

HIS 710
Atlantic World Colloquium
Fall 2008

Th 6:30-9:20 pm
Room: Moore HRA 3209

Dr. Linda Rupert
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Office hours: Thursdays 3-5 pm and by appointment (Moore HRA 2106)

Synopsis

This course introduces students to the variety of approaches and themes that comprise one of the newest and fastest-growing fields in our discipline. The Atlantic World provides a useful conceptual and methodological framework in which to analyze the development of European empires, the creation of American colonial societies, and the emergence of trans-imperial networks in the early modern period (roughly 1400-1800) and beyond. We will read a selection of major works which have defined the field, identify different perspectives and approaches, and trace the development of the historiography. We will also consider the challenges involved in comparative, cross-cultural historical research, and the limits of an Atlantic approach.

Required Books (Please make sure you have the right edition. All are on reserve at the library.)

- Bailyn, Bernard. *Atlantic History: Concepts and Contours*. Harvard University Press, 2005.
- Canny, Nicholas, & Anthony Pagden, eds., *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World, 1500-1800*. Princeton University Press, 1987.
- Cañizares-Esguerra, Jorge, & Eric R. Seeman, eds., *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500-2000*. Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007.
- Crosby, Alfred. *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*. 30th anniversary edition. Praeger, 2003.
- Daniels, Christine, & Michael V. Kennedy, eds., *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the New World, 1500-1820*. Routledge, 2002.
- Davis, David Brion. *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World*. Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Egerton, Douglas, et al. *The Atlantic World*. Harlan Davidson, 2007.
- Games, Alison, & Adam Rothman. *Major Problems in Atlantic History*. Houghton Mifflin, 2008.
- Heywood, Linda M. & John K. Thornton. *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660*. Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Meinig, Donald. *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History. Volume I. Atlantic America*. Yale University Press, 1986.
- Parry, J. H. *The Age of Reconnaissance: Discovery, Exploration, and Settlement, 1450-1650*. Various editions.
- Sensback, Jon. *Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World*. Harvard University Press, 2006.

Course Goals and Objectives

By the end of the course students should have developed significant skill in:

- recognizing a variety of interpretive approaches to Atlantic history
- analyzing historical monographs for their conceptual framework, methodological approach, and use of sources
- tracing trends and developments in the historiography
- developing their own analytic abilities, both written and oral

Schedule of Classes and Readings

Unit 1: Defining the Atlantic World

Thursday, August 28: Games, "Atlantic History;" Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History;" AHA, "Conversation on Transnational History"

Thursday, September 4: Bailyn, *Atlantic History*; Thornton, "The Birth of an Atlantic World;" Coclanis, "Atlantic World or Atlantic/World?"

Thursday, September 11: Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange*

Thursday, September 18: Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance*

Thursday, September 25: Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*

Unit 2: Atlantic Perspectives

Thursday, October 2: Daniels and Kennedy, eds., *Negotiated Empires*

Thursday, October 9: Canny and Pagden, eds., *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World*

Thursday, October 16: Heywood & Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles and the Foundation of the Americas*

Thursday, October 23: Meinig, *The Shaping of America*

Thursday, October 30: Sensback, *Rebecca's Revival*

Unit 3: Teaching the Atlantic World

Thursday, November 6: Egerton, et al. *The Atlantic World*

Thursday, November 13: No class meeting

Thursday, November 20: Games & Rothman, *Major Problems in Atlantic History*

Thursday, November 27: THANKSGIVING BREAK; NO CLASS

Thursday, December 4: Cañizares-Esguerra & Seaman, eds., *The Atlantic in Global History*

Requirements

Graduate work requires active, enthusiastic participation at all levels, deep understanding of the material, engagement with classmates, and careful, timely completion of assignments. As a graduate student you should make the most of every opportunity to develop your analytic abilities and to push beyond the limits of your current knowledge.

All written work should follow rigorous standards of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and style. Clear writing showcases clear thinking. Carefully edit and proofread everything you write. Graduate students should own, and consult often, the latest editions of:

Wayne C. Booth, et al. *The Craft of Research*. University of Chicago Press.

Kate L. Turabian. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. U. C. P.

Joseph M. Williams, *Style. Toward Clarity and Grace*. U. C. P.

For all assignments, bring a hard copy (printout) to class, and also deposit an identical copy in the electronic dropbox of the course Blackboard site.

Written and oral discussion (approximately 40% of final grade)

Goal: To develop the skill of informed, intelligent discussion, both written and oral.

Class presentations: Each week one student will give a brief presentation situating the assigned reading and its author in context, and systematize the main points of the Blackboard discussion to frame and continue our class discussion. Discussion leaders will meet with the professor the week before (Thursday at 5 pm unless otherwise agreed).

Blackboard postings: Students will begin to discuss the weekly readings on the Blackboard Discussion Board. Initial postings are due by 10 pm Tuesday; responses can be posted through 10 pm Wednesday. You must participate actively in the Blackboard forum at least twelve weeks during the semester and at least three weeks for each unit. Carefully read and reflect on your fellow students' postings and come to class prepared to continue the discussion regardless of whether you have posted.

Class participation: Attendance; active engagement with the material; and pointed, thoughtful, courteous responses to your fellow students' ideas and analysis are expected.

Short writing assignments (approximately 60% of grade)

Goal: To develop proficiency in critical, analytic, and synthetic writing.

Unit essays: Write a seven to ten page analysis and comparison of the readings for each unit, drawing on and developing some of the themes we have addressed in our discussions, and highlighting similarities and differences between the works. Also reflect on how you might apply some of this material to your own research and teaching. The essays are due in class (with a copy to the electronic Blackboard site) the week after we finish the unit. The last essay is due on Monday, December 8.

Book reviews: Each week one or two students will read an additional book which complements the assigned reading, and write a two to three page review for the class. Bring enough copies of the review to distribute in class (two for the professor), and a copy of the book to pass around.