*; Julie Roy Jeffrey, *The Great Silent Army of Abolitionism*; Elizabeth Varon, *Disunion*

Dec 4 Expansion and a Fracturing America. Read Johnson, Intro.-ch. 11

Possibilities for Review: Matthew Karp, *This Vast Southern Empire*; Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld* Manisha Sinha, *The Counterrevolution of Slavery*
RECEIVE TAKE HOME FINAL.

18 TURN IN TAKE HOME FINAL