

History 522  
M & W 3:30-4:45  
Fall 2003  
UNCG

Dr. Hunter  
224C McIver, 334-4068  
Hours: Mon 4:45-5:30,  
Wed 2:15- 3:15  
& by appointment

**“Marvelous Possessions:”  
How Europeans “Produced” the Americas**  
(Topics in Early America)

This topics course will examine how Europeans took possession of new world lands and peoples. For Europeans, enlightenment goals to catalogue uncharted lands and utopian aims to build new societies often collided with longings for riches and missionary crusades to convert souls. Each of these competing impulses generated different ways of possession, producing, and consuming the idea and experience of America. Through reading secondary sources in history, literature, and anthropology this course will explore different motives and methods that shaped cultural encounters with and images of the new world during the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries.

**Texts**

Seed, Patricia. Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Gutierrez, Ramon. When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991

Greenblatt, Stephen. Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.  
(optional for undergraduates; required for graduate students)

Mintz, Sidney W. Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History. New York: Penguin Books, 1986.

Fenn, Elizabeth, Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-82. New York: Hill and Wang, 2001

Anderson, Benedict. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. Rev. ed. New York, Verso, 1991.

Price, Richard. Alabi's World. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

## Requirements

### Class Participation:

Class attendance is required. Each student should come to class prepared for an in-depth discussion of the assigned readings. Taking notes while you are reading will help you greatly in preparing for class discussion. When reading, allow your notes to develop as an alternative text that both comments on, extends, and questions the reading. Take note of passages you do not understand and of interpretations you find persuasive or flawed. Also, try to understand the implications of the author's ideas when applied to other examples -- in other words, talk back to the text in your notes. Armed with the text, notes, and occasional written assignment, (see below) you will be prepared for class discussion. Do not wait to be called on. It is your responsibility to participate. Your ideas are important to all of us.

### Response Papers:

Occasionally students are asked to write short response papers. You may also be asked to do in-class writing based on readings and discussion. Assigned papers must be typed and use proper (academic) English. Papers with sentence fragments, lack of agreement between subject and verb, misplaced modifiers, inappropriate changes of subject during a single sentence, improper use of indefinite pronouns, frequent misspellings, and other mistakes not appropriate to college-level writing will not be accepted. Papers are due at the beginning of class. **No late papers will be accepted.**

The response papers should be based on the week's readings and can refer to previous texts as well. In the paper, you should take up either a broad theme or a particular detail, develop an idea (a thesis) about the subject matter or the production of the text itself, and use references from the reading (and other sources if you wish) to substantiate or extend the implications of your idea. Be prepared to read your paper to the class as part of class discussion.

### Final Paper/Project

Each student will use material from the class readings and additional research to write a final paper about a "possession." The paper may take the form of a research paper, a textual and contextual analysis of a single work, or a proposed museum exhibit. Detailed instructions will be provided during the term. Each student should meet with Dr. Hunter to select a topic. For undergraduates the paper should be 7-10 pages with two additional pages of supplemental material. Students will make a class presentation on their final paper/project at the end of the semester. Graduate student requirements will be handed out on a separate sheet.

### Grades:

Class Participation and presentations	40%		
Shorter written work	30%		
Final Paper/Project	<u>30%</u>	Total	100%

### Class Schedule

Mon – Aug 18                      Introduction

#### **Ceremonies**

**Reading:** Seed: Ceremonies of Possession, Introduction & Chapter 3 (1-15 & 69-99)

Wed. – Aug 20                      Class Discussion

**Reading:** Seed: Chapters 1 & 5 (16-40 & 149-178)

Mon – Aug 25                      Class Discussion

Reading: Green, from Intellectual Construction of America (on reserve) or TBA.

Wed. – Aug 27                      Class Discussion

**Reading:** Seed: Chapters 2, 4, & Conclusion. (41-69, 100-193)

Mon – Sept 1                      Class Discussion

Wed – Sept 3                      Comparative History

**Due:** Response paper on Seed's use of comparative history – provide examples from the reading to demonstrate your views.

#### **Religion and Conquest**

**Reading:** Gutierrez, When Jesus Came . . ., Introduction, Chapters 1&2 (xvii-xxxi,1-94)

Mon -- Sept 8                      Class Discussion

Wed – Sept 10                      Presentation and Discussion by Student team # 1

**Reading:** Gutierrez, (130-166 & 178-226)

Mon – Sept 15                      Class Discussion

Wed -- Sept 17                      Presentation and Discussion by Student team # 2

#### **Capitalism**

**Reading:** Mintz: Sweetness and Power, Introduction & Chapters 1-2 (xv-xxx & 1-73)

Mon -- Sept 22                      Class Discussion

**Due: paragraph on topic of final project.**

Wed – Sept 24                      Presentation and Discussion by Student team # 3

**Reading:** Mintz, Chapters 3-5 (74-214)

Mon -- Sept 29                      Class Discussion

Wed – Oct 1                      Presentation and Discussion by Student team # 4

### Disease

Reading: Fenn, Pox Americana, Intro and Chapters 1-4 (3-134)  
 Mon – Oct 6                                   Class Discussion  
 Wed -- Oct 8                                 Presentation and Discussion by Student team # 5

Reading: Fenn, Chapters 5-8 and Epilogue.  
 Mon – Oct 13                                 OFF Fall Break  
 Wed -- Oct 15                                 Presentation and Discussion by Student team # 6

### Naming and Nationalism

**Reading:** Anderson, Imagined Communities, Chapters 1-6 (1-111)  
 Mon -- Oct 20                                 Class Discussion  
   **Due: One page proposal and Bibliography for final paper**  
 Wed -- Oct 22                                 Meetings with Dr. Hunter on final paper

**Reading:** Anderson, Chapters 7-11 (113-206)  
 Mon – Oct 27                                 Meetings with Dr. Hunter on final paper  
 Wed -- Oct 29                                 Class Discussion

### Arts of Possession

Mon – Nov 3                                 Thomas Cole and American Landscape  
 Wed -- Nov 5                                 Robert Hughes's *Republic of Virtue*

### Four Voices

**Reading:** Price, Alabi's World, pages, TBA  
 Mon – Nov 10                                 Class Discussion  
 Wed -- Nov 12                                 Presentation and Discussion by Student team # 6

Reading: Price, pages, TBA  
 Mon – Nov 17                                 Class Discussion  
 Wed – Nov 19                                 Dialogue with four voices

### Tying it all Together

Mon -- Nov 24                                 Class Discussion  
   **Due:** Response paper of 3-4 pages on how are these different texts and approaches connected?  
 Wed – Nov 26                                 OFF -- Thanksgiving

Mon – Dec 1                      Presentations of Final Papers/Projects  
Wed – Dec 3                      Presentations of Final Papers/Projects

Wed -- Dec 10                **Final Paper/Project due by 5 PM in my box or green folder.**

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**Additional Reading for Graduate Students**

**Reading:** Greenblatt: Marvelous Possessions, Introduction & Chapter 3 (1-25 & 52-85)  
Discussion Groups to be scheduled

**Reading:** Greenblatt: Chapters 4 - 5 (86-151)  
Discussion Groups to be scheduled