

George Mason University
Department of History and Art History

Fall 2018
Tuesday, 7:20-10:00 PM
Room: Research Hall, 201
Office Hours: M 11-12, T 5-6

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HISTORY 613: COLONIAL AMERICA

This course provides a graduate-level introduction to the history and historiography of North America from roughly the beginnings of European colonization to the beginnings of the American Revolution. We will explore the changing parameters and definitions of the field, including its most recent incarnation as #VastEarlyAmerica, and we will consider the various themes of encounter, exchange, empire, conflict, community, and consolidation that historians have developed to make sense of this complex, multiethnic, and transnational world. The British colonies will remain the main (though not exclusive) focus, but we will explore ways of understanding those colonies within larger continental, Atlantic, and world-historical frameworks.

REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation:

Active and informed participation in discussion is **the** central element of the course. Our meetings will consist entirely of discussion of the assigned readings, so it is essential that you do the reading (both the main text and any required supplemental reading) and come prepared to discuss it. You can use the questions on the “Helpful questions” document (in the “Assignments” section of the Blackboard site) as a way to get started on thinking through the reading.

Discussion serves as a way of exploring and thinking about historical works and questions that gives us a more complete and complex understanding than any single point of view can provide. Classes are more enjoyable and intellectually rewarding for everyone when as many people as possible contribute. Participating in scholarly discussions of this type is a skill in and of itself, and working on this skill is part of the purpose of the course. Thus, regular, positive contributions to discussion are a baseline expectation for the class.

“Weekly” Reaction Papers:

You must write eight (8) one- to two-page reaction papers on the weekly reading. The particular weeks are up to you and don’t need to be decided in advance, just make sure you do eight. Also note that an additional week will be taken up by your book review essay (see below)—you may not submit a reaction paper for that week.

The reaction papers should have **one paragraph summarizing the book’s argument** and project as succinctly as possible without sacrificing accuracy and important nuances, and **another paragraph on your critical response** to this argument/project and its

execution in the book (in this case “critical” does not necessarily mean negative, but rather engaged and analytical). Your response should focus on **substantive intellectual and interpretive issues** rather than matters that are primarily aesthetic or formal (e.g., there were too many big words, it was boring, you felt maps would have been useful, or you would have preferred footnotes to endnotes). These papers are due in class on the day we discuss the reading.

Book Review Essay:

On a week of your own choosing, you must write a six- to seven-page (6-7) analysis of the reading for that week. This should not be a chapter-by-chapter summary of the main book’s contents, but rather a higher-level analysis of the book’s argument and method, exploring the key evidence and themes that support and develop that argument. You should also consider the contrast or complement offered to the main book’s argument and themes by both of the supplementary readings for that week. This paper is due in class on the day we discuss the reading.

Final Paper:

There are four options for the longer final paper topic—the first option is the default option that is most widely useful for most students. The other options are more specialized and geared towards students in particular situations in which those assignments may be more useful to their academic and intellectual progress.

Option One: Set questions on course readings. I will lay out two or three questions about major themes in the course, and you can write an extended (12-15 page) essay in response to one of them, drawing on a wide sampling of the course readings. This is the default option, and the one that is usually the most useful for M.A. students seeking to synthesize what they have learned this semester and for Ph.D. students preparing for exams.

Option Two: Your own thematic analysis of course readings. You may select a particular theme from the course that interests you, and write a 12-15 page essay on that theme, drawing on *at least* four of the books we read and *at least* four of the supplementary readings. Consult with me if you wish to pursue this option.

Option Three: Historiography paper. If you have a specific interest in a particular topic in colonial American history, you may elect to write a paper exploring the existing literature on that topic, laying out the major works and interpretations, existing debates, underexplored or neglected areas, and possible future directions for research. This option requires substantial extra reading, so it is most appropriate for those who would particularly benefit from building this kind of deep background—those intending to do research on the topic, or those for whom specific historiographical and bibliographic knowledge is important. The ideal length of these papers will vary depending on the nature of the topic explored, but 15 pages should be considered a realistic minimum. Consult with me if you wish to pursue this option.

Option Four: Primary source research paper. Students with a research agenda in early American history may do a medium-length, focused primary source research paper as the final paper for this course. Consult with me if you want to pursue this option.

The final paper is due during exam week, on a date to be determined during the semester.

Grading:

Reaction Papers: 20%

Book Review: 20%

Final Paper: 30%

Class Participation: 30%

READINGS

Structure of Weekly Readings:

Each week (except the first week), one book will serve as the core reading that we all will read. There will also be a selection of supplementary readings of chapter or article length that relate to some aspect of the core reading. You will be required to read one (1) of these supplementary readings each week in addition to the core reading, and, along with others who have read the same supplementary material, to explain it to the rest of the class and bring it into the discussion when relevant.

Core Reading:

The following books are required reading for everyone:

- Anishanslin, Zara. *Portrait of a Woman in Silk: Hidden Histories of the British Atlantic World*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016.
- Brekus, Catherine A. *Sarah Osborn's World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013.
- Edelson, S. Max. *Plantation Enterprise in Colonial South Carolina*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Goetz, Rebecca Anne. *The Baptism of Early Virginia: How Christianity Created Race*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012.
- Greer, Allan. *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Hall, David D. *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989.
- Lipman, Andrew. *The Saltwater Frontier: Indians and the Contest for the American Coast*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015.
- McConville, Brendan. *The King's Three Faces: The Rise & Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.
- Merrell, James H. *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1999.
- Morgan, Jennifer. *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- O'Malley, Gregory E. *Final Passages: The Intercolonial Slave Trade of British America, 1619-1807*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014.
- Reséndez, Andrés. *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016.
- White, Sam. *A Cold Welcome: The Little Ice Age and Europe's Encounter with North America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.

Recommended/Optional Background Reading

If you are not generally familiar with the history, chronology, and major events of the colonial era, the following book provides a good overview and reference:

- Taylor, Alan. *American Colonies: The Settling of North America*. New York: Penguin Books, 2001.

Accessing Required Supplementary Readings:

The supplementary readings are usually journal articles or chapters in edited collections of essays. I will provide links to these readings in the “Supplementary Readings” section of the class Blackboard site.

You can also find the journal articles (and some chapters) by visiting the GMU Library’s homepage (library.gmu.edu) and using the main search box. For journal articles, a combination of the author’s last name and a distinctive combination of words from the title usually works to locate the article. If that fails, you can use the “Journals” search button to locate the journal and GMU’s online access options, and then use the citation information on the syllabus to locate the appropriate volume and issue.

Recommended Resources

If you do not already have these, the following books are vital companions to graduate study in History (and other fields):

- Strunk, William, Jr. and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York, Longman Publishers, 1999. (Avoid other editions or alleged “updates” and repackagings that do not list E.B. White as a coauthor. Electronic editions in particular are often versions of the original, non-updated 1918 Strunk version without any of White’s contributions—that version is extremely dated and lacks the stylistic elegance of White’s version, but it frequently gets repackaged because it is in the public domain. And Amazon is not always good about making it clear exactly what edition you are getting via Kindle, which compounds the problem. Just get the physical book; it remains indispensable.)
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 9th ed. Edited by Wayne C. Booth, et al. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2018. (The specific edition does not matter so much for this one—more recent editions are better on using and citing electronic resources, but that’s about it. Really, I’m recommending this for Turabian’s contributions on Chicago-style citation and formatting rather than Booth’s material on research, which is ok but more geared towards general social science than history in particular.)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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.***

For details on how the honor system at GMU works, consult the university catalog (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>). 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 4

Final drop deadline (with tuition penalty): Sunday, September 9

Withdrawal period: Monday, September 1 to Sunday, 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.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

August 28: Introduction: Who, What, When, and Where?

Jack P. Greene and J. R. Pole, "Reconstructing British-American Colonial History: An Introduction," in *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Age*, ed. Jack P. Green and J. R. Pole (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 1-17.

Alan Taylor, "Squaring the Circles: The Reach of Colonial America," in *American History Now*, ed. Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2011), 3-23.

Karin Wulf, "No Boundaries? New Terrain in Colonial American History," *OAH Magazine of History* 25:1 (January 2011): 7-12.

Karin Wulf, "For 2016, Appreciating #VastEarlyAmerica," *Uncommon Sense* (blog), Omohundro Institute for Early American History and Culture, January 4, 2016. <https://blog.oieahc.wm.edu/for-2016-appreciating-vastearlyamerica/>. (If you are on Twitter, also explore the hashtag a little.)

Josh Piker, "Getting Lost," *Uncommon Sense* (blog), Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, January 21, 2016. <https://blog.oieahc.wm.edu/getting-lost/>.

Jessica Choppin Roney, "Rethinking the 'Colonial' in Colonial America," *The Panorama* (blog), *Journal of the Early Republic*, May 22, 2018, <http://thepanorama.shear.org/2018/05/22/rethinking-the-colonial-in-colonial-america/>.

September 4: Europeans Confront North America

Sam White, *A Cold Welcome: The Little Ice Age and Europe's Encounter with North America*.

Supplementary Readings

Peter C. Mancall, "The Raw and the Cold: Five English Sailors in Sixteenth-Century Nunavut," *William and Mary Quarterly* 70:1 (January 2013): 3-40.

W. Jeffrey Bolster, "Putting the Ocean in Atlantic History: Maritime Communities and Marine Ecology in the Northwest Atlantic, 1500-1800," *American Historical Review* 113:1 (February 2008): 19-47.

September 11: Indian Slavery and the Persistence of Colonial America

Andrés Reséndez, *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America*.

Supplementary Readings

Juliana Barr, "From Captives to Slaves: Commodifying Indian Women in the Borderlands," *Journal of American History* 92:1 (June 2005): 19-46.

Brett Rushforth, "A Little Flesh We Offer You: The Origins of Indian Slavery in New France," *William and Mary Quarterly* 60:4 (October 2003): 777-808.

September 18: Culture, Christianity, and Conversion

Alan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catharine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits*.

Supplementary Readings

Daniel K. Richter, "War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience," *William and Mary Quarterly* 40:4 (October 1983): 528-559.

Tracy Neal Leavelle, "'Bad Things' and 'Good Hearts': Mediation, Meaning, and the Language of Illinois Christianity," *Church History* 76:2 (June 2007): 363-394.

September 25: Dutch, English, and Indians in the Coastal Borderlands

Andrew Lipman, *The Saltwater Frontier: Indians and the Contest for the American Coast*.

Supplementary Readings

Katherine A. Grandjean, "New World Tempests: Environment, Scarcity, and the Coming of the Pequot War," *William and Mary Quarterly* 68:1 (January 2011): 75-100.

Emerson W. Baker and John G. Reid, "Amerindian Power in the Early Modern Northeast: A Reappraisal," *William and Mary Quarterly* 61:1 (January 2004): 77-106.

October 2: English Religion and Culture in Seventeenth-Century New England

David D. Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England*.

Supplementary Readings

Michael P. Winship, "Were There Any Puritans in New England?" *New England Quarterly* 74:1 (March 2001): 118-138.

Marilyn J. Westerkamp, "Puritan Patriarchy and the Problem of Revelation," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23:3 (Winter 1993): 571-595.

October 9: No class—Monday classes meet on Tuesday, Tuesday classes canceled due to Fall Break holiday

October 16: Religion and Race in Seventeenth-Century Virginia

Rebecca Anne Goetz, *The Baptism of Early Virginia: How Christianity Created Race*.

Supplementary Readings

John C. Coombs, "The Phases of Conversion: A New Chronology for the Rise of Slavery in Early Virginia," *William and Mary Quarterly* 68:3 (July 2011): 332-360.

Edward B. Rugemer, "The Development of Mastery and Race in the Comprehensive Slave Codes of the Greater Caribbean during the Seventeenth Century," *William and Mary Quarterly* 70:3 (July 2013): 429-458.

October 23: Gender and Race in the Early Modern Atlantic

Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*.

Supplementary Reading

Sasha Turner, "The Nameless and the Forgotten: Maternal Grief, Sacred Protection, and the Archive of Slavery," *Slavery & Abolition* 38:2 (April 2017): 232-250.

Wendy Anne Warren, "The Cause of Her Grief: The Rape of a Slave in Early New England," *Journal of American History* 93:4 (March 2007): 1031-1049.

October 30: The Slave Trade and the Making of the Colonial World

O'Malley, Gregory E. *Final Passages: The Intercolonial Slave Trade of British America, 1619-1807*.

Supplementary Readings

William A. Pettigrew, "Free to Enslave: Politics and the Escalation of Britain's Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1688-1714," *William and Mary Quarterly* 64:1 (January 2006): 3-38.

Ty M. Reese, "'Eating' Luxury: Fante Middlemen, British Goods, and Changing Dependencies on the Gold Coast, 1750-1821," *William and Mary Quarterly* 66:4 (October 2009): 851-872.

November 6: Plantation Society in the Lowcountry

S. Max Edelson, *Plantation Enterprise in Colonial South Carolina*.

Supplementary Readings

David Armitage, "John Locke, Carolina, and the 'Two Treatises of Government,'" *Political Theory* 32:5 (October 2004): 602-627.

Chris Evans, "The Plantation Hoe: The Rise and Fall of an Atlantic Commodity, 1650-1850," *William and Mary Quarterly* 69:1 (January 2012): 71-100.

November 13: The Consumer Revolution & the World of Goods

Zara Anishanslin, *Portrait of a Woman in Silk: Hidden Histories of the British Atlantic World*.

Supplementary Readings

T. H. Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776," *Journal of British Studies* 25:4 (October 1986): 467-499.

Cathy Matson, "Putting the *Lydia* to Sea: The Material Economy of Shipping in Colonial Philadelphia," *William and Mary Quarterly* 74:2 (April 2017): 303-332.

November 20: Enlightenment and Awakening

Catherine A. Brekus, *Sarah Osborn's World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America*.

Supplementary Readings

Frank Lambert, "Pedlar in Divinity: George Whitefield and the Great Awakening, 1737-1745," *Journal of American History* 77:3 (December 1990): 812-837.

Douglas L. Winiarski, "Souls Filled with Ravishing Transport: Heavenly Visions and the Radical Awakening in New England," *William and Mary Quarterly* 61:1 (January 2004): 3-46.

November 27: Continental Fractures: The Limits of Intercultural Diplomacy in Eastern North America

James H. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier*.

Supplementary Readings

Jane T. Merritt, "Dreaming of the Savior's Blood: Moravians and the Indian Great Awakening in Pennsylvania," *William and Mary Quarterly* 54:4 (October 1997): 723-746.

Joshua Piker, "Lying Together: The Imperial Implications of Cross-Cultural Untruths," *American Historical Review* 116:4 (October 2011): 964-986.

December 4: Transatlantic Fractures: Loving and Hating the King

Brendan McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776*.

Supplementary Readings

T. H. Breen, "Ideology and Nationalism on the Eve of the American Revolution: Revisions Once More in Need of Revising," *Journal of American History* 84:1 (June 1997): 13-39.

Daniel Robinson, "Giving Peace to Europe: European Geopolitics, Colonial Political Culture, and the Hanoverian Monarchy in British North America, ca. 1740-63," *William and Mary Quarterly* 73:2 (April 2016): 291-332.