

Dr. C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa

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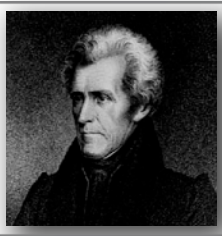
Office: 3175 Horizon Hall

Office Hours: By appt and virtual

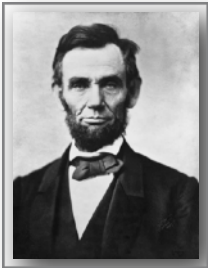


### Course Description

This course is a general survey of American history from the period of encounter through Reconstruction. Its goals are to provide an introduction to the major themes and historical developments of this era, as well as to introduce students to the methods and practices of historical research, analysis, and writing. Historians seek to understand and interpret change over time and as such, our goal in this course is to examine some of the most important changes and developments that occurred in the geographic region known today as the United States. Our survey begins with the moments of first encounter between Native populations and European explorers, with a particular focus on the ways cultural contact shaped indigenous and colonial societies. We will study the rise of slavery as a dominant system of labor in North America, the development of the political and economic philosophies that led to American independence. We will also examine social, cultural, and geographic expansions in the new nation, and the nineteenth-century political successes and failures that led to the American Civil War.



In an effort to study a vast amount of time and myriad events within this short semester we will allow several themes to guide our readings, lectures, and discussions. First, we will focus on environmental management and transformations, particularly the ways in which humans interacted with, shaped, and responded to the physical landscape throughout the period under examination. Second, we will consider the interactions, conflicts, and adaptations people had and made across cultures and societies. American history in this period must be understood as a product of the diverse peoples who shaped it. Third, we will examine the emergence and significance of American political and economic structures and philosophies. The history of these developments continues to shape United States society today and we must therefore seek to understand them fully. Finally, we will focus on the ways that people in the United States defined and articulated notions of freedom from the period before the Revolutionary War through the Civil War. Underlying all of these themes are the interpretive frameworks of race, class, and gender.



### Course Readings

There are five primary texts in this course. To supplement these texts we will read additional selections (documents, articles, etc.). The additional readings, as well as the primary texts, comprise an integral component to the course and should be read thoroughly.

- Paul S. Boyer, et al., *The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People*, Concise, Vol. 1, 7th (2012)
- Camilla Townsend, *Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma: An American Portrait* (2004)
- Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776)
- Linda Brent, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1973 [rep. 2009])
- Michael Shaara, *The Killer Angels: A Novel* (2004 [rep. 1974])



## Graded Work

Participation	50 points	Critical Response Essay	40 points
Attendance	50 points	Synthetic Essay	50 points
Quizzes/In-Class Writing	50 points	Take-Home Midterm Exam	100 points
Book Review Assignment	40 points	In-Class Final Exam	100 points
Discussion Leaders/Report	20 points	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500 points</b>

**\*\* - You must complete all graded work to pass the class.**

## Exams

The midterm exam will be a take-home exam. I will provide a writing prompt and ask that you answer the prompt as fully and completely as possible. Your response should be 2-3 pages in length. You will be required to cite your sources.

The final exam will follow an essay and short answer identification format. These questions are drawn from lecture materials and course readings. Students will receive study guides prior to the exam period.

## Written Assignments

### Book Review

Each student will write a book review (500 words max.), of our first major reading for the semester; Camilla Townsend's *Pocahontas and Powhatan Dilemma*.

The review should:

- 1) Identify the author of the work
- 2) Clearly and accurately summarize the author's thesis
- 3) Discuss the manner in which the author supports his/her argument (structure, organization, approach)
- 4) Cite specific examples of the evidence used to support his/her argument
- 5) Critique the argument. Is it compelling/logical/persuasive.

The review should be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, 1" margins, error-free.

### Critical Response Essay

Your essay must be 2-3 pages in length (500-750 words). It must also draw specific evidence and examples from the primary and secondary sources we've discussed. Details matter!! You must cite your sources. **DO NOT USE INTERNET SOURCES AT ALL!**

## WRITING PROMPT

The Constitution of the United States of America took effect in 1788 (it was written in 1787, ratification required only nine states), but its root influences can be seen much earlier. Using Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, the documents we read\*, and other course materials (lecture and textbook), create an argument that identifies and traces three significant ideas, events, and/or developments that influenced the drafters of the Constitution.

Some ideas, events, and developments to consider: Enlightenment thought, the social and economic tensions revealed in the American Revolution, examples of the failures of the Articles, the radicalism or conservatism of the Constitution, the connection between the English and U.S. Bill of Rights, and Anti-Federalists vs. Federalists.

\* - Documents: English Bill of Rights, Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, George Clinton's Attack on the Proposed Constitution, James Madison's Federalist No. 10, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights

### **Synthetic Essay**

Your essay must be 3-4 pages in length (750-1000 words). It must provide a clear, concise thesis statement and demonstrate a thorough knowledge of course materials. It must also draw specific evidence and examples from readings and lectures.

### **WRITING PROMPT**

In the period between 1800 and 1860 the North and the South developed in distinctive and divergent political, social, and economic ways. A free market economy, wage labor, and industrialization drove Northern society, while Southern society was shaped profoundly by the system of slavery. Create an argument that identifies and discusses three of the most significant events and/or developments that shaped Northern and Southern societies ("manufacturing" or "slavery" alone are not sufficient enough).

Some events and developments to consider: invention of the cotton gin (and interchangeable parts), the slave trade, the Second Great Awakening, moral reforms, abolition, the Transportation Revolution, the Commercial Revolution, the rise of the middle class, tariffs, the doctrine of nullification, the Mexican War, the Wilmot Proviso, the Compromise of 1850, the rise of the Democratic party. (There are many more possibilities)

Use lectures notes, the textbook, and *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* for evidence and source material. Do not use Internet sources or outside readings.

### **Discussion Leader Assignment**

In an effort to develop our presentation skills, each student will engage in a group project (3-4 students per group) to present one week's readings and lead the class in discussion. Each presentation/discussion should be approximately 20-30 minutes in length. Please remember that the rest of the class will have read the material, but your group should be the "experts" on the reading for the week! Each person in the group should plan to speak and each member will receive the same grade for the presentation portion. It is up to you to hold one another accountable and to divide the work evenly. Each individual student will also provide a short summary of the readings for the week. The summary should be 1 page (250 words) in length.

**Attendance and Participation**

The success of this course depends largely on the amount of effort you put into class preparation and in-class discussions. As such, I count attendance and participation as a significant portion of your grade (20%)!! I will take attendance in every class session. You may miss 2 classes (unexcused) with no penalty, after that, the next 2 will result in a 10-point penalty to attendance and participation each. If you miss more than 4 classes without college-recognized excuses, you will receive an “F” for the class. I expect you to attend class regularly, this policy WILL be strictly enforced.

Although I do not prefer to do so, I may conduct reading quizzes this semester. We will do reading quizzes only on the discussion days throughout the semester. These may or may not be announced in advance and will be worth 5 or 10 points each (for a total of 50 points). If you have an excused absence on a quiz day, you can make up the points, if you have an unexcused absence, you cannot.

**Grading Scale:**

500-470 = A	384-365 = C
469-450 = A-	364-350 = C-
449-435 = B+	349-335 = D+
434-415 = B	334-315 = D
414-400 = B-	314-300 = D-
399-385 = C+	299-000 = F

**A Note about Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense that can result in significant penalties. I will not tolerate it in any form. If you have any questions or concerns about plagiarism, please talk to me. Also, review the GMU Academic Honor Code.

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**Course Schedule**

**WEEK 1 - Introduction**

Aug. 22: Course Outline and Goals: Why and how should we study early American history?

Aug. 24: Pre-contact Cultures in North America, **Discussion Day**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S): DR. GP**

Readings: Boyer, 1-15; “You’ll Never Believe What Happened” in King, *The Truth about Stories*; “Americans without Tears” in Smith, *Everything You Know About Indians Is Wrong*

**WEEK 2 Contact and Encounter**

Aug. 29 : Europeans in Africa

Aug. 31: Arenas of Contact in North America, **Discussion Day**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Boyer, *Enduring Vision*, 16-37; Townsend, *Pocahontas*, 3-65; Document Prince Henry and the Slave Trade (1444)

### **WEEK 3 Comparing Colonies**

Sep. 5: Virginia and New England

Sep. 7: Virginia and New England, con't, **Discussion Day**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Boyer, *Enduring Vision*, 38-64; Townsend, *Pocahontas*, 66-123; Document Checklist for Virginia-Bound Colonists (1624)

### **WEEK 4 The Atlantic and the British Empire**

Sep. 12: The Consolidation of British North America

Sep. 14: Bacon's Rebellion and Slavery, **Discussion Day; BOOK REVIEW DUE**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Boyer, *Enduring Vision*, 65-89; Townsend, *Pocahontas* 124-178; Richard Godbeer, "William Byrd's Flourish": The Sexual Cosmos of a Southern Planter"

### **WEEK 5 Conflicts in the Colonies**

Sep. 19: Bacon's Rebellion and Slavery, con't

Sep. 21: The End of American Independence, 1676-1700, **Discussion Day**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Paine, *Common Sense*, 1st Half; Jill Lepore, "The Age of Paine" in *The Story of America* (2012)

### **WEEK 6 Colonial Life and Imperial Crises**

Sept. 26: Religion and Culture in 18th Century America

Sept. 28: Colonial Wars, Taxes, and Land: The Road to the Revolution;

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Boyer, *Enduring Vision*, 90-117; Paine, *Common Sense*, 2nd Half

### **WEEK 7 A New Nation**

Oct. 3: Creating the Constitution

Oct. 5: Creating the Constitution, con't, **Discussion Day, TAKE-HOME MIDTERM EXAM DISTRIBUTED**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Boyer, *Enduring Vision*, 118-192; Documents - Declaration of Independence, The United States Constitution and Bill of Rights; English Bill of Rights; George Clinton, An Attack on the Proposed Federal Constitution (1787) and James Madison, The Federalist, No. 10 (1787)

**WEEK 8 A New Nation, con't**

Oct 10: Federalists vs. Republicanism, **TAKE-HOME MIDTERM EXAM DUE**

Oct 12: The Revolution of 1800, **Discussion Day**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Brent, *Incidents*, 25-77

**WEEK 9 A Commercial Revolution**

Oct. 17: Cotton, Slavery, and the Industrial Revolution

Oct. 19: The Rise of the Middle Class, **Discussion Day; DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Boyer, *Enduring Vision*, 193-213; Brent, *Incidents*, 78-126

**WEEK 10 Andrew Jackson and Antebellum America**

Oct. 24: "Everybody loved him...except those who tried to kill him"

Oct. 26: The Second Great Awakening and the Age of Reform, **Discussion Day; CRITICAL RESPONSE ESSAY DUE**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Boyer, *Enduring Vision*, 214-254; Brent, *Incidents*, 126-172

**WEEK 11 Sectionalism and America's Geographic Expansion**

Oct. 31: Slavery and Abolition

Nov. 2: Manifest Destiny: Texas and the Mexican War, **Discussion Day**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Boyer, *Enduring Vision*, 255-277; Brent, *Incidents*, 172-215

**WEEK 12 The Crises of the 1850s**

Nov. 7: Immigration, Free Soil, and the Compromise of 1850

Nov. 9: Immigration, Free Soil, and the Compromise of 1850, **Discussion Day**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Boyer, *Enduring Vision*, 278-300; Shaara, *Killer Angels*, 3-85

**WEEK 13 The Crises of the 1850s, con't**

Nov. 14: Fire Eaters and Radicals: Political Realignment

Nov 16: Fire Eaters and Radicals: Political Realignment, **Discussion Day; SYNTHETIC ESSAY DUE**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Boyer, *Enduring Vision*, 301-323; Shaara, *Killer Angels*, 86-180; Document Charles Sumner, The Crime Against Kansas (1856)

## WEEK 14 - Secession and the Civil War

Nov. 21: Free Labor, Free Men: The Birth of the Republican Party

Nov. 23: **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

Readings: Boyer, *Enduring Vision*, 324-352; Shaara, *Killer Angels*, 181-260; Document Andrew Johnson, Plan of Reconstruction (1865)

## WEEK 15 The Civil War and Reconstruction

Nov. 28: Secession, the Civil War and Emancipation

Nov. 30: Reconstruction, **Discussion Day**

**DISCUSSION LEADER(S):**

Readings: Shaara, *Killer Angels*, 261-347

**FINAL EXAM: Thursday, December 7, 1:30-4:15pm**

**Disability Accommodations** If you have a learning or physical difference that may affect your academic work, you will need to furnish appropriate documentation to the Office of Disability Services. If you qualify for accommodation, the ODS staff will give you a form detailing appropriate accommodations for your instructor. In addition to providing your professors with the appropriate form, please take the initiative to discuss accommodation with them at the beginning of the semester and as needed during the term. Because of the range of learning differences, faculty members need to learn from you the most effective ways to assist you. If you have contacted the Office of Disability Services and are waiting to hear from a counselor, please tell me.

**A Note about Academic Integrity:** Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.