

REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA



SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

HIST 5371 (Online)

Graduate Reading Seminar

Fall 2017

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Digging into America's Founding

How did thirteen colonies join together to secede from the world's most powerful empire?

You might not have noticed, but Americans love to talk about their Revolution. With good reason! It's one of the most momentous episodes in world history. But it is also very complex – definitely more complicated than our national myths. This semester we will dig into the Revolution – its origins, its development, and its legacies.

Since most of the books we will read cover the same chronological period, we will be diving into the topic from different angles and perspectives. Therefore, I hope you will learn as much about the historical craft as the Revolution itself.

Because our online conversations are such a crucial part of the graduate seminar experience, your comments there will make up a substantive portion of your grade. Details on the frequency and substance of that online discussion are found below. Further, this class will require a lot of reading. Consider yourself warned.



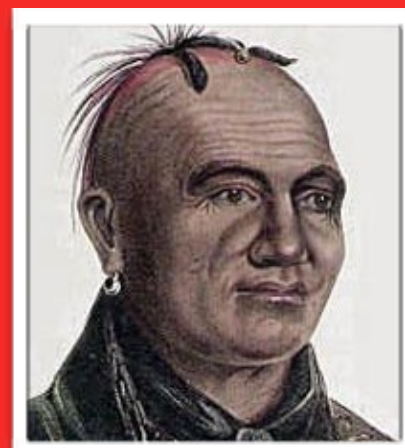
“...these united Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States...”

By the end of this semester, students are expected to:

- Acquire a substantial knowledge of America's complex revolution by reading some of its best interpreters.
- Demonstrate competence of the historian's craft by outlining key themes and methods historians have used to engage the revolutionary era.
- Evaluate scholarly work by rigorously engaging significant books and articles. This will be done primarily through reviews and essays.

ONLINE DISCUSSION

In a perfect world, we would be meeting in a seminar room every week to dissect the books as a group. Unfortunately, we are forced to replicate that experience through our online discussion board. This will be measured through two components: first, every student will post by Wednesday a brief yet substantive review of that week's book and article and address the author's primary arguments, use of sources, strengths, weaknesses, and novel insights when compared to the existing scholarship. These reviews will run around 800 words. Then, on either Thursday or Friday, every student will leave at least two comments responding to someone else's review that engages their ideas, critiques, and suggestions. These responses should be 4-5 sentences and more than merely superficial or affirmative in nature. A grading rubric will be provided.





REQUIRED BOOKS

Gordon Wood, *The American Revolution: A History* (Modern Library/Penguin).

Steve Pincus, *The Heart of the Declaration: The Founders' Case for an Activist Government* (Yale UP).

Pauline Maier, *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence* (Knopf/Vintage).

Robert Gross, *The Minutemen and Their World* (Hill & Wang).

Kathleen Duval, *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution* (Random House).

Gerald Horne, *The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance & the Origins of the United States* (NYU Press).

Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (Knopf/Vintage).

Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800* (Cornell UP).

Barbara Clark Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost: Consent and Resistance in Revolutionary America* (The New Press).

Jane Kamensky, *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley* (Norton).

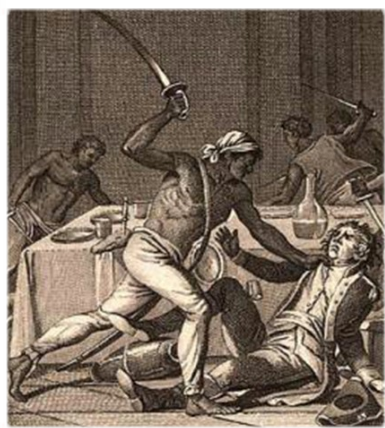
Jack Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution* (Knopf/Vintage).

John Ragosta, *Wellspring of Liberty: How Virginia's Religious Dissenters Helped with the American Revolution & Secured Religious Liberty* (Oxford UP).

John Polasky, *A Revolution Without Borders: The Call to Liberty in the Atlantic World* (Yale UP).

Course Approach

It might be useful to take a step back and consider how this course is constructed. You'll find that some elements of this course might be a bit more demanding than you'll find in other grad seminars — most notably, the reading. But you'll also notice that this comes at the expense of cutting out other traditional requirements — most notably, the research paper. This was a conscious decision I made in order to cover as much material as possible. This course should feel like a marathon instead of a sprint: you will have constant work, but there should never be a period where you are overwhelmed. (Or, at least, more overwhelmed than at other points.) If you do the weekly reading, reviews, and the two review essays, it is difficult *not* to get a solid grade.



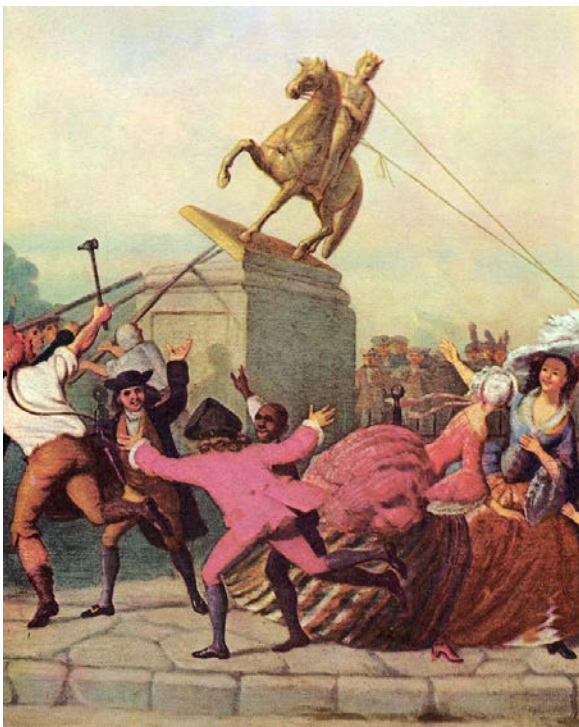
REVIEW ESSAYS

Twice a semester, on October 15 and December 3, students will write a review essay focused on a series of books and based on a historiographical question. On the reading schedule, you will notice that there are suggested readings for every topic beyond the required book. That should give you a starting point, though you are free to expand further. You can tie in as many required books as you wish, but you are expected to engage at least three non-required books. An example of a good question is, "How have historians integrated non-elite voices into their narratives of the Revolution?"

Essays should be 1,500 to 2,000 words. The first is due March 18th, and the second May 5th.

VIDEOS

I will record a number of videos this semester to help introduce and then summarize our discussion. Every few weeks I'll post an "Overview" video where I outline the next few books we'll be discussing. This should be a mere introduction to some of the larger themes, and are perhaps most useful when you think about broader trajectories. This comes in handy when you write your review essays. I will also be uploading weekly video reviews where I recap your posts and comments from that week's discussion. These will usually go up between Friday and Monday, depending on my schedule. Because I will be making these comments via video, I will not be adding too many typed comments on the discussion board.



Late Policy and Plagiarism

This is a graduate course, so I expect you to turn everything in on time. If you anticipate a problem with any of the assignments, please contact me in advance. There is no excuse for turning in something late without previously approving it through me. Penalties vary according to assignment (please consult individual rubrics), but in general there is a steep penalty for work turned in a day late and zero credit for work turned in after that.

There will be no tolerance for plagiarism. Please familiarize yourself with the definition and boundaries of plagiarism. Slight cases will result in a failure for the assignment, and serious cases will result in failure of the course.

GRADING RUBRIC

Assignment	Individual Points	Total Points
Weekly Discussion	40	560
Review Essays	100	200
Total		760

See, I told you the course structure was simple. If you participate in the weekly discussions and write your reviews, you're good.



SCHEDULE

R: Required

S: Suggested

(Articles are found on Blackboard)

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
8/23-8/25	Introduction	R: David Waldstreicher, "Founders Chic as Culture War"
8/28-9/1	Overviews and Framing	<p>R: Gordon Wood, <i>The American Revolution: A History</i>; T. H. Been, "Revisions Once More in Need of Revising: Political Ideology and Nationalism in Anglo-American Context, 1740-1790"; David Armitage, "The American Revolution in Atlantic Perspective"</p> <p>S: Alan Taylor, <i>American Revolutions: A Continental History</i> (Norton, 2016); Thomas P. Slaughter, <i>Independence: The Tangled Roots of the American Revolution</i> (Hill and Wang, 2014); Patrick Griffin, <i>America's Revolution</i> (Oxford UP, 2012); Gordon Wood, <i>The Radicalism of the American Revolution</i> (Knopf, 1991)</p>
9/4-9/8	Origins	<p>R: Steve Pincus, <i>The Heart of the Declaration: The Founders' Case for an Activist Government</i>; Woody Holton, "Ohio Indians and the Origins of the American Revolution in Virginia"; T.H. Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776"</p> <p>S: Bernard Bailyn, <i>Ideological Origins of the American Revolution</i> (Harvard UP, 1967); Jack P. Greene, <i>The Constitutional Origins of the American Revolution</i> (Cambridge UP, 2010); Pauline Maier, <i>From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765-1776</i> (Norton, 1992)</p>
9/11-9/15	Political Ideals	<p>R: Pauline Maier, <i>American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence</i>; Forum on Eric Nelson, "Patriot Royalism: The Stuart Monarchy in American Political Thought, 1769-1775"</p> <p>S: Gordon S. Wood, <i>The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787</i> (UNC, 1969); Eliga H. Gould, <i>Among the Powers of the Earth: The American Revolution and the Making of a New World Empire</i> (Harvard UP, 2012); Benjamin H. Irvin, <i>Clothed in the Robes of Sovereignty: The Continental Congress and the People Out of Doors</i> (Oxford UP, 2011); Daniel T. Rogers, "Republicanism: The Career of a Concept"; Gordon Wood, "Rhetoric and Reality in the American Revolution"; Trish Loughran, "Disseminating <i>Common Sense</i>: Thomas Paine and the Problem of the Early National Bestseller"</p>

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
9/18-9/22	Fighting the War	<p>R: Robert Gross, <i>The Minutemen and Their World</i>; Jesse Lemisch, "Jack Tarr in the Streets: Merchant Seamen in the Politics of Revolutionary America"</p> <p>S: Eric Hinderaker, <i>Boston's Massacre</i> (Harvard UP); Benjamin Carp, <i>Rebels Rising: Cities and the American Revolution</i> (Oxford UP, 2007); Elizabeth A. Fenn, <i>Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-82</i> (Hill and Wang, 2001); Holger Hock, <i>Scars of Independence: America's Violent Birth</i> (Crown, 2017); Michael McDonnell, "Class War? Class Struggles During the American Revolution in Virginia"</p>
9/25-9/29	Native Conflict	<p>R: Kathleen Duval, <i>Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution</i>; Alejandra Dubcovsky, "One Hundred Sixty-One Knots, Two Plates, and One Emperor: Creek Information Networks in the Era of the Yamasee War"</p> <p>S: Barbara Graymont, <i>The Iroquois in the American Revolution</i> (Syracuse UP, 1972); Claudio Saunt, <i>West of the Revolution: An Uncommon History of 1776</i> (Norton, 2015)</p>
10/2-10/6	A War For Slavery	<p>R: Gerald Horne, <i>The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America</i>; Edmund Morgan, "Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox"</p> <p>S: Robert G. Parkinson, <i>The Common Cause: Creating Race and Nation in the American Revolution</i> (UNC Press, 2016); Annette Gordon-Reed, <i>The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family</i> (Norton, 2009); Douglas Egerton, <i>Death or Liberty: African Americans and the Revolutionary America</i> (Oxford UP, 2011); Christopher Brown, "Empire without Slaves: British Concepts of Emancipation in the Age of the American Revolution"; Francois Furstenburg, "Atlantic Slavery, Atlantic Freedom: George Washington's Liberty, Slavery, and Trans-Atlantic Abolitionist Networks"</p>
10/9-10/13	The British World	<p>R: Maya Jasanoff, <i>Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World</i>; Ken Miller, "'A Dangerous Set of People': British Captives and the Making of Revolutionary Identity in the Mid-Atlantic Interior"</p> <p>S: Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, <i>The Men Who Lost America: British Leadership, the American Revolution, and the Fate of Empire</i>; Rebecca Brannon, <i>From Revolution to Reunion: The Reintegration of the South Carolina Loyalists</i>; Judith L. Van Buskirk, <i>Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York</i> (UPenn Press, 2002)</p> <p>THE FIRST REVIEW ESSAY IS DUE OCTOBER 15th AT MIDNIGHT</p>

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
10/16-10/20	Gender	<p>R: Mary Beth Norton, <i>Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800</i>; Rosemarie Zagarri, "The Rights of Man and Woman in Post-Revolutionary America"</p> <p>S: Carol Berkin, <i>Revolutionary Mothers: Women in the Struggle for America's Independence</i> (Knopf, 2005); Linda Kerber, <i>Women of the eRepublic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America</i> (UNC Press, 1990); Susan Klepp, <i>Revolutionary Conceptions: Women, Fertility, and Family Limitations in America</i> (UNC Press, 2009); Clare A. Lyons, <i>Sex Among the Rabble: AN Intimate History of Gender and Power in the Age of Revolutionary Philadelphia, 1730-1830</i> (UNC Press, 2006); Sarah Knott, "Female Liberty? Sentimental Gallantry, Republican Womanhood, and Rights Feminism in the Age of Revolution"</p>
10/23-10/27	Cultural Transformations	<p>R: Barbara Clark Smith, <i>The Freedoms We Lost: Consent and Resistance in Revolutionary America</i>; Alfred Young, "George Robert Twelves Hewes (1742-1840): A Boston Shoemaker and the Memory of the American Revolution"</p> <p>S: Kariann Yokota, <i>Unbecoming British: How Revolutionary America Became a Postcolonial Nation</i> (Oxford UP, 2014); Sarah Knott, <i>Sensibility and the American Revolution</i> (UNC Press, 2009); Nicole Eustace, <i>Passion is the Gale: Emotion, Power and the Coming of the American Revolution</i> (UNC Press, 2006).</p>
10/30-11/3	Biographical Perspectives	<p>R: Jane Kamensky, <i>A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley</i></p> <p>S: Annette Gordon-Reed and Peter Onuf, "Most Blessed of Patriarchs": <i>Thomas Jefferson and the Empire of Imagination</i> (Liveright, 2016); Woody Holton, <i>Abigail Adams</i> (Free Press, 2009); Carla Mumford, <i>Benjamin Franklin and the Ends of Empire</i> (Oxford UP, 2015); Jill Lepore, <i>The Book of Ages: The Life and Opinions of Jane Franklin</i> (Knopf, 2013)</p>
11/6-11/10	Constitutional Ending	<p>R: Jack Rakove, <i>Original Meanings: Politics and the Making of the Constitution</i>; Woody Holton, "Did Democracy Cause the Recession that Led to the Constitution?"</p> <p>S: Michael Klarman, <i>The Framers' Coup: The Making of the United States Constitution</i> (Oxford UP, 2016) Terry Bouton, <i>Taming Democracy: "The People," The Founders, and the Troubled Ending of the American Revolution</i> (Oxford UP, 2003); Max M. Edling, <i>A Revolution in Favor of Government: Origins of the U.S. Constitution and the Making of the American State</i> (Oxford UP, 2003);</p>

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
11/13-11/17	Religious Freedom	<p>R: John Ragosta, <i>Wellspring of Liberty: How Virginia's Religious Dissenters Helped Win the American Revolution and Secured Religious Liberty</i>; Katherine Carté Engel, "The SPCK and the American Revolution: The Limits of International Protestantism"; Christopher Grasso, "Deist Monster: On Religious Common Sense in the Wake of the American Revolution"</p> <p>S: Gideon Mailer, <i>John Witherspoon's American Revolution: Enlightenment and Religion from the Creation of Britain to the Founding of the United States</i> (UNC Press, 2017); Thomas S. Kidd, <i>God of Liberty: A Religious History of the American Revolution</i> (Yale UP, 2010); Thomas Buckley, <i>Establishing Religious Freedom: Jefferson's Statute in Virginia</i> (UVA Press, 2014); John Fea, <i>Was America Founded as a Christian Nation?: A Historical Introduction</i> (WJKP, 2016); Spencer McBride, <i>Pulpit and Nation: Clergymen and the Politics of Revolutionary America</i> (UVA Press, 2017)</p>
11/20-11/24	Thanksgiving Week	
11/27-12/1	The Age of Atlantic Revolts	<p>R: Janet Polasky, <i>Revolutions Without Borders: The Call to Liberty in the Atlantic World</i> (Yale UP, 2015); Ada Ferrer, "Haiti, Free Soil, and Antislavery in the Revolutionary Atlantic"; Sarah Knott, "Narrating the Age of Revolutions"</p> <p>S: James Alexander Dun, <i>Dangerous Neighbors: Making the Haitian Revolution in Early America</i> (UPenn Press, 2016); Nathan Perl-Rosenthal, <i>Citizen Sailors: Becoming American in the Age of Revolutions</i> (Harvard UP, 2015); David Armitage, <i>The Declaration of Independence: A Global History</i> (Harvard UP, 2007); Caitlin Fitz, <i>Our Sister Republic: The United States in an Age of American Revolutions</i> (Liveright, 2016)</p> <p>THE SECOND REVIEW ESSAY IS DUE DECEMBER 3 BY MIDNIGHT</p>

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. A copy of the University policy is available on the Sam Houston State University website. If you need clarification about what constitutes plagiarism, do not hesitate to ask or see me during office hours.

STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICY:

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: "a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20...." A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY:

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM:

Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

SKILL OBJECTIVES

Critical Thinking: Students will be taught to think critically and analytically, and to ask appropriate questions about different historical societies and cultures, integrating and synthesizing knowledge they gain in the course, forming conclusions, and building an informed belief system from the complex of information presented in the course content.

Communication: To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication. Communication skills will be addressed in this class through class participation, the reading and discussion of historical texts, attending lectures, and/or watching films. Students will learn through the use of historical materials to critically evaluate the time periods in which these materials originated.

Personal Responsibility: To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making. Personal responsibility will be addressed in this course as students articulate how to make sound ethical judgments based on the development of their personal value system. By studying how individuals in the past drew upon their cultural belief systems to make ethical choices students will learn how their personal choices based upon ideas, values, and beliefs influence their larger society and culture today.

Social Responsibility: To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities. Social Responsibility will be addressed in this course as students learn about the ways in which individuals and groups in the past made decisions aimed at promoting civil discourse, civic participation, and other social values so as to improve society for all. Students will thus learn about their own social responsibilities in improving current American society.