

History 231  
Spring 2008  
T-Th 11:30-12:25, Sills 109

McMahon  
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### SOCIAL HISTORY OF COLONIAL AMERICA, 1607-1763

This course offers a chronological survey of the social history of the founding and growth of the colonies in British North America. We will explore the difficulties that European and African emigrants faced in creating new societies, economies, and politics in an unfamiliar and already inhabited environment, the impact of cultural contact on Native Americans, and the effects of diverse and often conflicting cultural goals and expectations on the early settlement and development of the colonies. We will also examine the gradual adaptations and changes in European, Native American, and African cultures, and their separate, combined, and often contested contributions to a new “provincial,” increasingly stratified (both socially and economically), and regionally disparate culture. We will conclude by exploring later problems of maturity and stability as the thirteen colonies began to outgrow the British imperial system and become a new “American” society.

*Course requirements:* The course consists of two class meetings each week. The readings assigned for each class should be completed by that class meeting. (*Note:* you are not required to read the “further readings” listed in the syllabus and/or the Reading Guide). You are expected to attend class and to come to all class meetings prepared to discuss and analyze the readings [20% of final grade]. The History 231 Reading Guide—available on Blackboard and through the course website—provides questions to help focus your reading for the class discussions as well as electronic links to all of the assigned articles, either through e-reserve or an online Library database. If you miss a discussion-section meeting (noted in the syllabus), you are expected to write a thoughtful evaluation (3-4 pages) of the assigned book (monograph). You are encouraged to purchase the assigned books from the bookstore; one copy of each book is on reserve in the library.

The essay assignments are an integral part of the course. Two critical analyses of primary documents (5-7 pages each) will be due during the semester [together, 40% of final grade]. A final take-home essay (8-10 pages) is due by the scheduled final-exam date for the course [40% of final grade].

All students are expected to read, understand, and abide by the rules of citation outlined in *Sources: Their Use and Acknowledgement* (Dartmouth College, 1998) and by the Bowdoin College Academic Honor Code.

- Texts: William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (1983)  
Carol Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England* (1987; revised 1998)  
Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (1988)  
Barry Levy, *Quakers and the American Family: British Settlement in the Delaware Valley* (1988)  
Lorena S. Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter’s Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community* (1997)  
James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology of Early American Life* (1977, revised and expanded 1996)

All online Resources are available through Blackboard and/or the History 231 website:

<http://www.bowdoin.edu/faculty/S/smcmahon/courses/hist231/index.shtml>

1. 1/22 INTRODUCTION TO NORTH AMERICAN COLONIAL HISTORY

1/24 THE AGE OF DISCOVERY AND THE EXPANSION OF EUROPEAN EMPIRES

reading: Patricia Seed, "Taking Possession and Reading Texts: Establishing the Authority of Overseas Empires," *William and Mary Quarterly (WMQ)* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 49.2 (1992): 183-209. (JSTOR)

2. 1/29 ENGLISH HERITAGE: Society, economy, and politics in the 16th and 17th centuries

reading: Roger Howell, "Introduction," in Roger Howell, ed., *Maine in the Age of Discovery: Christopher Levett's Voyage, 1623-24* (Maine Historical Society, 1988), 7-31. (e-reserve)

Christopher Levett, "A Voyage to New England, begun in 1623 and ended in 1624" in Roger Howell, ed., *Maine in the Age of Discovery: Christopher Levett's Voyage, 1623-24* (Maine Historical Society, 1988), 33-68. (e-reserve)

*Guidelines for Writing a Critical Analysis of a Primary Document* (LINK)

1/31 FIRST SETTLERS—FIRST SETTLEMENTS: "The Importance of Being English"

readings: Sigmund Diamond, "From Organization to Society: Virginia in the 17th century," *American J. Sociology* 63.5 (1958): 457-475. (JSTOR)

Martin Quitt, "Immigrant Origins of the Virginia Gentry: A Study of Cultural Transmission and Innovation," *WMQ* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 45.4 (1988): 629-655. (JSTOR)

*The "New World" and the Mixing of Cultures*

3. 2/5 NATIVE NORTH AMERICANS: The first inhabitants of North America

readings: James H. Merrell, "The Indians' New World: The Catawba Experience," *WMQ* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 41.4 (1984): 537-565. (JSTOR)

Bruce G. Trigger, "Early Native North American Responses to European Contact: Romantic versus Rationalistic Interpretations," *J. American History (JAH)* 77.4 (1991): 1195-1215. (JSTOR)

2/7 DISCUSSION: THE CONTACT OF CULTURES

reading: William Cronon, *Changes in the Land* (1983).

4. 2/12 THE CHESAPEAKE BAY: The instability of a tobacco society

readings: Lois Green Carr, "Emigration and the Standard of Living: The Seventeenth Century Chesapeake," *J. Economic History* 52.2 (1992): 271-291. (JSTOR)

Lois Green Carr and Lorena S. Walsh, "The Planter's Wife: The Experience of White Women in 17th-century Maryland," *WMQ* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 34.4 (1977): 542-571. (JSTOR)

*Establishing Colonial Settlements*

2/14 THE ORIGINS OF THE SLAVE SYSTEM IN THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CHESAPEAKE

- readings: Russell Menard, "From Servants to Slaves: The Transformation of the Chesapeake Labor System," *Southern Studies* 16 (1977): 355-390. (e-reserve)  
Douglas Deal, "A Constricted World: Free Blacks on Virginia's Eastern Shore, 1680-1750," in Lois Green Carr, et. al., *Colonial Chesapeake Society* (1988): 275-305. (e-reserve)

5. 2/19 NEW ENGLAND: The covenant ideal and the New England Mind

- documents: Plymouth Colony, "Mayflower Compact" (1620), *Avalon Project at Yale Law School* (LINK)  
John Winthrop, "A Modell of Christian Charity" (1630), *Hanover Historical Texts Project* (LINK) or *The Winthrop Society* (LINK)

further reading: David M. Scobey, "Revising the Errand: New England's Ways and the Puritan Sense of the Past," *WMQ* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 41.1 (1984): 3-31. (JSTOR)

*First Critical Analysis Due:* Choose a document written **between 1607 and 1700**

2/21 THE NEW ENGLAND TOWN

- readings: Virginia DeJohn Anderson, "Migrants and Motives: Religion and the Settlement of New England, 1630-1640," *New England Quarterly*, 58.3 (1985): 339-383. (JSTOR)  
Richard Archer, "New England Mosaic: A Demographic Analysis for the Seventeenth Century," *WMQ* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 47.4 (1990): 477-502. (JSTOR)

6. 2/26 THE PURITAN FAMILY AND THE WELL-ORDERED COMMUNITY

- readings: Philip Greven, "Family Structure in 17th-century Andover" *WMQ* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 23.2 (1966): 234-256. (JSTOR)  
C. Dallett Hemphill, "Age Relations and the Social Order in Early New England: The Evidence from Manners," *J. Social History* 28 (1994): 271-294. (ACADEMIC SEARCH PREMIER)

2/28 DISAFFECTED NEW ENGLANDERS: Alienated affections and the "declension" of Puritan New England

7. 3/4 *DISCUSSION: WITCHCRAFT IN A CONTENTIOUS SOCIETY: The Late 17th century*

- reading: Carol Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman* (1987; revised 1998).

3/6 THE MID-ATLANTIC COLONIES IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY: New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania as the "Motley Middle"

- readings: Donna Merwick, "Dutch Townsmen and Land Use: A Spatial Perspective on Seventeenth-Century New York," *WMQ* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 37.1 (1980): 53-78. (JSTOR)

8. 3/25 THE EMPIRE AND THE COLONIES IN THE LATE 17TH CENTURY: The Glorious Revolution in America

reading: Bernard Bailyn, "Politics and Social Structure in Virginia," in J.M. Smith, ed., *Seventeenth-Century America* (1959, 1987); or in Katz, *Colonial America*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (1993). (e-reserve)

further reading: John M. Murrin, "The Menacing Shadow of Louis XIV and the Rage of Jacob Leisler: The Constitutional Ordeal of Seventeenth-Century New York," in Stephen L. Schechter and Richard B. Bernstein, eds., *New York and the Union: Contributions to the American Constitutional Experience* (1990), 29-71. (e-reserve)

3/27 PROVINCIAL SOCIETY: The search for identity

reading: Frank Lambert, "'Pedlar in Divinity': George Whitefield and the Great Awakening, 1737-1745," *JAH* 77.3 (1990): 812-837. (JSTOR)

*Eighteenth Century: Provincial Society*

9. 4/1 DISCUSSION: AMERICAN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONVERGENCE OF REGIONS IN THE 18TH CENTURY

reading: Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness* (1988).

4/3 SOUTHERN SOCIETIES IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

readings: Charles G. Steffen, "The Rise of the Independent Merchant in the Chesapeake: Baltimore, County, 1660-1769," *JAH* 76.1 (1989): 9-33. (JSTOR)

Warren R. Hofstra, "'The Extention of His Majesties Dominions': The Virginia Backcountry and the Reconfiguration of Imperial Frontiers," *JAH* 84.4 (1998): 1281-1312. (JSTOR)

10. 4/8 AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES

further reading: John K. Thornton, "African Dimensions of the Stono Rebellion," *American Historical Review* 96.4 (1991): 1101-1113. (JSTOR)

*Second Critical Analysis Due:* Choose a document written **between 1701 and 1760**

4/10 DISCUSSION: EVOLUTION OF A CHESAPEAKE COMMUNITY

reading: Lorena S. Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter's Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community* (1997).

11. 4/15 NEW ENGLAND IN THE 18TH CENTURY

readings: Christine Leigh Heyrman, "The Fashion Among More Superior People: Charity and Social Change in Provincial New England, 1700-1740," *American Quarterly* 34.2 (1982): 107-124. (JSTOR)

Cornelia Hughes Dayton, "Taking the Trade: Abortion and Gender Relations in an Eighteenth-Century New England Village" *WMQ* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 48.1 (1991): 19-49. (JSTOR)

4/17 THE MID-ATLANTIC COLONIES IN THE 18TH CENTURY

- readings: Ned Landsman, "Revivalism and Nativism in the Middle Colonies: The Great Awakening and the Scots Community in East New Jersey," *American Quarterly* 34.2 (1982): 149-164. (JSTOR)  
Thomas L. Purvis, "Origins and Patterns of Agrarian Unrest in New Jersey, 1735-1754," *WMQ* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 39.4 (1982): 600-627. (JSTOR)

*British Colonial America at Mid-Century*

12. 4/22 *DISCUSSION: THE ORGANIZATION OF SOCIETY IN THE MIDDLE COLONIES*

- reading: Barry Levy, *Quakers and the American Family* (1988).

4/24 THE EMPIRE AND THE COLONIES AND THE FEAR OF "CREOLEAN DEGENERACY"

- reading: Daniel K. Richter, "War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience" *WMQ* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 40.4 (1983): 528-559. (JSTOR)

14. 4/29 THE FEAR OF "CREOLEAN DEGENERACY": American culture and American identity in the 18th century

5/1 *DISCUSSION: THE EVOLUTION OF COLONIAL AMERICA: Evidence from everyday life*

- reading: James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten* (1977; revised and expanded 1996).

15. 5/6 AMERICA AT 1750: Toward The American Revolution?

- further readings: T.H. Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776" *J. British Studies* 25.4 (1986): 467-499. (JSTOR)  
Gary B. Nash, "The Transformation of Urban Politics, 1700-1764" *JAH* 60.3 (1973): 605-632. (JSTOR)  
Edmund Morgan, "Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox" *JAH* 59.1 (1972): 5-29. (JSTOR)

*Final Take-home Essay Due:* Tuesday, May 13, 5:00 pm