

# REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA



## SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

HIST 5371

Graduate Reading Seminar

Spring 2018

Wed 6pm-8:50pm

ABIV, Room 452

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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 the Revolution. With good reason! It's one of the momentous episodes in world history. But it is also complex—definitely more complicated than our national myths. This semester we will dig into the Revolution's origins, development, and 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.

Though I know it can be uncomfortable for some, I expect everyone to participate in our seminar, which will make up a substantive portion of your grade. Further, I reserve the right to adjust borderline grades based on committed participation.

This course will cover a lot of reading. *A lot*. This your warning. I promise I have been careful in selecting only those books that are most helpful.



**“...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.

Buckle up and enjoy a fun—if rigorous—semester!

### BOOK RESPONSES

You will be reading a different book every week, and you will be writing a very brief (2 pages) response to each text. Your responses should be printed out and brought to class. They will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Your responses should cover each of these four questions:

1. What is the author's primary argument?
2. What kind of sources does the author use?
3. What were the book's strengths and weaknesses?
4. How does this book add something new to the topic?





## 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).

Annette Gordon-Reed and Peter S. Onus, "Most Blessed of the Patriarchs": *Thomas Jefferson and the Empire of the Imagination* (Norton/Liveright).

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).

Janet 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 weekly 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 usual.) 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, 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 2,500 to 3,000 words. The first is due DATE, and the second DATE.



## LEAD HISTORIAN

Every student will have two opportunities to be the “lead historian” for the week. The “lead historian” will read not only the book assigned for everyone, but also one other book of their choice that is listed under the “suggested readings.” They will then write a 1,000-word review essay comparing the two books—their overlapping source material, competing arguments, or different approaches. The lead historian will provide a copy of their review to the entire class and digest the information for 15 minutes at the beginning of the seminar. You are not expected to turn in a book response on the weeks that you are writing a lead historian essay.

The goal is for every student to have a pile of comparative essays at the end of the semester, which should in

## 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
Book Responses	20	200
Lead Historian Essays	50	100
Review Essays	100	200
Total		500



# SCHEDULE

R: Required

S: Suggested

(Articles are found on Blackboard)

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
1/17	Introduction	R: Alan Taylor, "Expand or Die: The Revolution's New Empire"; look over Michael Hattem's "The Historiography of the American Revolution: A Timeline"
1/24	Overviews and Framing	R: Gordon Wood, <i>The American Revolution: A History</i> ; T. H. Breen, "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"  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)
1/31	Revolutionary Origins	R: Steve Pincus, <i>The Heart of the Declaration: The Founders' Case for an Activist Government</i> ; Woody Holton, "Ohio Indians and the Coming of the American Revolution in Virginia"; T.H. Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776"  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)
2/7	Political Ideals	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"  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 Common Sense: Thomas Paine and the Problem of the Early National Bestseller"

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
2/14	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>
2/21	Native Conflict	<p>R: Kathleen Duval, <i>Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution</i>; Jessica Choppin Roney, "1776, Viewed from the West"</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>
2/28	No Class	Professor Park is gone for a conference; use to time to work on you review essays.
3/7	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"; David Waldstreicher, "Ancients, Moderns, and Africans: Phillis Wheatley and the Politics of Empire and Slavery in the American Revolution"</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>
3/14	Spring Break	<b>THE FIRST REVIEW ESSAY IS DUE BY MARCH 18th AT MIDNIGHT</b>

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
3/21	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>
3/28	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 Republic: 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>
4/4	Biographical Perspectives	<p>R: Annette Gordon-Reed and Peter Onuf, "Most Blessed of Patriarchs": <i>Thomas Jefferson and the Empire of Imagination</i> (Liveright, 2016); David Waldstreicher and Jeffrey L. Pasley, "Hamilton as Founders Chic: A Neo-Federalist, Antislavery, Usable Past?"</p> <p>S: Jane Kamensky, <i>A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley</i>; 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>
4/11	No Class	Professor Park is gone for a conference; use to time to work on you review essays.

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
4/18	Constitutional Ending	<p>R: Jack Rakove, <i>Original Meanings: Politics and the Making of the Constitution</i>; Saul Cornell, "Aristocracy Assailed: Back-Country Opposition to the Constitution and the Problem of Anti-Federalist Ideology"</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>
4/25	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>
5/2	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 Revolution"</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><b>THE SECOND REVIEW ESSAY IS DUE MAY 4th BY MIDNIGHT</b></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.