

Enlightenment and Revolution in Early America, 1750-1820

HIS 310-01; Fall 2007
Mon & Wed, 2:15-4:05; Mears 202

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Office Hours: Tue, Thur, Fri: 2:00-4:00

Course Overview

Historians are still struggling to make sense of the various upheavals which transformed almost every aspect of American society in the second half of the eighteenth century. The sheer scope and pace of change has led scholars to identify a growing list of “revolutions” that went well beyond the more familiar contest for independence: the “commercial revolution,” the “consumer revolution,” the “revolution against patriarchy,” the “information revolution,” the “evangelical revolution,” and the “revolution in class relations.” This seminar will introduce students to the era’s dynamic currents by exploring how exactly these movements related to the broader forces unleashed by the American Enlightenment and the American Revolution. In the first half of the course, as preparation for writing independent research papers, we will analyze some of the major scholarly accounts of the Enlightenment and American revolutions. Students will also work with a wide array of historical texts, documents, and artifacts to prepare them for the interpretive issues and challenges involved in conducting independent research. In the second half of the course, students will develop and write their own research papers on a topic growing out of the seminar’s focus.

Required Text

Available for purchase at the Campus Bookstore. A copy is also available on Reserve at Burling Library.

Gordon S. Wood, The Radicalism of the American Revolution (1991).

Recommended Texts

The following books will be on one day reserve at Burling Library to provide you with greater detail and context regarding the key issues of the course. Students who do not have a familiarity with early American history may want to consult some of these surveys immediately to gain a better sense of the period. But all students will be expected to use this reserve material (where appropriate) to help in defining their research projects.

Jack Greene and J.R. Pole, eds., Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era (1984).

Ned Landsman, From Colonials to Provincials: American Thought and Culture, 1680-1760 (1997).

Robert Shalhope, The Roots of Democracy: American Thought and Culture, 1760-1800 (1990).

Michael Warner, The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America (1990).

Roy Porter, The Creation of the Modern World: The Untold Story of the British Enlightenment (2000).

Henry May, The Enlightenment in America (1976).

Kenneth Silverman, A Cultural History of American Revolution (1976).

Larry Tise, The American Counterrevolution: A Retreat from Liberty (1998).

Robert St. George, ed., Material Life in America 1600-1860 (1988).

T.H. Breen, Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence (2004)

Course Requirements

Class Participation

Class discussion provides our main opportunity to examine and debate the complexities of early American history. It is crucial, therefore, that students come to each class fully prepared to participate and discuss the topics at hand. This involves not only completing the assigned readings prior to class, but also taking the appropriate time to think through the particular issues and questions that emerge from each text. Accordingly, each student will be expected to post one discussion question about the readings on Blackboard by 8:00pm every Sunday evening (except for the first week). Everyone should think about these questions and be prepared to discuss them on Monday. Beginning with the third week, you will also have a variety of very short research assignments that are designed as an integral part of the “Primary Source Workshop” for each Wednesday. These will be evaluated as part of your class participation grade. Since class participation will count for 20% of your final grade, please make a serious effort to engage the readings, formulate questions, and contribute your ideas in class.

Paper Topic (Sept. 28th)

Students will prepare a short statement (1-2 pages) describing the topic they wish to explore for their research project. This paper should articulate, in a thoughtful manner, the central issues and questions that will guide your research as well as how your topic connects to the major themes of the course. Further guidelines will be discussed in class.

Annotated Bibliography (Oct. 5th)

Each student will prepare an annotated bibliography that identifies the key sources—both primary and secondary—that will be used to conduct your research project. The bibliography should consist of three sections: 1.) Historiography (i.e. the articles or books written by scholars that deal directly with your topic and that you plan to either build upon or challenge in your research) 2.) Methodology (i.e. scholarly works that present a particular method or interpretive approach that you plan to employ in your own project.) 3.) Primary Sources.

The bibliography is not meant to be an exhaustive or finalized list of what you will examine. Your focus will no doubt evolve as the semester progresses and as you begin conducting serious research into your topic. Think of the annotated bibliography then as an initial blueprint for your project.

Research Prospectus (Oct. 19th)

This 5 page paper will explain the major components of your project. Students should explain how their research questions, methodology, and sources come together to make a compelling project—one that can contribute to the historical understanding of the period. Further guidelines will be discussed in class.

Presentations & Peer Review

An essential part of academic life is learning to engage in a constructive dialogue with others. Scholars, after all, rarely work in isolation. So students will be expected to make presentations in class about their research projects and to work in smaller collaborative groups as the semester progresses. In weeks 9 and 10, each person will give a 10 minute presentation to the class on their research and respond to questions from the group. At that time, I will also assign students into small groups (of 3 people) based upon similarity of interests. These smaller groups will meet during my office hours to discuss the progress and challenges you encounter as you move towards your final paper. Each student will also be responsible for reading the advanced draft of their fellow group members and submitting a constructive peer review to me. We will then meet in week 14 (as small groups) to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of your drafts as well as the priorities for the revision process.

Advanced Draft (Nov. 28th)

A complete draft of your research paper (20-25 pages) is due on November 28th. It is critical that you produce a finished draft by this point so that you will have the appropriate time to revise your work in light of the peer discussions and instructor's suggestions.

Final Draft (Dec. 20th)

Your final draft (20-25 pages) is due by **5:00pm on Thursday, December 20th**. Please note that absolutely no papers will be accepted after Friday December 21st. The college requires that all coursework be submitted by the end of exam week unless you are taking an incomplete in the class.

Late assignments

Late papers will receive a deduction of 1/3 of a letter grade per day. Exceptions may be made for legitimate medical or personal issues.

Disabilities

If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Associate Dean and Director of Academic Advising, Joyce Stern, whose office is located in Rosenfield Center (x3702).

Grading Policy

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Percentage of Final Grade</u>
1.) Paper Topic (Sept. 28)	5%
2.) Annotated Bibliography (Oct. 5)	5%
3.) Research Prospectus (Oct. 19)	10%
4.) Presentations & Peer Review (Weeks 9,10, & 14)	10%
5.) Advanced Draft (Nov. 28)	10%
6.) Final Draft (Dec. 20)	40%
7.) Class Participation	20%

Class Schedule & Reading Assignments

All reading assignments (except for Gordon Wood's Radicalism) will be posted on Blackboard or distributed in class.

Section I: *Survey of Revolutionary America*

Week 1

Monday (Sept. 3): **America before the Revolution**

Reading Due: Wood, Radicalism, pp. ix-92.

Wednesday (Sept. 5): **How Radical was Republicanism?**

Reading Due: Wood, Radicalism, pp. 95-213.

Week 2

Monday (Sept. 10): **Democratic Culture: The Fulfillment or Abandonment
of the Revolution?**

Reading Due: Wood, Radicalism, pp. 229-347.

Wednesday (Sept. 12): **Assessing Wood's Interpretation**

Reading Due: Joyce Appleby, "The Radical Recreation of the American Republic"
Michael Zuckerman, "The Genteel Radicalism of Gordon Wood"
Alan Taylor, "Common Revolutionaries"

Section II: *Case Studies in Cultural Change*

Week 3 The Enlightenment and the Public Sphere

Monday (Sept. 17): **The Social History of Ideas**

Reading Due: Daniel Boorstin, "The Myth of an American Enlightenment"
Margaret Jacob, "The Enlightenment Redefined"
David Jaffe, "The Village Enlightenment"

Wednesday (Sept. 19): **Primary Source Workshop: Assessing Enlightenment Culture**
 Reading Due: Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography.

Week 4 *Print Culture and the Flow of Information*

Monday (Sept. 24): **The Social Implications of Print**
 Reading Due: Rhys Isaac, “Books and the Social Authority of Learning”
 Ned Landsman, From Colonials to Provincials, ch.2
 Richard Brown, “Knowledge is Power”

Wednesday (Sept. 26): **Primary Source Workshop: Assessing Print Culture**
 Reading Due: “Documents of Juliana Library Company”

Preliminary Paper Topics Due Friday (Sept. 28)

Week 5 *The Transforming Hand of the Market*

Monday (Oct. 1): **The Rise of a Commercial Society**
 Reading Due: T.H. Breen, “Baubles of Britain”
 David Waldstreicher, “Reading the Runaways”
 Steven Watts, “Masks, Morals, and the Market”

Wednesday (Oct. 3): **Primary Source Workshop: Assessing Market Culture**
 Reading Due: Online Newspaper Assignment

Annotated Bibliography Due Friday (Oct. 5)

Week 6 *Manners & Material Culture*

Monday (Oct. 8): **The Rules and Rituals of Everyday Life**
 Reading Due: John Brooke, “Burial, Baptism, and Community”
 Peter Hoffer, “The Revolution of the Senses”;

Wednesday (Oct. 10): **Primary Source Workshop: Assessing Material Culture**
 Reading Due: “The School of Good Manners”
 Material Artifact Assignment

Week 7 *Religious Awakenings*

Monday (Oct. 15): **Evangelical Religion & Democratic Culture**
 Reading Due: Timothy Hall, “The American Revolution and the Religious Public Sphere”
 Janet Lindman, “Acting the Manly Christian”
 Nathan Hatch, “The Democratization of American Christianity”

Wednesday (Oct. 17): **Primary Source Workshop: Assessing Religious Culture**

Reading Due: Jonathan Edwards, "A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God"
 Bridget Fletcher, "Hymns and Spiritual Songs"
 "Diary of Hannah Heaton"

Research Prospectus Due Friday (Oct. 19)***Fall Break (October 20-28)******Week 8 The Revolution & the Private Sphere***Monday (Oct. 29): **Patriarchy and Paternalism in America**

Reading Due: Fliegelman, "Prodigals and Pilgrims"

Wednesday (Oct. 31): **Primary Source Workshop: Assessing Patriarchal Culture**

Reading Due: TBA

III. *Independent Research & Presentations****Week 9 Project Presentations***

Monday (Nov. 5): (TBA)

Wednesday (Nov. 7): (TBA)

Week 10 Project Presentations

Monday (Nov. 12): (TBA)

Week 11 Research & Writing

No class meetings

Week 12 Writing

No class meetings

Week 13 Writing

No class meetings

Advanced Draft Due Wednesday, November 28th

Week 14 Peer Review

Small group meetings (TBA)

Week 15 Revising

No class meetings

Final Draft Due Thursday, December 20th