

HIS 701-02 Colloquium in American History before 1865 > Fall 2011 <

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*The historian is perforce a critic; the historian of history is a critic of critics
History is always written because history is always made. Historiography is always revised because
history is constantly remade.*

–Bert James Loewenberg,
American History in American Thought

Interpretations of events, ideas, forces, and persons in history change all the time. Historiography is the study of those differing interpretations by professional historians and their development over time. In this class you will be exposed to various schools of thought on major themes in American history through the Civil War. You must read a large amount of material in order to begin to master the literature on our selected topics. You will read the equivalent of roughly a book and a half each week, a normal load for history graduate students. I strongly urge you to take notes on your readings and familiarize yourself with the notes. As a matter of course, you will be exposed to “facts” and “content knowledge” in this course, but we are more interested in historical interpretations and how and why historical interpretations have changed over time.

When doing history, it helps to keep in mind that there are many different ways of determining how history happens. One of the key things to remember is that historians can disagree very much over why almost any event happened. You will not agree with all interpretations that you encounter in this course. However, you must know the major differing interpretations in order to understand historians and to become one yourself.

Grading: I expect that you will attend every class meeting, complete all readings, and participate in discussions. Your grade will be reduced for non-participation or absences.

You will complete five (5) analysis papers throughout the semester. Each paper of 5 or more pages will take that week’s readings and search for a crucial fact, process, question, idea, or approach to history that has caused historians to disagree about that topic. Analyze that particular item: why is it so critical to debate on this topic? Should it be the main focus of historians, or are there other facts, processes, questions, ideas, or approaches that could open up new understandings? Perhaps one of the week’s readings makes such a case? In addition, you should briefly tell me and the class about the authors of the readings for each week that you write about. You choose the five topics/weeks to complete your papers – they are due the day we discuss that particular topic, though **everyone must complete a paper on the Week 7 topic on October 18.**

At one meeting you will lead the discussion of that week’s readings. Prepare a one-page, single-spaced outline of key ideas and questions you will use to guide the discussion to turn in at the end of that class. It is obviously helpful if you are also completing an analysis paper for the same week.

Finally, there will be a take-home exam that will require you to discuss some of the key trends we identify over the course of the semester.

Grading summary:

5 Analysis Papers	10% each or	50% of your overall grade
Final Exam		20%
Class Participation		20%
Discussion Leadership		<u>10%</u>
		100%

Required books (available in the UNCG campus bookstore):

Jon Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution before 1776* (2000)
 Jack P. Greene, ed., *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (2009)
 Donald Fixico, ed., *Rethinking American Indian History* (1997)
 Steven Stoll, *Larding the Lean Earth: Soil and Society in Nineteenth-Century America* (2002)
 Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, & Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (1996)
 Chris Beneke, *Beyond Toleration: The Religious Origins of American Pluralism* (2006)
 Gwenda Morgan, *The Debate on the American Revolution* (2008)
 John Ferling, *Adams vs. Jefferson: The Tumultuous Election of 1800* (2004)
 Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (2000)
 Harry L. Watson, *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America* (rev. ed., 2006)
 David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (2006)
 Hugh Tulloch, *The Debate on the American Civil War Era* (1999)

SCHEDULE:

Nearly all of the articles listed in the schedule are available on the J-STOR or Project MUSE databases through the UNCG Library webpages or via the general internet. Others will be handed out by me.

August 23: Introduction

WEEK ONE (Aug. 30)

Colonial America - generally speaking

Book: Jon Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution before 1776* (Harvard, 2000)

Articles:

Joyce Appleby, "A Different Kind of Independence: The Postwar Restructuring of the Historical Study of Early America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd. Ser., Vol. 50, (Apr., 1993), pp. 245-267. *JSTOR*
 Alfred F. Young, "An Outsider and the Progress of a Career in History," *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 52, No. 3 (Jul., 1995), pp. 499-512 *JSTOR*

Gordon S. Wood, "A Century of Writing Early American History: Then and Now Compared; Or How Henry Adams Got It Wrong," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 100, No. 3 (Jun., 1995), pp. 678-696
JSTOR

WEEK TWO (Sept. 6)

Colonial America: an Atlantic World?

Book: Jack P. Greene, ed., *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (2009)

WEEK THREE (Sept. 13)

American Indians, Ethnohistory, and the "New Indian History"

Book: Donald Fixico, ed., *Rethinking American Indian History* (1997)

Articles:

James Axtell, "Colonial America Without the Indians: Counterfactual Reflections," *Journal of American History* 73 (1987) 981-96 *JSTOR*

Neal Salisbury, "The Indians' Old World: Native Americans and the Coming of Europeans," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 53, No. 3, Indians and Others in Early America (Jul., 1996), pp. 435-458 *JSTOR*

Greg O'Brien, "The Conqueror Meets the Unconquered: Negotiating Cultural Boundaries on the Post-Revolutionary Southern Frontier," *Journal of Southern History* Vol. 67, No. 1 (Feb., 2001), pp. 39-72. *JSTOR*

Colin Calloway, "2008 Presidential Address: Indian History from the End of the Alphabet; And What Now?" *Ethnohistory* vol. 58, No. 2 (Spring 2011), pp. 197-211.

WEEK FOUR (Sept. 20)

Early American Environmental History

Book: Steven Stoll, *Larding the Lean Earth: Soil and Society in Nineteenth-Century America* (2002)

Articles:

Mart A. Stewart, "Environmental History: Profile of a Developing Field," *The History Teacher*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (May, 1998), pp. 351-368. *JSTOR*

Ted Steinberg, "Down, Down, Down, No More: Environmental History Moves beyond Declension," *Journal of the Early Republic*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Summer, 2004), pp. 260-266. *JSTOR*

Katherine A. Grandjean, "New World Tempests: Environment, Scarcity, and the Coming of the Pequot War," *The William and Mary Quarterly* Vol. 68, No. 1 (January 2011), pp. 75-100. *JSTOR*

WEEK FIVE (Sept. 27)**Women in Colonial America**

Books: Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, & Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (1996)

Articles:

Linda K. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (Jun., 1988), pp. 9-39

Kathleen Brown, "Brave New Worlds: Women's and Gender History," *William and Mary Quarterly* vol. 50, (1993) pp. 311-328. *JSTOR*

WEEK SIX (Oct. 4)**Religion in Early America**

Book: Chris Beneke, *Beyond Toleration: The Religious Origins of American Pluralism* (2006)

Articles:

Charles L. Cohen, "The Post-Puritan Paradigm of Early American Religious History," *William and Mary Quarterly* vol. 54, no. 4 (Oct. 1997), pp. 695-722. *JSTOR*

Philip Goff and Alan Heimert, "Revivals and Revolution: Historiographic Turns since Alan Heimert's 'Religion and the American Mind,'" *Church History* vol. 67, no. 4 (Dec. 1998), pp. 695-721. *JSTOR*

October 11: No Class: Fall Break Use the time to read, comprehend, and write about all of the material for October 18.

***WEEK SEVEN (Oct. 18)**

***All students must write an analysis paper for this topic/week.**

The American Revolution: Historiography

Books: Gwenda Morgan, *The Debate on the American Revolution* (Palgrave, 2008)

Articles:

Colin Gordon, "Crafting a Usable Past: Consensus, Ideology, and Historians of the American Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 46, No. 4 (Oct., 1989), pp. 671-695. *JSTOR*

Alfred F. Young, "Afterword: How Radical Was the American Revolution?" Young, ed., Beyond the American Revolution (1993) 317-364. *Copies provided by instructor.*

WEEK EIGHT (Oct. 25)**The Early Republic**

Book: John Ferling, *Adams vs. Jefferson: The Tumultuous Election of 1800* (2004)

Articles:

Gordon S. Wood, "The Significance of the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Spring, 1988), pp. 1-20. *JSTOR*

Paul A. Gilje, "The Rise of Capitalism in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic*, Vol. 16, No. 2, (Summer, 1996), pp. 159-181. *JSTOR*

WEEK NINE (Nov. 1)**Historical Memory and Myth-Making in Early America**

Book: Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Beacon Press, 2000)

Articles:

Robert M. S. McDonald, "Thomas Jefferson's Changing Reputation as Author of the Declaration of Independence," *Journal of the Early Republic* 19 (1999) 169-95. *JSTOR*

Carla Mulford, "Figuring Benjamin Franklin in American Cultural Memory" *New England Quarterly* 72 (1999) 415-43. *JSTOR*

Mitch Kachun, "From Forgotten Founder to Indispensable Icon: Crispus Attucks, Black Citizenship, and Collective Memory, 1770–1865," *Journal of the Early Republic* 29 (Summer 2009) 248-286. *Project Muse*

WEEK TEN (Nov. 8)**Jacksonian America & Market Revolutions**

Book: Harry L. Watson, *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America* (rev. ed., 2006)

Articles:

Read the Forum on Charles Seller's *The Market Revolution* in the *Journal of the Early Republic* vol. 12, no. 4 (1992) 445-476. *JSTOR*

Part of a forum on a major recent book on this era, Sean Wilentz's book *The Rise of American Democracy*: James Oakes, "The Ages of Jackson and the Rise of American Democracies," *The Journal of the Historical Society* 6 (December 2006) 491-500. *EBSCO Host*

See also the excellent review of Daniel Walker Howe's *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* by Jill Lepore in *The New Yorker*, October 29, 2007:

http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/books/2007/10/29/071029crbo_books_lepore?printable=true

WEEK ELEVEN (Nov. 15)**Slavery**

Book: David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (2006)

Articles:

Walter Johnson, "On Agency," *Journal of Social History* - Volume 37, Number 1, Fall 2003, pp. 113-124.
Project MUSE

Peter Kolchin, "Eugene D. Genovese: Historian of Slavery," *Radical History Review* - Issue 88, Winter 2004, pp. 52-67. *Project MUSE*

Nov. 22: No Class: Thanksgiving Break

WEEK TWELVE (Nov. 29)**Causes of the Civil War**

Book: Hugh Tulloch, *The Debate on the American Civil War Era* (1999)

Article:

Gary J. Kornblith, "Rethinking the Coming of the Civil War: A Counterfactual Exercise," *Journal of American History*, 90 (June 2003), pp.76-105. *JSTOR*

Final Exam due in my office or office mailbox by 12:00 p.m., NOON, Tuesday, December 6.