THE AMERICANS: FROM COLONIAL TIMES TO 1877

Beginning with encounters between Native Americans and the first Euro-American colonists, we will examine trade, diplomacy, conflict, and cultural exchange on North American shores. In addition, we will explore socio-economic distinctions and ties between the developing colonies.

The emergence of popular self-government forms the next unit of the course. Enlightenment thought, colonial political institutions, and the colonies' gradual alienation from Great Britain will be addressed as factors shaping eighteenth-century Republicanism, which culminated in the American Revolution. All wars have repercussions beyond their immediate purpose; we will consider how the Revolutionary War changed relations between men and women, as well as between white and African-American.

Moving into the nineteenth century, we will examine how Americans began to form a national identity, both political and cultural. We will explore the ways that territorial expansion, industrialization, and conflict over slavery shaped American life. The struggles between Native Americans and whites over sovereignty and land, the search for community in a rapidly changing society, and the drift toward sectionalism form crucial parts of this story. Lastly, we will investigate the great conflict that pitted brother against brother, the American Civil War and its aftermath, Reconstruction.

Course Structure
The course is arranged both thematically and chronologically. Class time will include both lecture and discussion. Periodically, guest speakers, workshops and films will break routine and add further dimension.

Required Texts
Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave (1845; Rpt., New York: Viking Penguin, 1982).

Course Packet: A small collection of primary sources, available at the History Office, Clough 308.

Reading Assignments should be completed on the day they are listed. The Henretta text provides a chronological outline of events, while Marcus and Burner provide vivid first-person accounts of events and conditions that shaped everyday life.

The Franklin, Ulrich, Douglass, and Shaara readings will allow you to explore some topics in more depth. Benjamin Franklin's autobiography brings to life Enlightenment thought; Martha Ballard's story, gender and community in rural New England; Frederick Douglass's narrative, African-American views on slavery; and Michael Shaara's novel, the meanings of the Civil War to those who fought it.

Exams will give you practice developing an interpretation and sustaining it with argument and illustration. There will be two in-class essay exams, and one take-home essay exam. Grades will be based upon the following:

- 1st exam: 25%
- 2nd exam: 25%
- Final exam: 25%
- Class Participation: 25%

Class Participation is important. Discussions, workshops, and student presentations will require your full attention. Missed workshops and discussions cannot be made up. Over three absences will cause your course grade to drop by a full letter. Varsity athletics, severe illness, or family tragedy are the only exceptions to this rule.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

W Aug 26  Introduction to the Course

**INVASION, CONTACT, AND COLONIZATION**

F Aug 28  Lecture/Discussion: European Expansionism and the Idea of the “Indian.”


Henretta, pp.3-7, 11-23.
M Aug 31  Exercise in Historical Investigation: The Mystery of Roanoke

Reading: John White, "The Lost Colony of Roanoke," America Firsthand, pp.22-30. [Handout]

Henretta, pp.37-42.
An Intact Society: The Seneca Nation

F Sept 4 Workshop: Cross-Cultural Encounters

Reading: “Revolt of the Pueblo Indians,” America

M Sept 7 Labor Day Holiday

W Sept 9 New England: The Algonquians


Henretta, pp.63-66.

F Sept 11 New England: The Puritans


M Sept 14 The Chesapeake: Powhatans and Englishmen

Reading: John Smith, "Description of Virginia," America Firsthand, pp.29-32.

Henretta, pp.43-52.

W Sept 16 Slavery in the New World

Reading: Oloudah Equiano, "The African Slave

Henretta, pp.78-92.

F Sept 18 Preindustrial Arts Workshop

Reading: Henretta, pp.92-94, 104-08.
AMERICAN REVOLUTION
M Sept 21  Enlightenment Thought in America

Reading: Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography.
Film Clip, “The Romantic Horizon.”

W Sept 23  Discussion: Enlightenment Thought in America

Reading: Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography.
Henretta, pp.116-22.

F Sept 25  Discontent in the Colonies

Reading: Henretta, pp.94-100, 108-15, 122-34.

M Sept 28  Imperial Crises

Reading: Thomas Preston, "A British Officer’s
“Colonial Accounts of the Boston Massacre,”
America Firsthand, pp.100-07.
Henretta, pp.137-55.

W Sept 30  Approaching Revolution

Reading: Henretta, pp.155-64.

F Oct 2  Discussion: Revolutions Within the War

Reading: “A Spy’s View of Washington’s Army, 1775,” pp.143-45. [Handout]
Joseph Martin, "A Soldier's View of the Victory
“Unruly Women: Jemima Wilkinson and Deborah Sampson Gannett,” pp.288-89. [Handout]

** Start reading Ulrich, A Midwife’s Tale **
M Oct 5 War and Social Change: African-Americans and the American Revolution

**FIRST EXAM QUESTIONS HANDED OUT**

W Oct 7  War and Social Change: Anglo Women and the American Revolution

Reading: Eliza Pinckney, “A Republican Woman,” America Firsthand, pp.88


Henretta, pp.187-90, 200-01.

F Oct 9  Discussion: Women in the Early Republic

Reading: Laurel Ulrich, A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812, pp.3-35; 72-101; 134-161.

M Oct 12  **FIRST ESSAY EXAM**

THE NEW NATION

W Oct 14  The Constitution of 1787

Reading: Mr. Parsons et al., “Ratifying the Constitution,” America Firsthand, pp.131-37.

Henretta, pp.198-99, 201-03, 206-17.

F Oct 16  National Identity in American Painting

Reading: Henretta, pp.246-48, 273-78.


M Oct 19  FALL RECESS
AN EXPANDING NATION
W Oct 21  Early Industrialization


F Oct 23  Politics in the Age of Jackson

   Reading: Henretta, pp.327-36, 347-54.

M Oct 26  Ideology of Separate Spheres


W Oct 28  Antebellum Reform: Temperance and Other Forms of Salvation


F Oct 30  Antebellum Reform: Abolitionism

   Henretta, pp.373-80.

M Nov 2  Native American Dilemma: Sovereignty vs. Wardship

   Reading: John Ross, "The Trail of Tears," America Firsthand, pp.169-75.
**SECOND EXAM QUESTIONS HANDED OUT**
W Nov 4 Discussion: The Overland Trail: Myth and Reality
Reading: John Faragher, "Women and Their Families on the Overland Trail," p.246-67. [Handout]


Henretta, pp.407-12.

F  Nov 6   Westward Migration: Religion and Gold


Priscilla Evans, "Pulling a Handcart to the Mormon

M  Nov 9   **SECOND ESSAY EXAM**

THE CIVIL WAR

W  Nov 11  Sectionalism, State's Rights, and the Expansion of Slavery

Reading:  Henretta, pp.249-56.

F  Nov 13  Plantation Society

Reading:  Charles Ball et al., "Life Under the Lash," America Firsthand, pp.231-37.


Begin reading Douglass and Jacobs.

M  Nov 16  Discussion: African-American Abolitionists

Reading: Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave.

Harriet Jacobs, "Life of a Female Slave," America
Henretta, pp.424-25.
W  Nov 18   Conflict Over Slavery


F  Nov 20   A House Divided

   Reading: Henretta, pp.429-43.
   Michael Shaara, The Killer Angels.

M  Nov 23   Civil War

   Reading: Henretta, pp.443-55.
   Michael Shaara, The Killer Angels.

Nov 25-29   THANKSGIVING BREAK

M  Nov 30   Film: The Civil War ("Bottom Rail on Top", "Lincoln at
            "Surrender at Appomattox," "Legacy").

   Reading: George Nichols, "Marching With Sherman's Army,
           America Firsthand, pp.254-60.

   Pauline Heyward, "A Southern Women's Wartime
   Henretta, pp.478-82.

W  Dec 2    Discussion: The Soldiers’ Story

   Reading: Michael Shaara, The Killer Angels.

   Clara Barton, "Nursing on the Firing Line,"
           America Firsthand, pp.267-75.

F  Dec 4    Lincoln and Wartime Reconstruction

   Reading: Felix Haywood et al., "African-Americans' 
           Firsthand, pp.294-99.
Henretta, pp.485-88.

M Dec 7 Johnson and Congressional Reconstruction


W Dec 9 Radical Reconstruction

Reading: Grimes Family Papers, "A Sharecrop Contract," pp.286-88. [Handout]


Henretta, pp.494-507.

**TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM HANDED OUT**

T Dec 15 FINAL EXAM DUE: Hand in at Clough 301, by Noon.

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