

History of the United States I (512:201:08)
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:30 – 3:50, Hill Hall, room 105
Instructor: Jessica Criales
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Course overview:

What causes drove and facilitated the European colonization of the Americas, and how did indigenous people respond? How did the American colonies become an independent nation? What economic, political, cultural, and geographic forces shaped the development of the United States? Who gained power in the new nation, and who was excluded? What were the causes and effects of the Civil War?

This course attempts to answer these and many other questions through the careful study of the history of the North American continent, focusing on the region of the current United States, from prehistoric times through 1877. We will analyze both primary sources (first-hand accounts) and secondary sources (scholarly analysis) in wrestling with the complicated foundations of our national history. In addition, we will take time to consider how United States history is told and represented in popular culture and/or in the average elementary and high school classrooms. What is the difference between our conception of United States' history, and the evidence from historical facts?

Goals: By the end of the course, students should:

- Be familiar with the development of colonial North America and the various cultures that combined to shape the region
- Be able to give their own explanation for major events in colonial American and United States history, such as colonization, independence, and the Civil War
- Be able to analyze and interpret a primary source via a close reading and understanding of the context of the source's production
- Be able to deconstruct and critique secondary source arguments
- Be able to create a strong thesis statement for an interpretive essay, and use a combination of secondary and primary sources to support their arguments

Required Book:

Nancy A Hewitt and Steven F. Lawson, *Exploring American Histories: A Brief Survey with Sources*. Volume 1: to 1877. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013. ISBN #: 978-0-312-41000-1 (Electronic version is also acceptable, and renting from the bookstore or from amazon.com is recommended.)

Other readings will be posted on blackboard. Both paper assignments will require outside research and the use of books or sources typically available at university or public libraries.

Grading and Assignments:

Participation – 20%

Active participation and preparation for class are an essential part of the learning experience. The participation grade will be based on oral contributions to discussion sections (five times over the course of the semester), short writing assignments, in-class presentations, attendance, and occasional quizzes on the reading at the instructor's discretion. Questions on the

exams will draw from both the lectures and the textbook. Information from the other readings may also appear on exams, and will be necessary to complete the papers. There will be short assignments connected to the majority of non-textbook readings, especially in preparation for discussion.

Your voice is important to our conversation! By speaking in class, you help other students learn, and the more perspectives we hear in the classroom, the better our course will be. If you are shy or unaccustomed to speaking in class, let me know, and I can offer you some strategies and adaptations for class participation. Do **not**, however, assume that you have an “A” in participation simply because you have shown up to class and listened to the lecture or discussion for that day. In my classroom, it is very easy to have your participation grade be your lowest grade overall. To be successful, you must demonstrate your engagement with the material and your ability to collaborate in the learning process. Each class, even those marked “lecture,” will include some discussion and participation by students.

Papers – 40%

Essay #1 – Myths and realities – 15%

Three to five page paper analyzing the popular representation of an historical event, as compared to scholarly analysis (both your own analysis, based on primary sources, as well as historians’ analysis). This paper will be tied to an in-class presentation.

Essay #2 – Primary source analysis – 25%

Four to six page paper analyzing the meaning of a word that you choose, based on research you conduct using newspaper databases, either from 1600 – 1781, or from 1781 – 1877.

The papers are due on October 15 and December 3, but note that both papers are fairly independent from the course material covered, so you can start working on them as soon as you’d like. I highly recommend turning them in early. **Late papers will incur a significant reduction in their grade – in all but the most exceptional cases, to a C or lower.** If you need an extension, you must talk to me in person by the class before the paper is due – extensions will not be granted over e-mail. Of course, I will always accept papers turned in before the deadline!

Exams – 40%

Midterm – 20%

The midterm will be a combination of an in-class, closed book short definitions exam and a timed, take-home, open book essay exam on October 22.

Final – 20%

The final exam will be a combination of an in-class, closed book short definitions exam and a timed, take-home, open book essay exam. Our final exam is scheduled for Thursday, December 17 from 11:45 to 2:45 pm.

Attendance:

Attendance will be taken at every class and will be consequential to your grade (especially given that it is impossible to participate if you don’t attend). **Any student who misses eight classes through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit from the course and should withdraw.**

Discussion sections:

Every other Tuesday, we will divide into two groups of 16-17 students for discussion. Group one will come from 2:25 – 3:10. Group two will come at 3:10 and stay until 3:55. You will sign up for one group on blackboard in the second week of class.

Honor system:

You must follow the University's guidelines on academic integrity. As is required by the department, all students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge. To receive credit, every major assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: "On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination / assignment." Papers will be uploaded on blackboard and reviewed by turnitin.com, which will flag any possible instances of plagiarism. (We will review the definition of plagiarism before the first essay.) Assignments that are found to be counter to the honor code will receive a grade of 0.

Classroom standards:

Please be respectful to your fellow students and keep distracting behaviors to a minimum. I expect full engagement from students in the classroom for the entirety of the class period. This means arriving on time and staying for the duration of the course, not carrying on side conversations, not doing other homework in class, and not using your cell phone or other electronic device for non-class purposes. If you want to use an electronic device (laptop, tablet) to take notes, you must get permission from me first, and I will ask you to show me your note-taking method.

History is the study of real people and real events. Our readings and conversations will occasionally address physical and sexual violence, as well as issues of race, ethnicity, and otherness. Please come speak with me if you think you will find any of these topics triggering so we can create a strategy for dealing with them.

My goal is to offer each student the opportunity to be successful in the course. The assignments and assessments (papers, exams) have been designed to give you the tools necessary to fulfill the course expectations, and the ability to demonstrate your mastery of the subject. For those who need extra support or flexibility, due to disabilities, language barriers, complicated personal lives, or other issues, I am more than willing to work with you to develop a plan that allows you the best chance at achieving the course goals. On the other hand, you must be proactive in developing these plans with me. My general teaching philosophy is to be flexible about ways to reach certain standards, but very strict about the standards themselves. An easy way to assess your own progress in the course is to make sure that you can answer the guiding question of a given class (see the class schedule) a day or two after the class has been held.

Contact:

I will hold office hours by appointment, generally between 3:50 and 5:00 on Tuesdays, and between 1:30 and 2:30 on Thursdays. E-mail is usually the best way to get ahold of me, and I will respond within 48 hours if you email me during the week (longer on weekends). E-mails should be addressed to me in a professional manner, using appropriate grammar, capitalization, and full sentences; I retain the right to not respond to an e-mail if it does not meet these standards. (In my role as an educator, however, I will let you know if you need to resend an e-mail.)

The contents of this syllabus are subject to change at the instructor's discretion. All changes will be posted on Blackboard; please make sure to check Blackboard/your Rutgers e-mail frequently.

Schedule of readings and assignments:

Date	Topic	Assignment (due at start of class):
Tuesday, Sept. 1	Lecture: Pre-Colombian history	none
Thursday, Sept. 3	Lecture: European context, Spanish conquest	<i>Exploring American Histories (EAH)</i> , chapter 1
Tuesday, Sept. 8	NO CLASS (LABOR DAY)	none
Thursday, Sept. 10	Lecture: Jamestown (& review of syllabus)	None
Tuesday, Sept. 15	Myths & realities: Pocahontas	On blackboard: Townsend, <i>Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma</i> , chapters 3 & 4
Thursday, Sept. 17	Lecture: Puritans & New England	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 2
Tuesday, Sept. 22	Discussion: King Phillip's War	<i>EAH</i> , document project 2 (pages 57-64) One-page written assignment: answer one of the six questions on p. 63 of <i>EAH</i> . Turn in hard copy at the end of class.
Thursday, Sept. 24	Lecture: Labor and society in the Southern colonies	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 3
Tuesday, Sept. 29	Myths & realities: Life in the Colonies Student presentations on <i>Witch of Blackbird Pond</i> by Elizabeth George Speare, or <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> by Nathaniel Hawthorne	Blackboard: Hall, "The Mental World of Samuel Sewall"
Thursday, Oct. 1	Lecture: Borders, Expansion, and Conflicts of Empire	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 4
Tuesday, Oct. 6	Discussion: The Great Awakening	<i>EAH</i> , document project 4 (pages 123-127) One-page written assignment: What are the social/political ramifications of the Great Awakening texts?
Thursday, Oct. 8	Lecture: Seven Years' War	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 5
Tuesday, Oct. 13	Myths & realities: Aftermath of the Seven Years' War Student presentations on <i>Last of the Mohicans</i> (either the book by James Fenimore Cooper or the 1936 or 1992 movie)	Blackboard: Selections from Fred Anderson, <i>Crucible of War</i>

Thursday, Oct. 15	Lecture: Revolutionary War I	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 6 **PAPERS DUE**
Tuesday, Oct. 20	Lecture: Revolutionary War II	
Thursday, Oct. 22	MIDTERM	In-class short definitions, followed by 1-hour take-home exam on Blackboard
Tuesday, Oct. 27	Myths & Realities: Revolutionary War Student presentations on <i>1776</i> (the 1972 musical), <i>Johnny Tremain</i> by Ester Forbes, or <i>Assassin's Creed 3</i> (videogame)	Blackboard: McDonnell, "Class War? Class Struggles During the American Revolution in Virginia"
Thursday, Oct 29	Lecture: Federalism & Constitutions	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 7
Tuesday, Nov. 3	Discussion: Whiskey Rebellion	<i>EAH</i> , document project 7 (pages 219 – 225). One-page written assignment: Should the Whiskey Rebellion be considered as part of the American Revolution?
Thursday, Nov. 5	Lecture: Capitalism and development in the Early Republic	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 8
Tuesday, Nov. 10	Myths & Realities: Life in the Early Republic Student presentations on <i>Lyddie</i> by Katherine Paterson, the "Erie Canal lesson plan" from Monroe Fordham (http://www.monroefordham.org/docs/LessonPlan1_Erie%20Canal.pdf) or <i>How the West was Won</i> (movie, 1962, parts 1 & 2 only)	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 11, p. 326-338
Thursday, Nov. 12	Lecture: Expansion, Mexican-American War, and Removal	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 9 (entire) and chapter 10, pages 307-317
Tuesday, Nov. 17	Discussion: Utopias & Reform Movements	<i>EAH</i> , document project 11 (pages 352-359) and chapter 11, pages 339-350 Written assignment: TBA
Thursday, Nov. 19	Lecture: Slavery and the South	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 12
Tuesday, Nov. 24	Myths & Realities: Representations of Slavery Student presentations on <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> by Harriet Beecher Stowe, the "Addy" American Girl book series, or the 2013 movie <i>12 Years a Slave</i>	Blackboard: Selections from Baptist, <i>The Half That Has Never Been Told</i> Bennet, " Addy Walker, American Girl " (online article)
Thursday, Nov. 26	NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING	
Tuesday, Dec. 1	Lecture: The Civil War	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 13

Thursday, Dec. 3	Myths & History: The Civil War in popular memory Student presentations on <i>Gettysburg</i> (1993 movie), or <i>The Red Badge of Courage</i> by Stephen Crane, or <i>Lincoln</i> (2012 movie)	Blackboard: Selections from Manning, <i>What this Cruel War Was Over</i> **Paper 2 due**
Tuesday, Dec. 8	Discussion: Reconstruction	<i>EAH</i> : document project and 14, pages 450-457 One-page writing assignment: Based on these documents, did the goals of Union or those of the Confederacy have more impact in shaping Southern life after the Civil War?
Thursday, Dec. 10	Lecture: Reconstruction	<i>EAH</i> , chapter 14

Notes on assignments:

All readings should be completed by the start of class. Please bring the readings to class and be prepared to discuss them.

Discussion assignments (one-page or less) should be brought to class. Late/missing discussion assignments will not be accepted, except in the case of excused absences. (Note that skipping a discussion section costs you up to 4% of your final grade – 2 points for the participation and 2 points for the paper).

Grade ranges: A: 92.1 – 100; B+: 86.1 – 92; B: 81.1 – 86; C+: 75.1 – 81; C: 70.1 – 75; D: 60-70; F: below 60. For discussion participation and assignments: check-plus: 2 points, check: 1.5 points, check-minus: 1 point; absent/incomplete: 0 points.

Essays should be submitted on Blackboard and turned in (hard copy) by 5 pm on the due date. Essays should be double-spaced, with numbered pages, and the student's name on the first page. All texts should be cited using footnotes in MLA/Chicago style. Here's an example of a footnote for a book.¹ Here's a footnote for a movie.² And here's one for a newspaper article – if you know the author's name, it goes before the title of the article, but most newspaper articles in the 1700s and 1800s didn't identify the author by name.³ When you quote a source a second time, you usually use just the author's name, a short version of the book title, and the page number, not the full citation.⁴ If you cite the same work twice in a row, you can replace all the citation information with "ibid" (Latin for "same as before").⁵

¹ Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766*, (New York: Vintage, 2001), 27.

² John Ford et al., dir. *How the West Was Won*. Film. MGM Studios, 1963.

³ "EXPERIMENT on TEA." *The Royal American Magazine, or Universal Repository of Instruction and Amusement*, 20 March 1774: 3.

⁴ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 15.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

Student presentations/papers: “Myths and Realities”

During the course of the semester, you will work with a group of approximately 2-3 students to give a presentation to the class on how key episodes in American history are remembered in the popular imagination. A good presentation will give the rest of the class a taste of the style and “flavor” of the book/movie/etc that you are analyzing, summarize the main points, identify themes, and compare and contrast it with the information given in the textbook, lectures, and other reading (especially the reading assigned for that day). Once you’ve identified some of the major themes of the work and some of the differences between the imagining of the story and the historical facts available, think about why the story was created in this way. Excellent presentations will have a better understanding of these differences by doing some light research into the time period when the work was created, and/or the background of the authors.

The purpose of these presentation is to give some substance to our classroom conversations about the ways that American history is remembered/taught/celebrated in the United States, so be sure to include ways for your fellow classmates to participate during your presentation. You might try suggesting certain topics for discussion, or asking students how well they know the myth vs. the reality.

The presentations should last around 10-15 minutes, depending on how many groups are presenting that day.

The list of topics/time periods and works of historical fiction are below. Most books can be purchased online quite inexpensively (less than \$10), or found at your local public library (Newark Public Library: npl.org). Since most of the books are children’s literature, they probably won’t be in the Rutgers University library system. All of the movies are available for online viewing at amazon.com (most for a small rental fee), and many are also on Hulu/Netflix/etc. Again, most aren’t available via Rutgers (unless you happen to own a VHS or a video disk player!). If you’d like to present a work that is not on the list, talk to me about it.

On your own (not with your group) you will also write a 3-5 page paper analyzing the historical source. Your argument will be similar to the one in your presentation, but more carefully thought out and argued, with more specific evidence. To get an “A” on the paper, you must cite at least three sources beyond the work you’re analyzing – probably the textbook, the article/book chapter assigned to the whole class for that week, and at least one other scholarly source you find yourself. To earn a passing grade, you must cite at least two sources, plus the work you’re analyzing. Make sure to focus on the historical content of the work, and not its artistic value (this isn’t a book report or movie review).

If you choose a presentation date in the first half of the semester, the “Myths and Realities” paper will be due on Oct. 15 and the “Primary Source Analysis” will be due on Dec. 3. If your presentation topic is from the second half of the semester, your “Primary Source Analysis” will be due on Oct. 15 and your “Myths and Realities” paper will be due Dec. 3. See next page for presentation options.

----- First half of semester topics -----

Sept 29: Life in the Colonies: *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*, Elizabeth George Speare, 1958
(American colonies, 1600- 1740) *The Scarlet Letter*, Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1850

Oct. 13: French & Indian War *Last of the Mohicans*, James Fenimore Cooper, 1826
(New England, 1740-1760) *Last of the Mohicans* [film], 1936
Last of the Mohicans [film], 1992

Oct. 27: Revolutionary War *Johnny Tremain* , Ester Forbes, 1943
(American colonies, 1770-1781) *1776* [film], 1972
paper due Nov. 3 *Assassin's Creed III* [videogame], 2012

----- Second half of semester topics -----

Nov. 11: Early Republic *Lyddie*, Katherine Patterson, 1991
(United States, 1800 – 1860) *How the West was Won* [film], parts 1 & 2, 1962
Erie Canal Lesson Plan, 2014
(http://www.monroefordham.org/docs/LessonPlan1_Erie%20Canal.pdf)

Nov. 24: Slavery *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe, 1852.
(United States, 1776 – 1865) *Addy: An American Girl* Series, Connie Porter, 1993
12 Years a Slave [film], 2013

December 3: Civil War *Red Badge of Courage*, Stephen Crane, 1865
(Union/Confederacy, 1861-1865) *Gettysburg* [film], 1993
paper due Dec. 8 *Lincoln* [film], 2012

Paper #2: Primary Source Analysis

For this paper, you will do your own research on the meaning of a word (your pick) in American culture. The meaning and context of words change over time – the easiest example is the word “gay,” which simply meant happy in the 1900s, and now can be used to describe sexual orientation and/or be used as a pejorative slur. Who counted as a “traitor” in the United States in the 1770s? Was the “frontier” a good place or a bad place to live in the 1840s? What did it mean to be “feminine” in 1820? In past years, students have discovered that the word “barn” appeared mostly in articles about crime, and therefore was a place where improper things took place; and that “slavery” during the Revolutionary War referred mainly to American “enslavement” to British authority, not African slavery in the United States.

First, choose your word and your time period. If your presentation topic was during the first half of the semester, your primary source analysis should be about something after the Revolutionary War (1776-1877) and will be due Dec. 3; if your presentation was in the second half, your primary source analysis should focus on the time period before the Revolution (1609-1775). I recommend narrowing your focus to only 10-15 years, or you’ll be overwhelmed with the results. You might want to use google’s ngram feature to make sure the word was in use during your time period. Think about alternate spellings of your word as well – for example, “pirates” was often spelled “pyrates” in colonial times.

Use Rutgers’s library portal to search for mentions of your word in newspaper articles. You’ll want to spend about a day gathering citations, making sure to save each article along with the date, newspaper title, and page number so you can cite them properly. You must collect at least TWENTY-FIVE quotes. You should include all 25 in a bibliography, even if you do not quote all of them in the body of your paper.

Once you have your evidence gathered, sit back and look at it all. Are there any patterns? Any themes that emerge? Are there changes over time? You might want to print out all the articles and spread them around you, trying to organize them as you see them, or maybe you want to create a spreadsheet and analyze the topics that way. Whatever method works for you, try to create a coherent argument by the end. You should NOT cite or consult any other sources besides the newspaper databases. The purpose of this assignment is to allow you to test your skills as a historian, analyzing primary evidence on your own.

Your paper should be 4-6 pages, double spaced, plus a bibliography of all the newspaper articles at the end.

Databases (go to library.rutgers.edu, click on “View all Databases,” then scroll down to the database you want):

1. American Periodical Series Online (1730 – 1900)
2. Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, 1639–1800
3. North American Women’s Letters and Diaries: Colonial Times to 1950
4. The Pennsylvania Gazette, 1728–1800

Additional option (doesn’t require Rutgers log-in):

5. Virginia Gazette Index (1736 – 1780): <http://research.history.org/DigitalLibrary/va-gazettes/VGPPIndex.cfm> (Note: not searchable by key word, but offers an index of numerous common words)