

History 2121 (231)  
Spring 2022  
TTh 11:40-1:05, Sills 111

McMahon  
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### COLONIAL AMERICA AND THE ATLANTIC WORLD, 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 (socially, economically, and politically), 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. (The “further readings” listed in the Reading Guide are *not* required.) You are expected to attend class and to come to all class meetings and discussion sessions prepared to discuss and analyze the readings [20% of final grade]. *The History 2121 (231) Reading Guide* on *Blackboard* provides questions to help focus your reading for the class discussions. All reading assignments are available either through e-reserve (use the Library Reserves link on *Blackboard* or the e-reserves link on the *Reading Guide*), or by link to a database (JSTOR) or an online source from the *Reading Guide* (RG). If you miss a discussion session meeting (noted on the syllabus), you are expected to write a thoughtful evaluation (1-2 pages) of the assigned book. You are encouraged to print the assigned articles and to purchase the assigned books or request a copy from a CBB or MaineCat library; one copy of each book is on reserve in the library.

The essay assignments are an integral part of the course. Two careful readings and analyses of primary documents (4-5 pages each) will be due during the semester [together, 40% of final grade]. A final take-home essay (10-12 pages) is due by the scheduled final-exam date for the course [40% of final grade]. The *Extension, Deadline, and Grading Policy* for the course can be found on the course home page.

All students are expected to read, understand, and abide by the Bowdoin College Academic Honor Code and by the rules of citation (When to Cite and How to Cite) described on the Bowdoin College Academic Honesty and Plagiarism website at <https://www.bowdoin.edu/dean-of-students/ccs/community-standards/the-codes.html>.

Texts: William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (1983; reprinted 2003)  
Russell Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony that Shaped America* (2004)  
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)

Links to the *History 2121 (231) Reading Guide* and other online sources can be found on Blackboard or at: <https://tildesites.bowdoin.edu/~smcmahon/courses/hist231/index.html>

1. 1/25 INTRODUCTION TO NORTH AMERICAN COLONIAL HISTORY

1/27 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. 2/1 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)

document: Christopher Levett, "A Voyage to New England, begun in 1623 and ended in 1624" (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)  
History 231, *Primary Document Collections* (LINK)  
Bowdoin College, *Academic Honesty and Plagiarism* (LINK)  
Bowdoin Library, *Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide*. (LINK)

2/3 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. 2/8 NATIVE NORTH AMERICANS: The first inhabitants of North America

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

2/10 DISCUSSION: THE CONTACT OF CULTURES

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

*Establishing Colonial Settlements*

4. 2/15 THE CHESAPEAKE BAY: The instability of a tobacco society

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

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

2/17 THE ORIGINS OF THE SLAVE SYSTEM IN THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CHESAPEAKE

reading: Russell Menard, "From Servants to Slaves: The Transformation of the Chesapeake Labor System," *Southern Studies* 16 (1977): 355-390. (e-reserve)

5. 2/22 DISCUSSION: NEW NETHERLANDS AND THE ATLANTIC WORLD

reading: Russell Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony that Shaped America* (2004).  
*Note:* focus on the Prologue through Chapter 14, pp.1-300.

2/24 NEW ENGLAND EMIGRATION: Puritan ideals and English motives

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. 3/1 "PURITAN" FAMILIES AND "WELL-ORDERED" COMMUNITIES

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. (JSTOR)

3/3 DISAFFECTED NEW ENGLANDERS: Alienated affections and the "declension" of Puritan New England

7. 3/8 THE OTHER MID-ATLANTIC COLONIES IN THE LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY: New Jersey and Pennsylvania

reading: Evan Haefeli, "The Pennsylvania Difference: Religious Diversity on the Delaware before 1683," *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 1.1 (Spring 2003). (JSTOR)

3/10 TBD

8. 3/29 THE ENGLISH 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)

Encyclopædia Britannica Online:

Nathaniel Bacon; Culpeper's Rebellion; Jacob Leisler; Charles Calvert, 3<sup>rd</sup> Baron Baltimore; Edmund Andros (LINKS)

*Eighteenth Century: Provincial Society*

3/31 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)

9. 4/5 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)

4/7 TBD

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

10. 4/12 AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES

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

4/14 *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. 4/19 *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)

4/21 *THE MID-ATLANTIC COLONIES IN THE 18TH CENTURY*

readings: 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)

John Smolenski, "From Men of Property to Just Men: Deference, Masculinity, and the Evolution of Political Discourse in Early America," *Early American Studies* 3.2 (2005), 253-285. (JSTOR)

*British Colonial America at Mid-Century*

12. 4/26 *THE EMPIRE AND THE COLONIES: Colonial warfare in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries*

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

4/28 *THE FEAR OF "CREOLEAN DEGENERACY": American culture and American identity in the 18th century*

13. 5/3 *DISCUSSION: THE EVOLUTION OF COLONIAL AMERICA: Evidence from everyday life*

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

5/5 *AMERICA AT 1750: Toward the American Revolution?*

14. 5/10 *TBD*

*Final Take-home Essay Due: Monday, May 16, 12:00 pm*