



HIST 241
Colonial America:
Comparative New World Societies

“The Boston Massacre” by Paul Revere.

Instructor: Dr. James Paxton

Moravian College

Fall 2006

Class: Tuesday and Thursday 10:20am to 11:30am

Office: Comenius 306

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00–3:00

Wednesday 1:30-2:30

Or by appointment

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Course Description

For many Americans, colonial history is synonymous with the thirteen English-speaking colonies that became the United States. But colonial America was a large, crowded, and diverse place that stretched from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific and from Hudson’s

Bay in the north to the tip of South America. Within this arena, Native, English, Spanish, French, Dutch, Russian, and Swedish, and African peoples met, intermingled, and jostled for power. The impossibility of conveying New World societies in all their complexity and variety forces us to focus on a limited number of actors and a narrow range of themes. This broadly comparative course will explore common themes in English, French, and Spanish speaking North America. It will focus on the evolving relationships between America's founding people, Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans, and the societies they created together.

Course Objectives

Students will

- become familiar with the main events and themes in colonial American history.
- become familiar with some of the major schools of thought and historiographical debates that have shaped historians' understanding of the colonial period.
- understand the role of Native peoples and Africans in the development of New World societies.
- learn to critically evaluate secondary sources.
- further develop clear and effective oral and written communications skills.

Class Organization

Classes will be a combination of lecture and discussion. We will usually begin with a 20-30 minute introduction to the week's topic followed by a student-led discussion of the assigned readings.

Required Texts

Douglas Glover, *The Life and Times of Captain N*. (Fredericton, N.B.: Goose Lane Editions, 1993).

Aaron Spencer Fogleman, *Hopeful Journeys: German Immigration, Settlement, and Political Culture in Colonial America, 1717-1775* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996).

Woody Holton, *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves, & the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

Required texts are available in the Moravian College bookstore. Additional readings are available on JSTOR or will be placed on reserve in Reeves Library.

Attendance

While there is no formal penalty for missing classes, students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes. Success in the course depends upon comprehension of the lecture material and participation in class discussions. Lateness will not be tolerated.

Please turn off or mute all electronic devices in the classroom.

Grade Distribution

Essay 1	10%
Essay 2	12%
Essay 3	15%
Journals	18%
Participation	25%
Final Exam	20%

The participation grade will reflect the quality and quantity of your contributions to class. It is not an attendance grade.

Journals

Throughout the semester you will write a total of six journal responses to the readings. Which classes you hand in a journal is up to you, but do not leave them to the end of the course. The journals should succinctly state the author(s) main arguments. When you are writing your journals, consider how the readings relate to one another and to the work we have done in the course. Journal entries should be 1-2 pages, typed, double-spaced, with a one-inch margin. In terms of style, journal entries may be less formal, but they will still be marked for spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Journals **must** be handed in at the beginning of the class in which they are due.

Assignments

During the course you will become an expert in one area of colonial American history. By the third week you will choose a topic, which you will explore in-depth through three essays. The essays will be historiographical in nature. Papers are due at the beginning of the class. The first essay will be a 2-3 page book review. The second essay will compare the book you reviewed in essay one with another book on the same subject. It should be 3-4 pages in length. The final essay will be a 6-7 page historiographical essay assessing five books. You may substitute three articles for a book. A historiographical essay provides comment and analysis on a number of works pertaining to one subject. Do not summarize the contents of the books. Instead, analyze the book's evidence and conclusions and then compare the author's evidence and conclusions with what you have found in other works.

Late Policy

Papers turned in after the beginning of the class on which they are due will be assessed a penalty of 10% for the first day they are late and 5% for each day thereafter. Computer and printing problems are not acceptable reasons for lateness.

Important Due Dates

September 14: Essay Topics and Bibliography

October 5: Essay 1
November 2: Essay 2
November 28: Essay 3

Academic Dishonesty

According to the Moravian College Student Handbook, the following constitutes plagiarism: “as the use, deliberate or not, of any outside source without proper acknowledgment.” Plagiarism will result in the offender receiving zero in the course. Please consult the Student Handbook for fuller details.

Students with Disabilities

Students with physical, learning, or medical disabilities should speak to me and contact Laurie Roth, Director of the Learning Center, to arrange the appropriate accommodations. Please make these arrangements in the first weeks of the semester.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Aug. 29 – Introduction: What is colonial history?

Aug. 31 – Historiography

I. Old Worlds

Week 2

Sept. 5 – America

Neal Salisbury, “The Indians Old World: Native Americans and the Coming of Europeans,” *William and Mary Quarterly* (July 1996): 435-58. Reserve/JSTOR

Sept. 7 – Europe

Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys*, 1-65.

II. New Worlds

Week 3

Sept. 12 – Frontiers, Marchlands, and Borderlands

Bernard Bailyn, “A Domesday Book for the Periphery,” in Philip D. Morgan, ed., *Diversity and Unity in Early North America* (London: Routledge, 1993), 12-37. Reserve

W.J. Eccles, “The Nature of the Canadian Frontier,” in *The Canadian Frontier, 1535-1760* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969), 1-11. Reserve

Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron. “From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in Between in North American History.” *American Historical Review* 104 (June 1999): 814-41. Reserve/JSTOR

What is the difference between a frontier, borderland, and metropolis? Compare French and English encounters with America's land and people.

Sept. 14 – Colonial Encounters

Alfred A. Crosby, "Colonization as a 'Swarming,'" in Karen Ordahl Kupperman, ed., *Major Problems in American Colonial History*, 2-11. Reserve

Colin G. Calloway, "New Peoples and New Societies," in Karen Ordahl Kupperman, ed., *Major Problems in American Colonial History*, 17-25. Reserve

Some historians have described the destruction of Native Americans as a holocaust. Based on the articles do you agree or disagree? How would you characterize the Native experience in colonial America?

Essay Topics and Bibliography Due

II. New World Societies

Week 4 – How It Might Have Been

Sept. 19 – *The Life and Times of Captain N*

How does Glover characterize the interactions between Native Americans and Euro-Americans? Do you agree with his characterization? According to Glover, what is the meaning of the Revolution?

Sept. 21 – Spanish Colonization

Ramon A. Gutierrez, "Franciscan Conversion in New Mexico," in Karen Ordahl Kupperman, ed., *Major Problems in American Colonial History*, 165-72. Reserve

David J. Weber, "Conflict Within the Spanish Regime and the Pueblo Revolt," in Karen Ordahl Kupperman, ed., *Major Problems in American Colonial History*, 172-78. Reserve

In what ways did the Spanish influence Native societies? To what extent did Native peoples influence colonial society?

Week 5

Sept. 26– French Colonization

Daniel H. Usner, Jr., "Divergence within Colonial Societies," in *Indians, Settlers, and Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley before 1783* (1992), 44-76. Reserve

W.J. Eccles, "Institutions and Environment" and "Society and the Frontier," in *The Canadian Frontier, 1535-1760* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969), 60-102. Reserve

Sept. 28 – The English Colonies – Racism

Winthrop D. Jordan, *The White Man's Burden: Historical Origins of Racism in the United States* (1974), 3-54.

Edmund S. Morgan, *Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox*, Journal of American History (1972): 5-29.

Did racism result from economic imperatives or a cultural predisposition on the part of the English?



“The Overseer” by Benjamin Latrobe.

Week 6 - Slavery

Oct. 3

Allan Kulikoff, “The Origins of Afro-American Society in Tidewater Maryland and Virginia, 1700-1790,” *William and Mary Quarterly* (April 1978): 226-259. Reserve/JSTOR

Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, “The Creole Slaves: Origin, Family, Language, Folklore,” *Africans in Colonial Louisiana* (1992), 157-200. Reserve

Graham Hodges, “The Creation of a Slave Society, 1664-1714,” *Slavery and Freedom in the Rural North: African Americans in Monmouth New Jersey, 1665-1865* (1997), 1-32. Reserve

How do these readings alter your thinking about slavery? How were the experiences of slaves in the Chesapeake, New Jersey, and Louisiana similar and different?

Oct. 5 – Middle Colonies

Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys*, 69-99.

Essay One Due

Week 7

Oct. 10 – **No Class – Fall Recess**

Oct. 12 – New England and Witchcraft

John Demos, "Communities: The Social Matrix of Witchcraft," *Entertaining Satan: Witchcraft and the Culture of Early New England* (1982), 275-312. Reserve
Elaine G. Breslaw, "Tituba's Confession: The Multicultural Dimensions of the 1692 Salem Witch-Hunt," *Ethnohistory* (1997): 535-549. Reserve/JSTOR
Why did the witch hunt occur?

Week 8

Oct. 17 – Virginia

Martin H. Quitt, "Trade and Acculturation at James town, 1607-1609: The Limits of Understanding," *William and Mary Quarterly* (April 1995): 227-258.
Reserve/JSTOR

Lois Green Carr and Lorena S. Walsh, "The Planter's Wife: The Experiences of White Women in Seventeenth-Century Virginia," *WMQ* (Oct. 1977): 542-71.
Reserve/JSTOR

Oct. 19 – British West Indies

Michael Craton, "Reluctant Creoles: the Planters' World in the British West Indies" in Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1991), 314-362. Reserve

Jack P. Greene, "The Continuing Connection Between Barbados and South Carolina," in Philip D. Morgan, ed., *Diversity and Unity in Early North America* (London: Routledge, 1993), 245-53. Reserve

III. Revolutions

Week 9

Oct. 24 – Religious

Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys*, 100-126.

Patricia U. Bonomi, "The Hosannas of the Multitude": The Great Awakening in America," 92-102. Reserve

What was the Great Awakening? Did the Germans participate in the Great Awakening?

Oct. 26 – Economic

Gary B. Nash, "Urban Wealth and Poverty in Pre-Revolutionary America," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (Spring 1976): 545-82. Reserve/JSTOR

Week 10

Nov. 2 – Introduction to the Historiography of the American Revolution

Essay 2 Due

Week 11

Nov. 7 – Politics

Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys*, 127-53.

Oct. 31

Holton, *Forced Founders*, 77-129.

Nov. 9 – The Imperial Crisis in Britain’s Other Colonies

Andrew Jackson O’Shaughnessy, “The Stamp Act Crisis in the British Caribbean,”

William and Mary Quarterly (April 1994): 203-226. Reserve/JSTOR

Gordon Stewart and George Rawlyk, “The Lost Decade,” in *A People Highly Favoured of God: Nova Scotia Yankees and the American Revolution* (Toronto: Macmillan),

3-23. Reserve

Why did Britain’s other colonies not join the Revolution?

Week 12

Nov. 14

Woody Holton, *Forced Founders*, 131-220.

Nov. 16 – Natives, Slaves, and Women in the Revolution

Sylvia R. Frey, “Between Slavery and Freedom: Virginia Blacks in the American Revolution,” *Journal of Southern History* (1983): 375-398. Reserve/JSTOR

Colin G. Calloway, “Corn Wars and Civil Wars: The American Revolution Comes to Indian Country,” *The American Revolution in Indian Country* (1995), 26-64.

Reserve

Elaine F. Crane, “Dependence in the Era of Independence: The Role of Women in a Republican Society,” *The American Revolution: Its Character and Limits* (1987),

253-272. Reserve

As these articles demonstrate, slaves, Anglo-American women, and Native Americans participated in the Revolution. For what did they struggle? And how does their struggle force us to revise an interpretation that the war was about freedom and the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuits of happiness?

IV. The New Order

Week 13

Nov. 21 – The Other Americans

Jane Errington, “And This Shall be a British Province” and “Upper Canada – an

American Community?” *The Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada: A Developing Ideology* (Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1987), 20-54.

Reserve

To what extent was Upper Canada American or British?

Nov. 23 – **No Class – Thanksgiving**

Week 14

Nov. 28 – Reading Day

Essay 3 Due

Nov. 30 – Consolidating the Revolution

Edward Countryman, "Indians, the Colonial Order, and the Social Significance of the American Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly* (1996): 342-62.

Reserve/JSTOR

Alan Taylor, "The Divided Ground: Upper Canada, New York, and the Iroquois Six Nations, 1783-1815," *Journal of the Early Republic* (2002): 55-75.

Reserve/JSTOR

Birte Pfleger, "'Miserable Germans': and Fries's Rebellion: Language, Ethnicity, and Citizenship in the Early Republic," *Early American Studies* 2 (Fall 2004): 341-361. Reserve

Week 15 – American Identity

Dec. 5 – American Identity

Edmund S. Morgan, "Conflict and Consensus in the American Revolution," *Essays on the American Revolution* (1973), 289-309. Reserve

John M. Murrin, "A Roof Without Walls: The Dilemma of American National Identity," *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*, 333-348. Reserve

John M. Murrin, "Beneficiaries of Catastrophe: The English Colonists in America," *Diversity and Unity in Early North America*, 259-282. Reserve

What factor, event, or trend defines the essential American character?

Dec. 7 - Conclusion