

**HIS 710: Atlantic World Colloquium  
Spring 2007**

**Readings and themes**

**(Note: the syllabus will be available on the first day of class)**

W 6:30-9:20 pm  
HHRA TBA

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**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. Historians have found the Atlantic World to be a useful conceptual and methodological framework in which to analyze the development of European empires and the creation of American colonial societies in the early modern period (roughly 1400-1800). An Atlantic perspective brings into focus the inter-connected economic, social, and cultural currents which carried people, capital, commodities, and ideas across political boundaries and linked four continents. We will read a selection of major works which have defined the field, identifying different perspectives and tracing the development of the historiography. We will also consider the challenges involved in comparative, cross-cultural historical research, as well as the limits of an Atlantic approach. This is a core course for the minor in Atlantic History and is required for all Ph.D. students. It is also recommended to MA students who would like an introduction to the relatively new, evolving, and dynamic field of Atlantic History. I echo Allison Games's invitation in the June 2006 issue of the *AHR*: "Jump in. The water's great."

**Readings**

The following books can be purchased from the UNCG bookstore. If you order them elsewhere be sure you have the right edition.

- Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2005)
- Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra & Eric R. Seeman, eds., *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500-2000* (Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007).
- Alfred Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*. 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003).
- Christine Daniels & Michael V. Kennedy, eds., *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the New World, 1500-1820* (New York: Routledge, 2002).
- Ralph Davis, *The Rise of the Atlantic Economies* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1973).
- Allison Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1999)
- David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge, 1995).
- Robert Harms, *The Diligent: A Voyage through the Worlds of the Slave Trade* (New York: Basic, 2002)
- C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1989).
- Donald Meinig, *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History. Volume I. Atlantic America* (New Haven: Yale, 1986).
- Stewart Schwartz, *Tropical Babylons: Sugar and the Making of the Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: UNC, 2004).
- James Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: UNC, 2003).
- John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* Second edition. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge, 1998).
- Robert Whitaker, *The Mapmaker's Wife: A True Tale of Love, Murder, and Survival in the Amazon* (New York: Basic, 2004)

## Topics

### Unit 1: Frameworks

**Wednesday, January 10: Introduction: What is the Atlantic World?**

**Wednesday, January 17: Atlantic Geneologies**

Reading: Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concepts and Contours*

**Wednesday, January 24: Atlantic Ecologies**

Reading: Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange*

**Wednesday, January 31: Atlantic Economies**

Reading: Davis, *The Rise of the Atlantic Economies*

**Wednesday, February 7: Atlantic Geographies**

Reading: Meinig, *The Shaping of America* (excerpts)

### Unit 2: Power and Agency

**Wednesday, February 14: Rethinking Empire**

Readings: Daniels and Kennedy, *Negotiated Empires*

**Wednesday, February 21: History from Below**

Readings: James, *The Black Jacobins*

**Wednesday, February 28: The Slave Trade**

Reading: Harms, *The Diligent*

**Wednesday, March 7: Spring break. No class**

**Wednesday, March 14: Beyond Enslavement: The Black Atlantic**

Reading: Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*

### Unit 3: Movement

**Wednesday, March 21: Diasporas**

Reading: Sweet, *Recreating Africa*

**Wednesday, March 28: North Atlantic Migrations**

Reading: Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World*

**Wednesday, April 4: Merchant Networks**

Reading: Hancock, *Citizens of the World*

**Wednesday, April 11: Commodity Flows**

Reading: Schwartz, *Tropical Babels*.

**Wednesday, April 18: The Circulation of Ideas**

Reading: *The Mapmaker's Wife*

**Wednesday, April 25: Conclusions: The Atlantic World or the Atlantic in the World?**

Reading: Cañizares-Esguerra & Seaman, eds., *The Atlantic in Global History*