

## HIST XXXX

### Colonial America in the Atlantic World



Vaughn Scribner  
Sample Syllabus

Beginning in the sixteenth century, North America became a center of imperial competition, identity reformation, and transatlantic connection. As the Spanish, French, British, Portuguese, and Dutch Empires traversed the Atlantic Ocean in search of wealth and power, Native American peoples continuously adapted to and resisted ongoing interactions with these European invaders. African peoples, furthermore, endured and opposed slavery at the hands of the European empires. The North American colonies were thus built upon foundations of inequality, brutal violence, and greed as ethnicity, class, religion, gender, and race increasingly determined one's status in the New World. Yet even owing to the various levels of discrimination and conflict in North America, all parties retained agency and individuality in the harshest of environments. Colonial North America, then, was a world built by all but not always for all.

This course takes a transatlantic approach to investigating the origins of the North American colonies, development of colonial society, culture, and institutions, and steady advancement of Revolutionary tumult. It examines the interaction among peoples and cultures throughout the Atlantic world that clashed and collaborated in the New World, including Native Americans, Africans, African Americans, and European imperialists. After taking a chronological approach to the history of British North America from the sixteenth through the end of the eighteenth centuries, we will then shift our attention to larger transatlantic themes such as consumerism, race, gender, religion, and enlightenment thought. At its core, after all, this course encourages a global, comparative approach to colonial North America marked by diversity more than uniformity and questions as much as answers.

Easily-accessible primary documents like newspapers, travel journals, maps, poems, broadsides, and personal papers will be especially important for this class. More than perhaps any other primary source, newspapers can provide us a glimpse into everyday life in the early American colonies. So too can travel diaries and journals allow us an intimate glimpse into the mindsets of

early modern citizens and the world in which they lived. Thus, you will investigate different primary documents each week, and through doing so will not only learn how to critically analyze primary sources, but also how to use these sources to develop our own opinions of the past. Every assigned primary document will be accessible online or through your course reader.

### **Course Goals:**

- Engage with colonial America's history on a critical level, taking into account the diverse peoples, places, and ideas that constantly formed this brutal world.
- Understand colonial America as inherently tied to larger networks.
- Gain a fuller understanding of historians' changing perception of the past through thorough reading and discussion of secondary sources.
- Investigate how historians craft their arguments by analyzing important, eye-opening primary documents.
- Become better, more critical writers and speakers. I am putting a heavy emphasis on helping you to express yourself, both through the written and spoken word.
- Become more effective readers. I will teach you how to "gut" a book's content (i.e. take out the most important material for your purposes). Not only will this save you time, but it will also help you to hone in on the author's overarching argument(s).
- Ultimately, this course is directed not only at expanding your knowledge and understanding of colonial America, but is also centered around making you more active, engaged thinkers. I want you to question the past, and to *develop your own opinion* on various subjects, issues, and ideas that still affect us today.

### **Required Texts:**

- Stanley N. Katz, et al. *Colonial America: Essays in Politics and Social Development, Sixth Edition* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2010).
- Alan Taylor, *American Colonies* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001).
- Anthony Pagden, *Lords of all the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain, and France, c. 1500-1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).
- Reading Packet, available in the bookstore.

## **Points Break Down:**

Weekly Reaction Papers- 20%

Participation- 25%

Book Review- 15%

Book Review- 15%

Final Paper- 25%

## **Assignments:**

### Weekly Reaction Papers (Fifteen Total):

Each week (Friday) a short writing assignment will be due. The two-page reaction paper will show that you have a thorough understanding of the week's reading assignments. I expect you to briefly explain the content of the secondary and primary readings, and how both the secondary and primary readings helped you to more fully understand various factors of colonial North America.

In each reaction paper, I want you to clearly define:

- 1) The secondary source authors' argument(s).
- 2) Praise and/or criticisms of the secondary source's effectiveness.
- 3) How the secondary source changed or reinforced what you already knew or thought.
- 4) What are the primary sources? Why are the primary sources important? What are potential biases in them? How did they change or reinforce your pre-existing beliefs?

Beyond showing me your understanding of the documents in writing, this will also help you prepare for discussion on Friday, which leads me to the next portion of your grade...

### Class Attendance/Participation:

Although lecture will be an important part of this class, the fifty-minute class period will also be devoted to class-wide discussion and critical analysis of primary documents. Fridays, in particular, will be devoted exclusively to discussion and analysis of assigned readings, etc. For this reason, your participation grade will not be simply determined by attendance. Rather, I will grade you on how well you participate upon arriving at class. This means you need to come prepared and ready to contribute to discussion with well-informed opinions. Therefore, even if you come to class everyday, if you do not talk you will not receive an "A" for participation. Finally, we are all adults, and I expect you to treat me—and each other—accordingly. Disrespectful behavior towards your classmates

or me will not be tolerated.

### Final Paper:

Students will complete a six-to-eight page paper addressing the question I provide, due at the end of the semester. A successful paper will show a solid argument and proficient knowledge of colonial North America and those people, places, and ideas that shaped it. This question will be open-ended, without a clear-cut “right” or “wrong” answer. I want you to reflect on what *you* think about the past, and make this clear in your well-developed, concise, argumentative answer. Utilize the secondary and primary sources we have analyzed throughout the semester to support your contentions.

The paper should be typed (double-spaced), with one-inch margins, a title page, and footnotes/citations. Please use the Chicago Manual of Style. A letter grade will be subtracted for every day late.

### Book Reviews (2):

You will each choose two of the following (listed) books to review. Your first book review will be due one month into the semester, while the second book review will be due in two months into the semester. I expect these book reviews to be more than a simple explanation of the book’s argument and trajectory. I expect you to engage with the material, and analyze the book’s argument(s), scope, and effectiveness with a critical eye. Point out where you think the book succeeds in its goals—and where it does not. How effective was the author’s argument? How well did he/she follow through on what they set out to do? Where is there room for improvement? Read this book with a *critical eye*. A letter grade will be subtracted for every day late.

#### **Books:**

- Charles C. Mann, *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005).
- William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983).
- Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).
- James F. Brooks, *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).
- Paul Kelton, *Epidemics and Enslavement: Biological Catastrophe in the Native Southeast, 1492-1715* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

- Galgano, Robert C. *Feast of Souls: Indians and Spaniards in the Seventeenth-Century Missions of Florida and New Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).
- Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008).
- James H. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999).
- Gloria L. Main, *Peoples of a Spacious Land: Families and Cultures in Colonial New England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).
- Jennifer L. Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
- Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake & Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998).
- Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 1998).
- David Yeltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
- Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1975).
- Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of an American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).
- Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- Fred Anderson, *The War that Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Viking Press, 2005).
- Ian K. Steele, *The English Atlantic, 1675-1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).
- Mary Beth Norton, *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692* (New York: Vintage Books, 2003).

- Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990).
- Kathleen Brown, *Foul Bodies: Cleanliness in Early America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).
- David Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).
- Sharon V. Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).
- April Lee Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
- Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).
- Susan Scott Parrish, *American Curiosity: Cultures of Natural History in the Colonial British Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).
- Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness: Urban Life in America, 1625-1742* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1964).

## Schedule of Classes

### Week One: A World Before—Precursors to Western Imperialism

Class One: “The Far East”: The Pre-Eighteenth Century Powerhouse

Class Two: “The Atlantic World”: Europe Expands in the Sixteenth Century

Class Three: Discussion

#### Secondary Readings:

- Kenneth Pomeranz, “Beyond the East-West Binary: Resituating Development Paths in the Eighteenth-Century World,” *The Journal of East Asian Studies* 61 (2002): 539-590. (Available online at JStor).
- Alison Games, “Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities,” *American Historical Review* 111 (June 2006): 741-57 (Available online at JStor).

#### Primary Readings:

- William Biddulph, “A Letter written from Allepo in Syria Comagena,” in *Travels of certaine Englishmen into Africa, Asia, Troy, Bythinia, Thracia, and to the Black Sea*, ed. Theophilus Lavender (London: Th. Haveland for W. Aspley, 1609). (Available via “Early English Books Online”)
- “Treaty of Tordesillas, June 7, 1494.”  
[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/15th\\_century/mod001.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/15th_century/mod001.asp)

### Week Two: North America Before European Contact

Class One: A Land of Bounty: North America’s Natural Environment

Class Two: “The People”: The Eastern Woodland Tribes

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

#### Secondary Readings:

- James Merrell, “The Indian’s New World: The Catawba Experience,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 41 (1984): 537-65. (JStor)
- Karen Ordahl Kupperman, “The Puzzle of the American Climate in the Early Colonial Period,” *American Historical Review* 87 (1982): 1262-1289. (JStor)
- Alan Taylor, *American Colonies*, 3-23.

#### Primary Readings:

- Richard Hakluyt, *Discourse of Western Planting* (1584), EXCERPT  
<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/amerbegin/exploration/text5/hakluyt.pdf>

- John White, Images of Native Americans from Roanoke Island (1580s)  
[http://www.britishmuseum.org/whats\\_on/past\\_exhibitions/2007/archive\\_a\\_new\\_world.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on/past_exhibitions/2007/archive_a_new_world.aspx)

### **Week Three: The Empires Arrive**

Class One: A Free-For-All?: Imperial Advancements and Conflicts in North America

Class Two: Late to the Party: Early English Colonial Efforts in North America

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

#### Secondary Readings:

- Anthony Pagden, *Lords of all the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain, and France, c. 1500-1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), Introduction.
- Alan Taylor, *American Colonies*, 23-50.

#### Primary Readings:

- Investigate news articles surrounding the recent discovery of hidden marks on colonial map. Start here:  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/04/us/map-markings-offer-clues-to-lost-colony.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/04/us/map-markings-offer-clues-to-lost-colony.html?_r=0)
- Christopher Columbus and Bartolome de las Casas, "Columbus's Landfall, 1552" (From *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*). (Packet)

### **Week Four: A World Made by Death—Conflict and Violence in the New World**

Class One: Conflict between Native Americans and Europeans

Class Two: Conflict among European Imperialists in the New World

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

#### Secondary Readings:

- Daniel K. Richter, "War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience," in Katz, *Colonial America*.
- Bernard Bailyn, *The Barbarous Years: The Peopling of British North America: The Conflict of Civilizations, 1600-1675* (New York: Knopf, 2012), Chapter Five: "A Flood, a Flood of Blood," pg. 97-117. (Packet)

#### Primary Readings:

- John Smith, *A True Relation of Such Occurrences and Accidents of Note* (London: John Tappe, 1608):



<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/jamestown-browse?id=J1007>

- Extracts from Bernal Diaz del Castillo, *The Discovery and Conquest of Mexico* (1517-1521). (Packet)

### **Week Five: A Model of English Colonization?—The Puritans and the Chesapeake**

Class One: The Puritans: Hardly the Rule for America

Class Two: From Disaster to Payload: The Jamestown Experiment

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

Secondary Readings:

- Taylor, *American Colonies*, 138-187.
- Michael Zuckerman, "The Social Context of Democracy in Massachusetts," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 25 (1968): 523-44. (JStor)

Primary Readings:

- John Smith, *The Generall Historie of Virginia* (London: Sparkes, 1624): <http://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/smith/menu.html>
- John Winthrop, "City Upon a Hill (1630)" <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/winthrop.htm>

### **Week Six: Imperial Rivalries—the Dutch, French, and Spanish Colonial Efforts**

Class One: "The Devil Shits Dutchmen": New Netherland

Class Two: Not Alone: New France and the Spanish Borderlands

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

Secondary Readings:

- Pagden, *Lords of all the World*, Chapter One
- James F. Brooks, *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), Chapter One (Packet)

Primary Readings:

- *The Emblem of Ingratitude: A True Relation of the Unjust, Cruel and Barbarous Proceedings Against the English at Amboyna* (London, 1672). Available via Early English Books Online.
- Adriaen Van der Donck, *Description of New Netherland* (1640)

<http://solomon.eena.alexanderstreet.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/cgi-bin/asp/philo/eena/getpart.pl?S3105-D018>

- Johannes Vingboons “View of New York (1664)” IMAGE

<http://www.geheugenvannederland.nl/?/en/items/KONB04:4-VELH619-14>

### **Week Seven: Many Thousands Gone—Slavery in Colonial America**

Class One: The Worst Transatlantic Experience: The Middle Passage

Class Two: Inherent Inequality: Servitude and Slavery in Colonial North America

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

Secondary Readings:

-Alden T. Vaughan, “Slaveholders’ “Hellish Principles”: A Seventeenth-Century Critique,” *Colonial America*.

-April Lee Hatfield, “Chesapeake Slavery in an Atlantic Context,” *Colonial America*.

Primary Readings:

- Collection of Virginia Slave Laws from 1660:

<http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/bdorseyl/41docs/24-sla.html>

- Thomas Phillips, *Journal of a Voyage Made in the Hannibal, 1693-94*, Excerpt:

<http://www.virtualjamestown.org/DonnanVoyageCombine.pdf>

- Richard Frethorne, “Letter to his Father and Mother, March 20, April 2 & 3, 1623”:

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6475>

### **Week Eight: The Burgeoning British Empire at Home and Abroad**

Class One: What’s Going on at Home?: The Glorious Revolution

Class Two: A World Made by...?: Eighteenth-Century English Colonial Prosperity

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

Secondary Readings:

- John Murrin, “The Menacing Shadow of Louis XIV and the Rage of Jacob Leisler: The Constitutional Ordeal of Seventeenth-Century New York,” *Colonial America*.

- Taylor, *American Colonies*, 301-338.

Primary Readings:

- Samuel Prince's Letter Describing the Boston Uprising (1689):  
<http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/bdorseyl/41docs/42-pri.html>
- A Letter from a Gentleman of the City of New York (1689):  
<http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/bdorseyl/41docs/43-gen.html>

**Week Nine: The Empires Clash**

Class One: The Great War for Empire: The Seven Years' War

Class Two: Fallout: An Emerging American Identity

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

Secondary Readings:

- Paul Kelton, "The British and Indian War: Cherokee Power and the Fate of Empire in North America," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69 (2012): 763-792. JStor.
- Fred Anderson, "George Washington Enters the World Stage," *Colonial America*.
- Taylor, *American Colonies*, 420-444.

Primary Readings:

- Newspaper Assignment: Use the *Virginia Gazette* (located here <http://research.history.org/DigitalLibrary/BrowseVG.cfm>) to view stories relating to the Seven Years' War. Find Four.

**Week Ten: The Development of Race: Being African in Colonial America**

Class One: Others: The Development of Race and Slavery in the Atlantic World

Class Two: From African to African American: Fashioning an African American Culture

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

Secondary Readings:

- Alden T. Vaughan, "The Origins Debate: Slavery and Racism in Seventeenth-Century Virginia," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 97 (July 1989): 311-54.
- Philip D. Morgan, "Social Transactions between Whites and Blacks," *Colonial America*.

Primary Readings:

- William Byrd II, "Excerpts from *The Secret Diary* (1709-1711)" Packet.

- Oludauh Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (London, 1789), Chapter Two.  
[http://history.hanover.edu/texts/equiano/equiano\\_contents.html](http://history.hanover.edu/texts/equiano/equiano_contents.html)

### **Week Eleven: Gender: Women's Roles in Colonial America**

Class One: The Forgotten Half: Women's Positions in Colonial American Society

Class Two: A Deadly Intersection: African and Native American Women

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

#### Secondary Readings:

- Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "Wheels, Looms, and the Gender Division of Labor in Eighteenth-Century New England," *William and Mary Quarterly* 55 (1998): 3-38. JStor.
- Wendy Anne Warren, "'The Cause of Her Grief': the Rape of a Slave in Early New England," *Colonial America*.

#### Primary Readings:

- Pierre de Charlevoix, "The Role of Women in Huron Society (1721)" Packet.
- Mary Rowlandson, *The Narrative of Captivity and the Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (1682)  
<http://www.library.csi.cuny.edu/dept/history/lavender/rownarr.html>
- Newspaper: Find three "runaway," "slave-for-sale," or "wanted" advertisements for female slaves in the *Virginia Gazette*.  
<http://research.history.org/DigitalLibrary/BrowseVG.cfm>

### **Week Twelve: Consumer Cultures: The Consumer Revolution and British North America**

Class One: A World Made By Trade—The Consumer Revolution in the Atlantic World

Class Two: Consumer Consciousness—Consumerism and Globalization in the British American Colonies

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

#### Secondary Readings:

- T.H. Breen, "'The Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century," *Colonial America*

- David Hancock, "Commerce and Conversation in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic: the Invention of Madeira Wine," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 29 (1998): 197-219.

Primary Readings:

- Find at least three examples of all the consumer goods available to colonists before 1776 in the *Virginia Gazette*.

<http://research.history.org/DigitalLibrary/BrowseVG.cfm>

- Dr. Alexander Hamilton, "Excerpt from *Itinerarium* (1744)," Tuesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>.

[http://mith.umd.edu/eada/html/display.php?docs=hamilton\\_itinerarium.xml](http://mith.umd.edu/eada/html/display.php?docs=hamilton_itinerarium.xml)

- Sarah Kemble Knight, "Excerpt from Journal (1704)," 40-42.

[http://mith.umd.edu/eada/html/display.php?docs=knight\\_journal.xml&action=show](http://mith.umd.edu/eada/html/display.php?docs=knight_journal.xml&action=show)

### **Week Thirteen: So Many Souls to be Saved: Religious Development in Colonial America**

Class One: Witchcraft: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis

Class Two: The First Great Awakening

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

Secondary Readings:

- Richard Latner, "Salem Witchcraft, Factionalism, and Social Change Reconsidered: Were Salem's Witch-Hunters Modernization's Failures?," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 65 (2008): 423-448. JStor.

- David J. Silverman, "Indians, Missionaries, and Religious Translation: Creating Wampanoag Christianity in Seventeenth-Century Martha's Vineyard," *Colonial America*.

- Frank Lambert, "'Peddler in Divinity': George Whitfield and the Great Awakening, 1737-1745," *Colonial America*.

Primary Readings:

- George Whitefield, "The Folly and Danger of Being Not Righteous Enough (mid-eighteenth century)"

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/whitefield/sermons.xi.html>

- Read this collection of letters sent from Reverend John Higginson to various people during the Salem trials.

<http://salem.lib.virginia.edu/letters/index.html>

### **Week Fourteen: An Age of Wonders: The Age of Enlightenment in Colonial America**

Class One: Citizens of the World: Enlightenment Thought in the Atlantic World

Class Two: Changing Contours: The 'Enlightened' World of Benjamin Franklin

Class Three: Discussion of Readings/Lecture

Secondary Readings:

- Roy Porter, "Matrix of Modernity," *History Today* 51 (April, 2001). (JStor)
- James Delbourgo, "Common Sense, Useful Knowledge, and Matters of Fact in the Late Enlightenment: The Transatlantic Career of Perkins's Tractors," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 61 (2004): 643-684. JStor.

Primary Readings:

- Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography* (London, 1793)  
<http://www.earlyamerica.com/lives/franklin/>
- Find examples of "enlightened" thought in the *Virginia Gazette* (pre-1776)  
<http://research.history.org/DigitalLibrary/BrowseVG.cfm>

### **Week Fifteen: Reflections on Colonial America and Globalization**

Class One: Who was a "Colonial American?"

Class Two: Are the colonies best understood in a local, regional, or transatlantic/global context?

Secondary Readings:

- Joyce Chaplin, "Expansion and Exceptionalism in Early American History," *Journal of American History*, 89 (March 2003): 1431-1455. JStor.
- Jeremy Adelman and Stephon Aron, "From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation States, and Peoples in Between in North American History," *American Historical Review* 104 (June 1999): 814-841. JStor.