

AMH 5905: Readings in Early American History
Fall 2005
Professor Anna Lawrence
Thursday, 7-10 p.m.
AH 105

Office Hours: AL 151, MW 2-4
Contact: ALAWRE13@fau.edu, 7-0826

Course Description:

Early American history has long been a touchstone for understanding America's current identity. Not only historians, but also politicians, cultural theorists, artists, etc., have been intent on defining American history for their own purposes. Through this course, we want to understand some of the more powerful issues in defining America, by examining its history from early colonial settlement through the early national period. This course focuses on the more debatable aspects of early American identity and formation. In six units, we will address the themes of "Orientations and Origins in Early America", "Early Indigenous Cultures," "Women in Early American History," "The Revolution and National Origins," "Religious History of Early America," and "Early African-American History". In each unit we will look at recent and influential works in these areas and discuss their contributions to early American history.

Course Goals and Requirements:

The goal of this course is to understand the current field of early American history and the key works in the cultural and social history of this period. In addition, students should be able to identify and analyze historical issues, discuss these issues in depth, and write analytically on topics in early American history. Participation and weekly reading are the major requirements of this course. All the materials for this course can be found in the schedule below. They are available either on electronic course reserves, electronic access journals, or for sale at bookstores.

Textbooks

- Berlin, Ira. *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Breen, T.H. and Hall, Timothy. *Colonial America in an Atlantic World: A Story of Creative Interaction*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2003.
- Brown, Kathleen M. *Goodwives, Nasty Wenches, & Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Hatch, Nathan O. *The Democratization of American Christianity*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Lepore, Jill. *In the Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998.

Richter, Daniel K. *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. New York: Vintage Books, 1991.

Participation

Your attendance is presumed and mandatory. A major portion of your grade is participation in our weekly discussions. One of the main goals of this course is for you to further develop the ability to think and write about historical arguments, and an important step in this process is in-class discussion. In addition to the required reading and writing, you are expected to use class time wisely by bringing ideas to share each week. This class must be a comfortable place to share ideas; respect for your fellow classmates is essential. Those of you who are comfortable with speaking must recognize the need for all to speak in this class, every week. If you feel uncomfortable or are concerned about participation, please talk to the professor as soon as possible.

Written Assignments

Written assignments are only accepted before or on the deadline; *no late papers will be accepted*.

1) Weekly Feedback – 1-2 pages, **due each week in class** (except

Each week you will be asked to turn in a short assignment. The assignment will be to answer this basic question: What are the main arguments or theses of the author(s)? This sounds simple, but of course it's not. These should be complex answers, totaling one to two pages of double-spaced text. They should demonstrate a careful reading of the text, and include specific examples from the readings. Students are not expected to turn in a weekly feedback for the book they are reviewing. **Due each Thursday by 3 p.m., via email to alawre13@fau.edu.**

2) Book Review – 2-3 pages (see syllabus for deadlines)

Choose just one of the books to review and note the deadline. Every one will sign up for a different book to ensure coverage. The person who is writing a book review for that week will be responsible for leading a portion of the discussion as well. Students are required to set up a meeting with the professor prior to the deadline for their review in order to discuss the parameters for leading class discussion.

3) Historiographical Essay - 8 pages, **due Dec. 8th**

This paper will be a synthesis and analysis of one topic in the syllabus; the topic is for each student to choose. Students might find it helpful to coordinate the subjects of both the book review assignment and the historiographical essay, so that the latter may build on the former. The assignment will allow students to use the assigned works in the course as a starting point for researching and exploring the topic more fully. The historiographical essay will analyze the major directions and issues in each field, by focusing on the most important works for each topic. Rather than providing a description of historical events or persons, the historiographical essay identifies the key issues and how they have been argued by historians. This essay will examine the specific evidence

in the key works and interplay between these works, to arrive at a picture of the current state of this field, and possible directions for the future. Proposals for final essays are **due Oct. 27**. Fuller guidelines will be provided in class.

Grading:

Participation:	30%
Weekly Feedback:	25%
Book Review:	10%
Final Essay:	35%

Schedule of Topics and Readings

8/25: Introductions

Orientations and Origins in Early America

9/1: Introduction to Early America from the Transatlantic Perspective
T.H. Breen and Timothy Hall, *Colonial America in an Atlantic World*
[No WF due]

9/8: Transatlantic Directions

David Armitage, "Greater Britain: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis?" *American Historical Review* 104 (Apr., 1999), 427-445; Ian K. Steele, "Exploding Colonial American History: Amerindian, Atlantic, and Global Perspectives," *Reviews in American History* 26:1 (Mar., 1998), 70-75; T.H. Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776," *Journal of British Studies* 25: 4 (Oct., 1986), 467-499; Joyce Appleby, "Recovering America's Historical Diversity: Beyond Exceptionalism," *Journal of American History* 79:2 (Sept., 1992), 419-431.

Early Indigenous Cultures

9/15: Early Contact and Conflict

Jill Lepore, *In the Name of War* & Mary Rowlandson's account [on Course Reserves]
****BR 1 due****

9/22: Cultural Exchange and Survival

Daniel Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country*
****BR 2 due****

Women in Early American History

9/29: Women & Gender – Seventeenth-century Women

Kathleen Brown, *Goodwives, Nasty Wenches, & Anxious Patriarchs*
****BR 3 due****

10/06: Methods of Early American Women's History: Eighteenth-century Women

Brown cont'd, 319-373; Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "Wheels, Looms, and the Gender Division of Labor in Eighteenth-Century New England," *William and Mary Quarterly* 55 (Jan., 1998), 3-38; Cornelia Hughes Dayton, "Taking the Trade: Abortion and Gender Relations in an Eighteenth-Century New England Village," *William and Mary Quarterly* 48 (Jan., 1991), 19-49; Mary Beth Norton, "The Evolution of White Women's Experience in Early America," *The American Historical Review* 89 (Jun., 1984), 593-619.

The Revolution and National Origins

10/13: Radicalism of the Revolution

Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*

****BR 4 due****

10/20: Republicanism, Social Groups and Division

Joyce Appleby, "Republicanism in Old and New Contexts," *William and Mary Quarterly* 43:1 (Jan., 1986), 20-34; Ruth Bloch, "The Gendered Meaning of Virtue in Revolutionary America," *Signs* 13: 1 (Autumn, 1987), 37-58; Stephanie McCurry, "The Two Faces of Republicanism: Gender and Proslavery Politics in Antebellum South Carolina," *Journal of American History* 78:4 (Mar., 1992), 1245-1264; Gregory Nobles, "Breaking into the Backcountry: New Approaches to the Early American Frontier, 1750-1800," *William and Mary Quarterly* 46: 3 (Oct., 1989), 641-670; Edward Countryman, "Indians, the Colonial Order, and the Social Significance of the American Revolution" (in Forum: Rethinking the American Revolution), *William and Mary Quarterly*, 53: 2, (Apr., 1996), 342-362.

Religious History of Early America

10/27: Eighteenth-century Religious History

Rhys Isaac "Evangelical Revolt: The Nature of the Baptists' Challenge to the Traditional Order in Virginia, 1765 to 1775," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 31: 3 (Jul., 1974), 345-368; Jon Butler "Enthusiasm Described and Decried: The Great Awakening as Interpretive Fiction," *The Journal of American History* 69: 2 (Sept., 1982), 305-325; Frank Lambert, "The First Great Awakening: Whose Interpretive Fiction?" *The New England Quarterly* 68:4 (Dec., 1995), 650-659; Susan O'Brien, "A Transatlantic Community of Saints", "A Transatlantic Community of Saints: The Great Awakening and the First Evangelical Network, 1735-1755," *The American Historical Review* 91:4 (Oct., 1986), 811-832.

****Final Essay Proposals Due****

11/3: Popular Christianity

Nathan Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*

****BR 5 due****

Early African-American History

11/10: Early Slavery

Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*

****BR 6 due****

11/17: Critiques in the Field

Peter H. Wood, “‘I Did the Best I Could for My Day’: The Study of Early Black History During the Second Reconstruction, 1960 to 1976,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 35:2 (Apr., 1978), 185-225; Jon F. Sensbach, “Charting a Course in Early African-American History,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 50:2 (Apr., 1993), 394-405.

11/24: No meeting [Thanksgiving]

Final Meeting

TBD [12/1]: Presentations of Historiographical Projects

12/8: ****Final Essays Due****