

HIS 701 Colloquium in American History before 1865

Fall 2014: TH, 3:30-6:20, MHRA 1209

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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 so 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 6 topic on October 2.**

At one meeting you will lead the discussion of part 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:

- Jack P. Greene, ed., *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (2009)
- Colin Calloway, *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America* (2nd edition, 2013)
- Chris Beneke, *Beyond Toleration: The Religious Origins of American Pluralism* (2006)
- Gwenda Morgan, *The Debate on the American Revolution* (2008)
- Clare Lyons, *Sex among the Rabble: An Intimate History of Gender & Power in the Age of Revolution, Philadelphia, 1730-1830* (2006)
- Harry L. Watson, *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America* (revised edition, 2006)
- Sarah J. Purcell, *Sealed with Blood: War, Sacrifice, and memory in Revolutionary America* (2002)
- 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)
- Peter Charles Hoffer, *Past Imperfect: Facts, Fictions, Fraud—American History from Bancroft and Parkman to Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin* (2008)

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 made available as a pdf on the Blackboard site for this course.

August 21: Introduction**WEEK ONE (Aug. 28)****Colonial America – interpretations and approaches**

Articles:

- T. H. Breen, "Creative Adaptations: Peoples and Cultures," in *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era* Jack P. Greene and J. R. Pole, eds., (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 195-232. *Provided via pdf on Blackboard*
- 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*
- John M. Murrin, "Beneficiaries of Catastrophe: The English Colonies in America," in *The New American History* Eric Foner, ed., (Temple University Press, 1997), 3-30. *Provided via pdf on Blackboard*
- Gary J. Kornblith and Carol Lasser, "More Than Great White Men: A Century of Scholarship on American Social History," in *A Century of American Historiography* James M. Banner, Jr., ed. (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010), 11-20. *Provided via pdf on Blackboard*

WEEK TWO (Sept. 4)**Colonial America: an Atlantic World?**

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

WEEK THREE (Sept. 11): No Class: Florida State University Conference**WEEK FOUR (Sept. 18)****American Indians, Ethnohistory, and Environmental History**

Book: Colin Calloway, *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America* (2nd edition, 2013)

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

Donald L. Fixico, "The Literature of American Indian History," in *A Century of American Historiography* James M. Banner, Jr., ed. (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010), 170-182. *Provided via pdf on Blackboard*

Donald Worster, "The Rise of Environmental History," in *A Century of American Historiography* James M. Banner, Jr., ed. (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010), 114-123. *Provided via pdf on Blackboard*

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

WEEK FIVE (Sept. 25)

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, "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

John M. Murrin, "No Awakening, No Revolution? More Counterfactual Speculations," *Reviews in American History*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Jun., 1983), pp. 161-171. JSTOR

*WEEK SIX (Oct. 2)

***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:

“The American Revolution: Moderate or Radical?” with excerpts of essays from T. H. Breen and Gary B. Nash in *Interpretations of American History: Patterns and Perspectives: Volume One: Eighth Edition* Francis G. Couvares et. al., eds., (Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2009), 127-164. *Provided via pdf on Blackboard*

WEEK SEVEN (Oct. 9): No class: Ethnohistory Conference

WEEK EIGHT (Oct. 16)

Historical Memory and Myth-Making in Early America

Book: Sarah J. Purcell, *Sealed with Blood: War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America* (2002)

Articles:

Robert E. Cray, Jr., “Major John André and the Three Captors: Class Dynamics and Revolutionary Memory Wars in the Early Republic, 1780-1831,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 17 (Fall 1997) 371-397. *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*

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, “How Betsy Ross Became Famous: Oral tradition, nationalism, and the invention of history,” *Common-Place* vol. 8, no. 1, (October 2007):

<http://www.common-place.org/vol-08/no-01/ulrich/>

WEEK NINE (Oct. 23)

Gender & Sex in Early America

Books: Clare Lyons, *Sex Among the Rabble: An Intimate History of Gender & Power in the Age of Revolution, Philadelphia, 1730-1830* (2006)

Articles:

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

Richard Godbeer, “‘The Cry of Sodom’: Discourse, Intercourse, and Desire in Colonial New England,” *William and Mary Quarterly* vol. 52, (1995) pp. 259-286. *JSTOR*

Albert L. Hurtado, “When Strangers Met: Sex and Gender on Three Frontiers,” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (1996), pp. 52-75. *JSTOR*

John M. Murrin, "Things Fearful to Name": Bestiality in Colonial America," *Pennsylvania History* Vol. 65, (1998), pp. 8-43. *JSTOR*

WEEK TEN: October 30

Jacksonian America & Market Revolutions

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

Articles:

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

Sean Wilentz, "Society, Politics, and the Market Revolution, 1815-1848," in *The New American History* Eric Foner, ed., (Temple University Press, 1997), 61-84. *Provided via pdf on Blackboard*

See also the excellent review of Daniel Walker Howe's *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* by Jill Lepore, "How America Came of Age," 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. 6)

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*

WEEK TWELVE (Nov. 13)

Causes of the Civil War

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

Articles:

Gary J. Kornblith, "Rethinking the Coming of the Civil War: A Counterfactual Exercise," *Journal of American History*, 90 (June 2003), pp.76-105. *JSTOR*
 "The Flag Controversy and the Causes of the Civil War, a Statement by Historians," *Callaloo*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Winter, 2001), pp. 196-198. *JSTOR*

WEEK THIRTEEN (Nov. 20) (Last class!):

Take-home final exam will be handed out at the end of class.

The Perils of American History and Historians

Book: Peter Charles Hoffer, *Past Imperfect: Facts, Fictions, Fraud—American History from Bancroft and Parkman to Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin*

Articles:

Another view on the Bellesiles case: Jon Wiener, "Arming America and 'Academic Fraud'," in *Historians in Trouble: Plagiarism, Fraud, and Politics in the Ivory Tower* Jon Wiener, ed., (The New Press, 2005), 73-93. *Provided via pdf on Blackboard*

Other Mis-Behaviors by Historians: Jon Wiener, "Feminism and Harrassment: Elizabeth Fox-Genovese Goes to Court," *Historians in Trouble*, 13-30. *Provided via pdf on Blackboard*

Jon Wiener, "The Denmark Vesey 'Trial Record': A New Verdict," *Historians in Trouble*, 119-135. *Provided via pdf on Blackboard*

More dirt on Ambrose: Richard Rayner, "Channelling IKE," *The New Yorker* (April 26, 2010)
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/04/26/channelling-ike>

Nov. 27: No Class: Thanksgiving Break

Final Exam due in my office or office mailbox by 12:00 p.m. noon, Monday, December 1.