

HISTORY 332
Fall 2009
T 1:00-3:55, CT-16 Harrison McCann

McMahon
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Community in America: 1600-1900

In this history “problems” course, we will explore the ideals and the social, economic, and cultural realities of community in American history, focusing on change, continuity, and racial, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity in community experience from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries. We will study the formation of new communities on a “frontier” that began on the Atlantic seaboard and gradually moved westward across the continent; the attempts to create alternative communities either separate from or contained within established communities; and the changing face of community that accompanied cultural diversity, expansion, modernization, urbanization, and suburbanization.

Course expectations and requirements: The course will be held as a seminar, meeting once a week for three hours. For most class meetings during the first half of the semester, our discussion will focus on a community study monograph. Students are encouraged to purchase the books from the bookstore; a copy of each book is on reserve in the library. In addition, students are encouraged but not required to explore the further readings for each class meeting—primary sources (documents) and/or secondary sources (articles or chapters). Those reading assignments are available either on e-reserve through the *Library Reserves* link on *Blackboard* or by link to an online source or database from the *History 332 Reading Guide on Blackboard*. The *Reading Guide* also provides questions to help focus your reading. In preparation for each class meeting, students should read *and* begin to analyze the assigned texts; they should come to class with specific questions and some preliminary answers. By reading and participating in class discussions, students should develop an understanding of the research process and practice the analytical skills that they will use to pursue independent research in history. If a student misses a class meeting, the student is expected to write a 3-4 page analysis of the readings for that class. Class participation counts for 50% of the final grade.

Throughout the semester, students will engage in the process of designing and pursuing their own primary research projects. Early in the semester, each student will formulate a thesis question and a preliminary hypothesis about some aspect of community history. In late October, students will submit a research paper prospectus which presents a preliminary thesis statement or hypothesis, a brief annotated bibliography of the primary and secondary sources that they will analyze, and a preliminary outline. A draft of a section of the paper will be due in late November. During the second half of the course, class meetings will rotate between discussions of a monograph and small group meetings where students discuss their work in progress. The research paper (20-25 pages) will be due on the scheduled final-exam date for the course. Research methodology and process count for 25%, and the essay counts for 25% of the final grade.

All students are expected to read, understand, and abide by the Bowdoin College Academic Honor Code and by the rules of citation described on the Colby, Bates, and Bowdoin Academic Honesty Site at <http://library.bowdoin.edu/1st/CBBhonesty.shtml>.

Course texts:

- Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (1974)
- James H. Merrell, *The Indians' New World: Catawbas and their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal* (1989)
- Alan Taylor, *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (1996)
- William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (1992)
- Sarah Deutsch, *Women and the City: Gender, Space and Power in Boston* (2000)

All online Resources are available through Blackboard and/or the History 332 website:
<http://www.bowdoin.edu/faculty/S/smcmahon/courses/hist332/>

1. 9/8 PREVIEW

2. 9/15 INTRODUCTION: Historical Visions and Sociological Models of Community

Readings: Thomas Bender, Ch. 1, "Introduction: The Meanings of Community," Ch. 2, "Social Theory and the Problem of Community," 3-43. [Optional: Ch. 3, "Community in American History," 45-120], in Bender, *Community and Social Change in America* (1978). (e-reserve)

David J. Russo, "Introduction," "The Little Community: Towns (and Rural Areas Too?)," in Russo, *Families and Communities: A New View of American History* (1974), 1-51. (e-reserve)

Darrett Rutman, "Assessing the Little Communities of Early America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3d ser. XLIII (1986), 163-178. (JSTOR)

Document: John Winthrop, "A Modell of Christian Charity" (1630), *Hanover Historical Texts Project* (LINK) or *The Winthrop Society* (LINK)

3. 9/22 NEW ENGLAND COMMUNITIES: Witchcraft as a Community Phenomenon

Reading: Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (1974)

Guidelines for Writing a Research Paper in History (Blackboard or course website LINK)

Documents: Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Witchcraft Papers: Verbatim Transcripts of the Legal Documents*, 3 volumes (sample the transcripts)

Further reading (crafting a thesis and argument): Mary Beth Norton, "George Burroughs and the Girls from Casco: The Maine Roots of Salem Witchcraft," *Maine History* 40.4 (Winter 2001-2002), 259-277. (e-reserve)

4. 9/29 NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES: Tribes and tribal territories

Reading: James H. Merrell, *The Indians' New World: Catawbas and their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal* (1989)

Further readings (sources, methodology, and interpretation in Native American history): Jacques Ferland, "Tribal Dissent or White Aggression? Interpreting Penobscot Indian Dispossession Between 1808 and 1835," *Maine History* 43.2 (2007), 125-170. (e-reserve)

Pauleena MacDougall, "The Historian's Dilemma: Choosing, Weighing, and Interpreting Sources," *Maine History* 43.2 (2007), 171-186. (e-reserve)

5. 10/6 LIBRARY TOUR AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES: Ginny Hopcroft

Further readings: Ellen Somekawa and Elizabeth Smith, "Theorizing the Writing of History Or, 'I Can't Think Why It Should Be So Dull, For a Great Deal of It Must Be Invention'," *Journal of Social History* 22.1 (1988), 149-161. (Academic Search Premier)

Robert Dykstra and William Silag, "Doing Local History: Monographic Approaches to the Smaller Community," *American Quarterly* 37.3 (1985), 411-425. (JSTOR)

T.J. Jackson Lears, "Power, Culture, and Memory," *Journal of American History* 75.1 (1988), 137-40. (JSTOR)

More further readings: Lorena S. Walsh, "The Historian as Census Taker: Individual Reconstitution and the Reconstruction of Censuses for a Colonial Chesapeake County," *William and Mary Quarterly* 38.2 (1981), 242-260. (JSTOR)
Darrett Rutman, "New England as Idea and Society Revisited," *William and Mary Quarterly* 41.1 (1984), 56-61. (JSTOR)
Ellen Fitzpatrick, "Caroline F. Ware and the Cultural Approach to History," *American Quarterly* 43.2 (1991), 173-198. (JSTOR)

6. 10/13 FALL VACATION: No class meeting

7. 10/20 THE FRONTIER IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC: Community, Biography, Fiction, Myth

Reading: Alan Taylor, *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (1996) *Note*: read Introduction, Chapters 1-4, 8, 10, 13-15 (pp. 3-114, 199-228, 256-291, 346-427); skim chapters 5-7, 9, 11, 12

Further readings (historical myths, stories, and narratives): David Hackett Fischer, *Paul Revere's Ride* (1994), Introduction: Paul Revere Remounted; Historiography: Myths After the Midnight Ride, xiii-xviii, 327-344. (e-reserve)
William Cronon, "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative," *Journal of American History* 78 (March 1992), 1347-1376. (JSTOR)

8. 10/27 INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES: discuss research progress and prospectuses

Research Paper Prospectus Due Friday, Oct. 31

9. 11/3 URBAN LIFE I: Environmental History, and Community within a Regional Network

Reading: William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (1992). *Note*: read the Prologue and Part I (5-93); skim Part II (97-259); read Part III and the Epilogue (263-385).

Further readings: Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," *American Historical Review* (1893. (e-reserve))
Donald Worster, et. al., "A Round Table: Environmental History," *Journal of American History* 76.4 (March 1990), 1087-1147. (JSTOR)

10. 11/10 SMALL GROUP MEETINGS: work-in-progress discussions

11. 11/17 URBAN LIFE II: Gender, Class and Neighborhood Communities

Reading: Sarah Deutsch, *Women and the City: Gender, Space and Power in Boston* (2000).

Further readings: Linda Gerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *Journal of American History* 75 (1988), 9-39. (JSTOR)
Christine Stansell, "Women, Children, and the Uses of the Streets: Class and Gender Conflicts in New York City, 1850-1860," *Feminist Studies* (1982), 309-335. (JSTOR)
Susan Saegert, "Masculine Cities and Feminine Suburbs: Polarized Ideas, Contradictory Realities," in Catharine R. Stimpson, ed., *Women and the American City* (1980), 93-108. (e-reserve)

12. 11/24 SMALL GROUP MEETINGS: work-in-progress discussions

Penultimate draft due: Introduction and first section of Research Paper

13. 12/1 SMALL GROUP MEETINGS: work-in-progress discussions

14. 12/8 FINAL CLASS MEETING: work-in-progress discussions

Research Paper Due, Saturday, Dec. 19, 2009, 5:00 p.m.