

HIST 203-301
Early American Rebellions: Revolution, Resistance and Power in Early North America
Spring, 2016

Thursdays, 1:30-4:30pm
College Hall, Room 311F

Draft syllabus, subject to revision

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The seminar course explores incidents of violent and non-violent resistance during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries. We will consider incidents of violence across the continent—including King Philip’s War, the Stono Rebellion, and the American Revolution—as ways to investigate the interactions and power dynamics among the many people who called North America home. By examining when and how individuals and groups used violent and non-violent force to challenge existing social, political, and economic structures or to exert control over contested spaces, we will consider how ethnicity, gender, status, and race shaped these conflicts. Finally, this course asks us to analyze critically the ways that the legacies and popular histories of these “revolutions,” “rebellions,” and “uprisings” shaped contemporary conceptions of identity in early America.

Assignments

This course is focused on reading and scholarly discourse; meaningful class participation is highly valued. Students will attend class faithfully, complete all assigned readings, and engage in thoughtful class discussion. Before each class (by noon on Wednesday), students will post two short but insightful reading questions or comments on the course website. In addition, students will bring to class a one-paragraph response to the readings that highlights or queries a particular theme or problem in the week’s readings. There will be an in-class midterm exam. Students will also write one short paper (2-3 pages) and a final paper (8-10 pages). The final paper will be an argument-driven analysis of a set of readings from the course syllabus. We will provide several paper topics; students will choose one.

Class Participation/Attendance: 30%
Discussion Posts on Canvas and Weekly Response Paragraphs: 5%
First Paper: 10%
Midterm: 25%
Final Paper: 30%

Absences

Because this is a seminar class—and therefore class participation is particularly crucial—you should take care to avoid absences. That said, things happen. If you need to miss a class, you should make a strong effort to let us know *before* class. Serious illness, family emergencies, and “Acts of God” permit an excused absence. In that case, you will either write a 2-3 page response paper to the week’s readings, or meet with one of us in person to discuss the readings. More than two excused absences will negatively affect your class participation grade (a loss of 5 percentage points in your overall grade). Unexcused absences will also affect your participation grade.

Plagiarism

Please do not plagiarize. All your written work should be yours alone, or cited to an appropriate source. If you are uncertain what this means in practice, please speak with one of us and please refer to the University of Pennsylvania’s Code of Academic Integrity.

http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html

Required Books

These books are available to purchase at the Penn Book Center (at 34th and Sansom Streets).

Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Harvard University Press, 2000)

Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip’s War and the Origins of American Identity* (Vintage, 1999)

Jill Lepore, *New York Burning: Liberty, Slavery, and Conspiracy in Eighteenth-Century Manhattan* (Vintage, 2006)

Gary Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America* (Viking, 2006)

* indicates that a reading is in the coursepack, (w) that a reading is on the course website

Reading Assignments and Class Meetings

January 14: Talking about Violence and Resistance—Terminology, Perspective, and Historical Memory

(If possible, please print the short readings, read them, and bring them to our first class.)

(w) Jill Lepore, “What’s in a Name?” in *The Name of War: King Philip’s War and the Origins of American Identity* (Vintage, 1999)

(w) Honor Sachs, “Devils, Saints, and Denmark Vesey,” *Huffington Post*, February 27, 2014

During this class, we will discuss best strategies for reading and writing well in this seminar.

January 21: Slavery in the Early Anglo-Atlantic

Ira Berlin, "Prologue" and "Part I: Societies with Slaves" (pp. 1-92) in *Many Thousands Gone*

David Richardson, "Shipboard Revolts, African Authority, and the Atlantic Slave Trade," *William and Mary Quarterly* (January 2001)

Stephanie Smallwood, "African Guardians, European Slave Ships, and the Changing Dynamics of Power in the Early Modern Atlantic," *William and Mary Quarterly* (October 2007)

January 28: Conflict and Violence in New England: The Pequot War (1634) and King Philip's War (1675-78)

Alan Taylor, "New England: 1600-1700" in *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (Penguin 2001)

"The Trial of Anne Hutchinson, 1637" (pp. 80-83) in Linda Kerber et al., *Women's America: Refocusing the Past* (Oxford, 2016)

*Ronald Dale Karr, "'Why Should You Be So Furious?': The Violence of the Pequot War," *Journal of American History* (December 1998)

*John Underhill, "Newes from America" (1638)

Jill Lepore, selections from *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity*

February 4: Race, Gender, and Labor: Bacon's Rebellion (1676)

*Edmund S. Morgan, chapters 1, 11-13 and 15 in *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (Norton, 1975)

*Kathleen Brown, "Gender and English Identity on the Eve of Colonial Settlement" and "Vile Rogues and Honorable Men" in *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (UNC Press, 1996)

*Barbara J. Fields, "Slavery, Race and Ideology in the United States of America," *New Left Review* (May-June 1990)

*Nathaniel Bacon, "Declaration of the People of Virginia" (1676)

February 11: Indian Labor and Exploitation in Early America: The Pueblo Revolt (1680) the Yamasee War (1715-1717), and the Natchez War (1729)

Alan Taylor, "The Spanish Frontier, 1530-1700" in *American Colonies*

*Declaration of the Indian, Juan (1681)

*Letter from Antonio de Otermin to Francisco Ayeta (1682)

*William L. Ramsey, “‘Something Cloudy in Their Looks’: The Origins of the Yamasee War Reconsidered,” *Journal of American History* (June 2003)

*Antoine Le Page du Pratz’s account of the Natchez War in *The History of Louisiana* (1774)

*Sophie White, “Massacre, Mardi Gras, and Torture in Early New Orleans,” *William and Mary Quarterly* (July 2013)

February 18: Slavery and Community: The Stono Rebellion (1739)

Ira Berlin, Introduction to “Part II: Slave Societies” (pp. 95-108) in *Many Thousands Gone*

Peter Wood, “Rising Tensions” and “A Colony in Conflict” in *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (Knopf, 1974)

(N.B: This book is available on reserve at Van Pelt, as well as available to read online through the card catalogue. Please take ample notes on the book and bring them to class.)

*Peter Kolchin, “The World the Historians Made: Peter Wood’s *Black Majority* in Historiographical Context,” *South Carolina Historical Magazine* (October 1999)

Short paper due this week

February 25: Bouts of Trouble in New York: Jacob Leisler’s Rebellion (1689-1691) and the “Slave Conspiracy of 1741”

*Alan Taylor, pp. 276-289 (on the Glorious Revolution and Jacob Leisler) in *American Colonies*

*Daniel K. Richter, “Planters Besieged” and “Revolution, War, and a New Transatlantic Order” in *Before the Revolution: America’s Ancient Pasts* (Harvard, 2011)

*Jacob Leisler, “Letter to the Governor and Committee of Safety at Boston” (1689)

*Jacob Leisler, “A Modest and Impartial Narrative” (1690)

*Jill Lepore, selections from *New York Burning*

March 3: Popular Protest in Early America

*Paul Gilje, “Why Study Riots?” in *Rioting in America* (Indiana, 1997)

*E. P. Thompson, “Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century,” *Past and Present* (1971)

*Denver Alexander Brunzman, "The Knowles Atlantic Impressment Riots of the 1740s," *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* (Fall 2007)

*Barbara Clark Smith, "The Common Ground of Colonial Politics" in *The Freedoms We Lost: Consent and Resistance in Revolutionary America* (New Press, 2013)

*Eugene Genovese, "Book Four: Whom God Hath Hedged In" in *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (Vintage, 1972)

March 10: Spring Break

March 17: Contesting Territory: The Seven Years War and Aftermath

*Alan Taylor, "Imperial Wars and Crisis: 1739-75" in *American Colonies*

*Pontiac's Speech to an Ottawa, Potawatomi, and Huron Audience (1763)

*Jeremy Engels, "'Equipped for Murder': The Paxton Boys and 'The Spirit of Killing All Indians' in Pennsylvania, 1763-1764," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* (Fall 2005)

*Daniel K. Richter, "The Plan of 1764: Native Americans and a British Empire That Never Was" in *Trade, Land, Power: The Struggle of Eastern North America* (Penn Press, 2013)

*Woody Holton, "The Ohio Indians and the Coming of the American Revolution in Virginia," *Journal of Southern History* (August, 1994)

Ira Berlin, "Growth and Transformation of Black Life in the North" (pp. 177-194) in *Many Thousands Gone*

March 24: Midterm

In preparation for the midterm, please read *John Murrin, "Coming to Terms with the Salem Witch Trials" (American Antiquarian Society, 2003) and *Carol F. Karlsen, "Handmaidens of the Lord" in *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England* (Norton, 1987). One of the questions on the midterm will ask you to consider Murrin's and Karlsen's arguments and modes of analysis in relation to the other readings you have done so far this semester.

March 31: The American Revolution I

Gary Nash, "Introduction" and chapters 2-5 in *The Unknown American Revolution*

*T. H. Breen, "'Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present* (May 1988)

*Karen Haulman, “Country Modes: Cultural Politics and Political Resistance” and “New Duties and Old Desires on the Eve of the Revolution” in *The Politics of Fashion in Eighteenth-Century America* (UNC, 2011)

*John Dickinson and Thomas Jefferson, “A Declaration by the Representatives of the United Colonies of North America, Now Met in General Congress at Philadelphia, Setting Forth the Causes and Necessity of Their Taking Up Arms” (1775)

April 7: The American Revolution II

Gary Nash, chapters 6-7 in *The Unknown American Revolution*

*Peter Silver, “Barbarism and the American Revolution” in *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (Norton, 2008)

*Wayne E. Lee, “‘One Bold Stroke’: Washington and the British in Pennsylvania, 1777-78” and “‘Malice Enough in Our Hearts’: Sullivan and the Iroquois, 1779” in *Barbarians and Brothers: Anglo-American Warfare, 1500-1865* (Oxford, 2011)

*Maya Jasanoff, “The Other Side of Revolution: Loyalists in the British Empire,” *William and Mary Quarterly* (April 2008)

*Cassandra Pybus, “Mary Perth, Harry Washington, and Moses Wilkinson: Black Methodists Who Escaped from Slavery and Founded a Nation” in Alfred F. Young, Gary B. Nash, and Ray Raphael, eds., *Rebels, Radicals, and Reformers in the Making of the Nation* (Knopf, 2011)

*Selected Letters between John Adams and Abigail Adams (1776)

April 14: Revolution for Whom?, or Taming the Revolution

Gary Nash, chapter 8 in *The Unknown American Revolution*

*Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, “The 1795 Conspiracy in Pointe Coupee,” in *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (LSU Press, 1992)

*Rosemarie Zagari, “Women and Party Conflict in the Early Republic” and Richard Newman “Protest in Black and White: The Formation and Transformation of an African American Political Community during the Early Republic” in Jeffrey L. Pasley, Andrew W. Robertson, and David Waldstreicher, eds., *Beyond the Founders: New Approaches to the Political History of the Early American Republic* (UNC, 2004)

*“Preface” (by David P. Geggus) and “American Political Culture and the French and Haitian Revolutions: Nathaniel Cutting and Jeffersonian Republicans” (by Simon P. Newman) in Geggus, ed., *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World* (Univ. of South Carolina, 2001)

*James Sidbury, "Part 1: Creolization, Appropriation, and Collective Identity in Gabriel's Virginia" in *Ploughshares into Swords: Race, Rebellion, and Identity in Gabriel's Virginia* (Cambridge, 1997)

Hand out Final Paper topics

April 21: Social and Economic Challenges in the Wake of the Revolution

*James Henretta, "Families and Farms: Mentalité in Pre-Industrial America," *William and Mary Quarterly* (January 1978)

*Gordon Wood, "The Enemy is US: Democratic Capitalism in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic* (Summer 1996)

*Terry Bouton, "William Findley, David Bradford, and the Pennsylvania Regulation of 1794" in *Revolutionary Founders*

**"An Address to the People of Hampshire County, Massachusetts, Setting Forth the Causes of Shays' Rebellion" (1786) and "A Letter to the Hampshire Herald Listing the Grievances of the Rebels" (1786)

**"President George Washington's Proclamation against the Whiskey Rebellion" (1794)

*Natalie Inman, "'A Dark and Bloody Ground': American Indian Responses to Expansion during the American Revolution," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* (Winter 2011)

*Michael F. Conlin and Robert M. Owens, "Bigger than Little Bighorn: Nomenclature, Memory, and the Greatest Native American Victory over the United States," *Ohio Valley History* (Summer 2012)

Douglas R. Egerton, "Slaves to the Marketplace: Economic Liberty and Black Rebelliousness in the Atlantic World" and Walter Johnson, "Clerks All! Or, Slaves with Cash," *Journal of the Early Republic* (Winter 2006)

May 10: Spring Term Ends

Final Paper Due