

History 797—Fall 2020
Research Seminar/ Age of Atlantic Revolutions (c. 1750s-1820s)
Dr. Zaggarri

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Office hours: Wednesdays 6:00-7:00pm and by appointment

This course will require students to write an article-length (20-25 page) research paper based on primary sources and the relevant secondary literature in the field. Students will work on a subject of their choice, developed in consultation with the instructor. The period is broadly construed to encompass the entire era from the 1750s through the 1820s. In addition to the American Revolution, topics may also cover issues related to the French Revolution, the Haitian Revolution, the Irish Rebellion of 1798, or the Wars for Independence in Latin America. Students should consider topics not only in the fields of political or military history, but those that focus on women, Native Americans, slavery, religion, material culture, or transatlantic history. Due to the possibility of shutdowns because of Covid-19, students would be prudent to choose topics that can be done utilizing online primary source databases. PLEASE NOTE THAT CLASS SESSIONS MAY MOVE ONLINE AT SOME POINT THIS SEMESTER DUE TO COVID-19.

Before the first class, students should refresh their historical knowledge of early American history by reading a brief overview, such as Gordon Wood’s *The American Revolution*, or *The American Yawp* (online and free), Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 at www.americanyawp.com. Take a look the attached documents, “Finding a Topic” and “Resources for Doing Research in Early American History/Atlantic Revolutions.” Begin to identify a topic for your paper.

Date: Aug. 26
Topic: Thinking about Research for the Age of Atlantic Revolutions
Reading: Thomas Bender, “A Season of Revolutions: The United States, France, and Haiti” (Blackboard)
Listening: Listen to Ben Franklin's World Podcast Episode #066, Simon P. Newman, “How Historians Find their Research Topics,” AND Episode #165, “The Age of Revolutions” (ONLY first 20 minutes is required, remainder is optional), both at www.benfranklinworld.com.

Sept. 2 **Historiography/Finding Good Secondary Sources**
Reading: “How to Gut a Book” (Blackboard); Rosemarie Zaggarri, “Scholarship on the American Revolution since *The Birth of the Republic*” (Blackboard); Karin Wulf, “‘Vast Early America’: Three simple words for a complex reality” (Blackboard)

Writing: In the Fenwick Library catalogue, take a look at the online Table of Contents for:

Revolutionary Black Roots of Slavery's Abolition in Massachusetts," *New England Quarterly* 87:1 (March 2014), 99-131 (JSTOR).

Writing: Read all three articles. Each person will be assigned one article on which to write. Write one paragraph (no more than 250 words) explaining what kind of methodology (social, political, intellectual) the historian uses to examine their topic. Explain how the major genre(s) of primary sources/evidence used by the historian determines the range of issues explored. Give specific examples to support your points.

Sept. 30

The So-What? Question

Reading: Michael A. McDonnell, "Class War? Class Struggles during the American Revolution in Virginia," *William & Mary Quarterly* 63: (2006), 305-44 (JSTOR); Ultan Gillen, "Constructing Democratic Thought in Ireland in the Age of Revolution, 1775-1800" (Blackboard); Maya Jasanoff, "Revolutionary Exiles: The American Loyalist and French Émigré Diasporas" (Blackboard)

Writing: Read all three articles. Each person will be assigned one article on which to write. Write one paragraph (no more than 250 words) that restates the author's major thesis and explains the author's major historical or historiographical contribution. In other words, how does the author answer the "So What" question? Give specific examples to support your points.

Oct. 7

Individual meetings

Writing: Submit an Annotated Bibliography for your project. You must include at least ten scholarly books and three journal articles (with a strong preference for works published within the last 25-30 years). The Bibliography should have three sections: Representative Primary Sources; Secondary Source Books (8-10 books); Scholarly Articles (at least three). For each citation, briefly discuss (in two to three sentences) the source's major focus and/or themes and/or thesis. Footnotes and bibliography should conform to the style used in the *Chicago Manual of Style*. A quick guide to this format is available online at http://chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html.

Oct. 14

Anatomy of a Research Paper

Writing: Choose one of the previous articles we have read on either 9/23 or 9/30. Think about the historical article as a distinctive *genre* of writing, possessing a recognizable structure and particular scholarly conventions. Print out the article. In the margins of the article, identify different features of the article (such as introduction, historiography, theoretical framework, discussion of primary sources, body of the essay, conclusion, addressing the so-what question). Also note the different kinds of evidence the author uses; how the author qualifies or modulates his claims; and how the author makes transitions from one part of the essay to the next. **Be prepared to turn in your annotated copy of the essay.**

Oct. 21

Writing Strategies and Mechanics/ Preparing a Critique

Reading: Handouts

Oct. 28

Individual Meetings

Writing: For your meeting with me, bring your draft Introduction (approx. 3-4 pages), consisting of your discussion of the historical background and historiographical context for your paper, and thesis statement. Also, do a BRIEF outline (major headings only).

Nov. 4

Progress Reports

Oral Presentation: Be prepared to provide a brief, informal (no more than 5 minutes) oral summary of your paper. Discuss your research process to date. Describe how your topic has evolved over time, your major research questions, and the major genres/bodies of primary sources that you are using. Be prepared to answer questions.

Nov. 11

Papers DUE--by 7:00 p.m.

You should not consider this a “draft”; it is the “first version” of the paper. It should be as complete and polished as possible and include proper footnote citations and bibliography.

Submit one copy to me at rzagarri@gmu.edu and another copy to your reviewer, via email. In addition, send a one-paragraph abstract of your paper to all class members.

Nov. 18

Critiques/Discussion of the Papers

Writing: Carefully read the paper assigned to you. Prepare a 1-to-2 page critique, keeping in mind the conventions of peer review. Bring two hard copies to class, one for the author and one for me. Prepare a short (no more than three minutes) oral presentation in which you discuss the paper's thesis, evidence, and conclusions. Discuss one major area in need of improvement and one major strength of the paper. **In addition**, read the abstracts sent to you by other class members. Think of salient questions for the authors.

Nov. 25

THANKSGIVING BREAK (no class)

Dec. 2

Assessing the Research Process (online)

Oral Presentation: Be prepared to state your paper's thesis and conclusions in a few sentences. Discuss what research strategies you found to be most useful and what was most challenging in the research process. What advice would you give to other researchers undertaking a project in early American/Atlantic Revolutions history?

FINAL PAPERS DUE: Wednesday, Dec. 9 by 5:00 pm. Papers should be sent to me at rzagarri@gmu.edu.

Papers should be approx. 20-25 pages, plus notes (either footnotes or endnotes) and bibliography. Citations should conform to the style used in the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

A quick guide to this format is available online at http://chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html.

Grading:

Oral presentations, class participation:	20%
Written work (including outlines, progress reports, drafts, first and last versions of research paper):	80%

Criteria for evaluating Research Papers:

- *Historiography: relates work to existing secondary literature in the field
- *Range and depth of research: uses primary and secondary sources effectively; establishes historical context
- *Analysis: states a clear thesis and uses strong evidence to support assertions
- *Writing: clear and grammatical prose, logical organization of paper
- *Mechanics: uses accurate citation style for footnotes and bibliography
- *Answers the “So What?” question

DROP DEADLINE: The last day to drop a class without a tuition penalty is Sept. 8. If you drop by Sept. 15, there is a 50% tuition penalty. THE FINAL DROP DATE is Sept. 28, when there is no tuition refund.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS: Students who require academic accommodations should contact the Disability Resource Center at (703) 993-2474 who will then be in touch with me.

HONOR CODE

ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO ABIDE BY THE UNIVERSITY'S HONOR CODE. If you have concerns about the meaning of plagiarism, please talk with your instructor. Violations of the Honor Code will be brought before the GMU Honor Board for adjudication. For further information, see <http://gmu.edu/academics/catalog/9798/honorcod.html#code>.

FINDING A TOPIC

The purpose of this research paper is to explore a specific, **NARROWLY** defined topic relating to the era of Atlantic Revolutions, defined as the entire period from 1760-1820, using primary sources and the relevant secondary literature. Your interests may guide you in choosing a topic, but you **MUST** restrict the scope of your project in order to pursue a manageable topic, doable within one semester. In other words, you should not seek to answer a research question such as: "What were the causes of the American Revolution in Virginia?" but rather: "Why did certain elite planters in Fairfax County, Virginia, come to support the American Revolution between 1765 and 1776?" And then you need to figure out if the primary sources exist to answer your question .

FINDING AN ADEQUATE PRIMARY SOURCE BASE IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARD WRITING A GOOD RESEARCH PAPER. These sources can include: newspapers, pamphlets, letters and correspondence, magazines and periodicals, legislative records, laws, novels and poetry, petitions, court records, church records, political cartoons, maps, wills, etc. These sources may be available through online databases, in printed volumes, or at particular libraries and archives (Library of Congress, Fairfax County Courthouse, Society of the Cincinnati, Virginia Historical Society, Massachusetts Historical Society, etc. etc.). You can find many primary source databases for early American history in the Fenwick Library online catalogue reference section at: <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/early-america>.

Here are some **EXAMPLES** of good topics. You may choose one of these topics, modify any of these topics, or find a topic of your own choosing, in consultation with me.

1. Use the manuscript collections at the Society of the Cincinnati Library in Washington, DC to examine George Washington's role in the creation of the Society. Or discuss the many criticisms of the Society made by Americans such as Thomas Jefferson and Mercy Otis Warren.
2. Go to the Virginia Room at the Fairfax Library to look at materials related to the Fairfax Resolves passed prior to the American Revolution.
3. Use manuscripts at Holy Trinity Church in Washington, DC to study the relationship between Catholics and slavery during the Revolutionary era.
4. Use the online Papers of the War Department from the 1780s and 1790s to examine American policies toward Native Americans immediately after the American Revolution,
5. Use the online version of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* newspaper to understand the experiences of indentured servants during the American Revolution.

6. Use printed collections and the online *Documentary History of the Ratification of the US Constitution* to study the Virginia ratifying convention. Explain why some Virginians opposed the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.
7. Use pamphlets available online from the Early American Imprint Series (Evans) to understand why people like Andrew Oliver, Samuel Seabury, and Thomas Hutchinson opposed the American Revolution.
8. Using their own writings, compare and contrast the experience of women such as Mercy Otis Warren, Judith Sargent Murray, Esther deBerdt Reed, and/or Abigail Adams during the American Revolution. Contrast their experience with that of Quaker, and suspected loyalist, Elizabeth Drinker.
9. Look at Broad­sides available in American Memory collection online through the Library of Congress to understand the importance of boycotts against Britain prior to the American Revolution. What was the role of the material culture in revolutionary resistance movement?
10. Look at the American Periodicals Series online to examine connection between the American Revolution and either the Haitian Revolution or the French Revolution.
11. Examine runaway slave advertisements in the *Geography of Virginia* online database and/or the digital North Carolina collection of Runaway Slave Advertisements to explore the conditions of slavery and/or impact of the American Revolution on enslaved people.
12. Use the printed papers of General Nathanael Greene and the online Papers of George Washington to explore the relationship between Washington and Greene.
13. Look at the digital collection of the letters of John and Abigail Adams online through the Massachusetts Historical Society to understand the effects of the American Revolution on their marriage and family life. .
14. Use newspapers on Historical Newspapers database to trace responses from other colonies outside of Massachusetts to the Boston Massacre or Boston Tea Party.
15. Use the online Peter Force/American Archives collection to examine the response of colonial legislatures to British policies from 1764-1776.
16. Using Early American newspapers and the American Periodical Series, study the circulation, and reception, of Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* (written in response to the French Revolution) in the United States during the 1790s.
17. Using Caribbean newspapers, study the impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Caribbean islands outside of Haiti. A knowledge of Spanish and/or French would be helpful for this topic.
18. Using the American Periodical series, look at the impact of Olympe de Gouges and other women of the French Revolution on American discourse about women's rights in the 1790s in the US.
19. Using the online Papers of the War Department, examine trade between the federal government and Native Americans during the Washington Administration.
20. Drawing on pamphlets in the online ECCO (Eighteenth Century Collections Online) series, discuss British responses to American independence in 1776-1778.

Resources for Doing Research in Early American History/Atlantic Revolutions

Local Physical Archives (selected examples)

Library of Congress—Manuscript Room, Newspaper Reading Room
Fairfax County Courthouse
Falls Church (Episcopal)
Society of the Cincinnati (DC)
Washington, DC, Historical Society
Maryland Historical Society (Baltimore)

Search Engines for Archival Sources

Archiv Grid
Archive Finder

Printed Primary Sources (scattered selected examples)

--Bernard Bailyn, ed., *Pamphlets of the American Revolution*, Vol. 1: 1750-1765 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965).
--Samuel Curwen, *Journal and letters of the late Samuel Curwen judge of admiralty, etc., an American refugee in England, from 1775 to 1784, comprising remarks on the prominent men and measures of that period : to which are added, biographical notices of many American loyalists and other eminent persons* (1842).
--Dennis Conrad, ed., *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, 13 vols. (Chapel Hill, NC: Rhode Island History Society, 1976-2005).
--Philip S. Foner, ed., *The Democratic-Republican Societies, 1790-1800: A Documentary Source of Constitutions, Declarations, Addresses, Resolutions, and Toasts* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing, 1977)
--Graham Russell Hodges, ed., *Black Loyalist Directory: African-Americans in Exile after the American Revolution* (NY: Garland Publishing Co., 1996).
--John Rodehamel, ed., *The American Revolution: Writings from the War of Independence* (NY: Library of America, 2001).
--Robert Rutland, ed., *Papers of George Mason, 1725-1792* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1970).
--John W. Thornton, ed., *The Pulpit of the American Revolution, or Political Sermons of the Period of 1776* (Boston: Gould & Lincoln, 1860).
-- *Naval History of the American Revolution*, 12 vols. (Washington, DC: Naval History Division, 1964-2005).

Fenwick Library—Selected Online Databases of Primary Sources for Early American History

America's Historical Imprints (material including pamphlets, broadsides,

sermons, orations, books, laws published in the North American British colonies/USA from 1690s to 1820—no newspapers or magazines)

American Periodicals (magazines and journals)

Caribbean Newspapers

Early American Newspapers

Early American Newspapers: Virginia

Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO) (books and pamphlets published in 18th-century Britain)

Colonial America (various sources from 1606-1822)

Founders Online (includes letters of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and others—PLEASE NOTE that Fenwick Library has versions of older, more complete editions in hard copy in the stacks.)

Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution (Philadelphia Convention of 1787, state ratifying conventions, along with related newspapers, pamphlets, and correspondence)

Papers of Dolley Madison (in *American Founding Papers* database)

Indian Histories and Cultures (treaties, correspondence, maps)

Letters of Eliza Pickney and Harriot Pickney Horry (elite, white, slaveholding South Carolina women; educated and effective in business matters)

War of 1812: Diplomacy on the High Seas (incl. documents concerning privateering, impressment)

Search Engines for Secondary Sources at Fenwick

AMERICA HISTORY AND LIFE

JSTOR

GoogleScholar

Google Books

WORLDCAT

Other Online Repositories for primary and secondary sources

Hathi Trust

Digital Public Library of America

Library of Congress

***Selected Repositories with Major Online Primary Source Databases
for Research in Early American History/Atlantic Revolutions***

(Note: This is just a small sample of the vast array of the primary source documents that have been digitized and made available online. If you have a particular area of interest, do some googling and see if there are primary sources available at a relevant historical society, church, museum, local archives, historical site, library, etc.)

- American Archives/Peter Force Papers* (various local documents, Continental Congress materials, resolutions, petitions, letters, related to coming of independence and the American Revolution) (digital.lib.niu.edu)
- North Carolina Runaway Slave Advertisements* (from newspapers) (libdm1.uncg.edu)
- The Geography of Slavery In Virginia: Virginia Runaway Advertisements* (from newspapers) (www2.vcdh.virginia.edu)
- Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution* (revolution.chnm.org)
- Haiti and the Atlantic World* (esp. materials on Haitian Revolution) (haitidoi.com)
- Digital Paxton* (documents relating to Paxton boys' raid against PA Indians, 1763) (digitalpaxton.org)
- Colonial North America at Harvard Library* (esp. papers of merchants such as John Hancock and Frederick Tudor as well as material on the Boston Tea Party and colonial epidemics)(colonialnorthamerica.library.harvard.edu)
- Jesuit Relations* (esp. material on Catholicism and on Indians in New France) (moses.creighton.edu)
- Colonial Albany* (esp. Albany Sons of Liberty; relations with Native Americans)
- Mapping Early American Elections* (results of elections to Congress mapped for 1789-1825; reveals origins of political parties)(earlyamericanelections.org)
- Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* (includes slave ship names/dates/places of departure and arrival, and more) (slavevoyages.org)
- Massachusetts Historical Society* (masshist.org) includes:
- Adams Papers Digital Edition* (including Abigail Adams)
 - Coming of the American Revolution* (esp. Sons of Liberty, Boston Tea Party, Boston Massacre)
 - Correspondence of Mercy Otis Warren and Hannah Winthrop*
 - African Americans and the End of Slavery in Massachusetts* (including Phillis Wheatley materials)
- Huntington Library Digital Collections* (especially for military/soldier orderly books) (hdl.huntington.org)
- O, Say Can You See? Early Washington, DC, Law & Family* (DC Circuit court cases, including slave petitions for freedom and manumission cases) (earlywashingtondc.org)
- Papers of the War Department, 1784-1800* (including correspondence of Secretary of War Henry Knox and material relating to Native Americans)