

HISTORY 709  
Dr. HUNTER  
Spring 2009

Office: 2119 MHRA Bldg  
Office Hrs: Tues 4-5 PM, Thurs 4-5 PM  
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## **RIOTS AND REVELS IN EARLY AMERICA, 1600-1860** Seminar in Historical Research and Writing

Public gatherings provide an important window into social relations and the level of unity or division within communities as well as the construction of individual and group identity. In this research seminar, we will examine how other historians have explicated crowd actions, political protests, parades, celebrations, spectacles, and ceremonies from 1600 to 1860. To guide students as they pursue their own research project, we will use primary and secondary texts to explore how historians gather and process evidence, develop interpretations, and produce a finished piece of work that contributes to the field. Students will be encouraged to select a research topic related to the theme of riots, revels, ceremonies, or public gatherings as a way of exploring a historical problem.

This course offers an opportunity to further develop the research and writing skills necessary for advanced work in history. For each of you, the paper you complete for this course may be the beginning of a published article or book. Work hard and enjoy!

### **TEXTS**

- \* Nissenbaum, Stephen. *The Battle for Christmas*. New York: David McKay, 1997.
- \* Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, (look for 6<sup>th</sup> ed.)

\* available at the UNCG Book Store

## REQUIREMENTS

### Class Participation:

Research and writing are often considered solitary occupations and indeed the deep and sustained thinking needed to complete a major research paper requires much solitude. However, every scholar needs the cooperation, feedback, and support of other scholars. As class members we will try to provide that for each other. Therefore it is essential that you come to class prepared to discuss the reading assignments and also to engage in a collective analysis of your own and others research and writing. Participation in class discussion will be graded. It is up to each of us to make this an exciting, challenging, and collaborative learning experience so bring your ideas and questions.

### Shorter Writing Assignments:

You will be asked to write an occasional response paper of 2-3 pages sometimes addressing a particular question or set of questions. You will also be writing a report on a primary source. There may be additional short writing assignments throughout the semester.

### Final Research Paper:

The final paper should be a well-developed research paper of 20-25 pages that presents a thesis and argument about a historical topic based on substantial evidence from primary sources. The topic must also be situated within a broad historical and historiographic context based on relevant secondary sources. The specific topic should be related to the theme of the course -- the social and cultural meaning of public gatherings or private rituals and center on events and developments that took place before 1860. The paper might take a public or private gathering as starting point for a detailed examination of community, class conflict, race, gender, or the cultural work of spectacle, ritual, protest, or celebration. In the paper you should aim for a skilled and imaginative analysis of primary sources to open up your specific topic.

There will be several preliminary research and bibliographic assignments along the way that should help you distribute your work load throughout the semester. Each paper must include at least three pages of supplementary material such as copies of maps, letters, images of material artifacts, paintings, drawings, or architectural plans. The paper must be typed, double-spaced with one inch margins. Chicago style endnotes or

footnotes and a full bibliography are required. Consult Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, for style and format of notes and bibliography.

### **GRADES**

Class Participation	20%	
Shorter Writing Assignments	20%	
Final Research Paper	<u>60%</u>	= 100%

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

#### INTRODUCTION

Jan 20 -- Tues                      Introduction and Beginning research techniques

#### TWO EXAMPLES

Jan 27 -- Tues                      Class Discussion and Reports on primary sources

**Reading:** William Link, “The Jordan Hatcher Case: Politics and ‘A spirit of Insubordination’ in Antebellum Virginia,” *Journal of Southern History* vol. LXIV No.4 (Nov 1998):615-648 (available on-line through JSTOR). **And** Clifford Geertz, “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight,” (available on e-reserves thru Blackboard)

**Due:** Response paper (see handout) **and** Reports on Primary Sources

#### POPULAR CULTURE AND INVERSION RITUALS

Feb 3 -- Tues    Class Discussion and Reports on primary sources

**Reading:** Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas*: Preface, Chaps 1 and 7; **and** Alfred F. Young, “English Plebian Culture and Eighteenth-Century American Radicalism,” (on e-reserves)

**Due:** More Reports on Primary Sources

#### INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

Feb 10 – Tues                      No Class

**Due:** Monday by 4 PM in my box or folder outside my door: Topic Proposal and Preliminary Bibliography indicating both primary and secondary sources.

#### CULTURE OF CELEBRATION

Feb 17 – Tues Class Discussion

**Reading:** Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas*, Chaps 2, 3, 5 and Epilogue

**Due:** Written report on individual primary source from each class member.

### RESEARCH AND WRITING

\* Feb 24 – Tues No Class – work on research

### CONTESTED TERRAIN

Mar 5 – Tues Class Discussion

**Reading:** Chapters 1, 2, and 5 from Susan Davis, *Parades and Power: Street Theater in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia* (on e-reserves)

**Due:** Revised Topic Proposal and Bibliography

### SPRING BREAK

\* Mar 12 -- Tues No Class -- Work on research and writing.

### THESIS AND EVIDENCE

Mar 19 – Tues Class Discussion and reports from class members

**Due:** 1-2 page report on your historical problem, the evidence you are using to research and solve it, and the claim you expect (hope) to make = your thesis. (Will be graded)

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Mar 26 -- Tues Class discussion and Group work on context and outline.

**Due:** Outline of paper and 2 pages of historical context/historiography to your group and to Dr. Hunter by Monday at noon. Paper copy in my box please.

### RESEARCH AND WRITING

\* Apr 2 – Tues No Class -- Work on Draft

### THESIS AND EVIDENCE -- AGAIN

Apr 9 – Tues Class Discussion and Reports

**Reading:** Waldstrieher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes*, Chaps TBA  
or Cook, *Arts of Deception*, Chaps TBA

**Due:** Present to Class: Thesis, argument, evidence, and 3 pages of Supplementary Materials

RESEARCH AND WRITING

\* Apr 16 – Tues No Class -- Work on Draft

DRAFTS

Apr 23 – Tuesday Peer Review of Drafts

**Due:** Draft due to groups and Dr. Hunter by **Friday Apr. 17 at 5PM.** Paper copy in my box please.

REVISIONS

Apr 30 -- Tues Last Class -- Report on Progress and Discuss Problems with Revisions and Citations.

FINAL PAPER

**May 8 – Fri**

**Due:** Final Paper in my office, folder, or box by 5 PM.

**Enjoy your summer. You've earned a rest!**