

**HISTORY 101:
AMERICAN HISTORY TO THE CIVIL WAR ERA
Spring 2008**

Instructor: Professor Ned Blackhawk
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Lecture: 9:30-10:45, TR
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Course Description:

The study of American history has recently witnessed fundamental revision. Gone now are the days when the history of early America remained geographically and temporally bound to the Atlantic seaboard and to England's North American colonies. As scholars now recognize, many diverse actors as well as empires shaped our nation's earliest development. This course surveys such history from the first European-Indian encounters through the Civil War and its aftermath. Our principle concern remains to understand not only the outcome of events, but also the origins of them. As we shall see, history is not simply a series of inevitable events but a contingent process, the origins of which remain open to interpretation.

Course Readings:

Five texts are required for this course and are available at the Underground Textbook Exchange on State Street. A copy of each will also be placed on College Library Reserves.

- Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2001)
- Barry Unsworth, *Sacred Hunger* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1992)
- George Brown Tindall and David E. Shi, *America: A Narrative History*, Volume 1, 6th Edition (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2004)
- Peter Irons, *A People's History of the Supreme Court: The Men and Women Whose Cases and Decisions Have Shaped Our Constitution* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1999; 2006 revised ed.)
- David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, *Indian Removal* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2007)

Course Requirements:

The course meets twice a week in lecture and once a week in discussion section. Students will be responsible for all materials covered in class, in the readings, and in discussion. Active engagement with the course readings is a precondition for success in the class.

Students will be evaluated based on the following assignments:

- 1) **Exams:** the Midterm and Final exams will assess comprehension of the materials in the first and second half of the course, respectively. The Midterm exam will comprise of a series of short identifications (**IDs**) and an essay. Each ID will be drawn from either lecture or the readings and will be graded based on its accurate identification *as well as* its relationship and

significance to larger course themes, ideas, and arguments. Essays will be graded based on clarity of argument, use of detailed examples and evidence, and organization. The Midterm will be held in class in on Feb. 26th and will comprise **25%** of the final grade. A list of Midterm study questions will be provided prior to the exam. The Final Exam will also consist of short IDs and an essay *drawn from the second half of the course*. A list of Final Exam essays will be provided prior to the exam. The Final Exam will also comprise **25%** of the final grade.

2) **Extended Book Review:** an extended book review (5-7) pages of Barry Unsworth's *Sacred Hunger* will constitute **30%** of the course grade. Book review guidelines and organizing questions will be distributed at the end of Week 3. Students will be responsible for answering one of the identified questions for their reviews, which will be graded based on analytical clarity, organization, and the use detailed examples drawn from the text. The reviews are due in class on March 13th.

3) **Discussion Section:** weekly discussion sections allow students opportunities to engage the course materials in small and structured sessions. Section attendance, participation, and potential assignments in section will constitute the remaining **20%** of the course grade.

Course Schedule:

Part I New Worlds for All: North America From European Contact to 1763

Week 1

January 22 Introduction: Why History?

January 24 *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*

Readings: Taylor, x-22; Unsworth, 1-62

Week 2

January 29 *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*

January 31 *The Spanish Frontier in North America*

Readings: Taylor, 23-90; Unsworth, 65-162

Week 3

February 5 *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization*

February 7 *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*

Readings: Taylor, 117-203; Unsworth, 165-216

Week 4

February 12 *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia*

February 14 *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America*

Readings: Taylor, 204-244; Unsworth, 219-304

Week 5

February 19 *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era*

February 21 *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766*

Readings: Taylor, 301-363, 420-443; Unsworth, 307-391

Week 6

February 26 **Midterm Exam**

February 28 *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West*

Readings: Taylor, 397-419, 445-477; Unsworth, 397-496

Part II:

A Nation Emerges... and Endures, 1763-1877

Week 7

March 4 *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*

March 6 *What Did the Constitution Mean to Early Americans?*

Readings: Unsworth, 499-528; Tindall and Shi, 182-249; Irons, v-47

Week 8

March 11 *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America*

March 13 *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812*
A Video Presentation of A Midwife's Tale (Unsworth Book Reviews Due)

Readings: Unsworth, 529-630; Tindall and Shi; 249-337; Irons, 85-108

Spring Break, March 15-23

Week 9

March 25 *The Americas in the Age of Revolution*

March 27 *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846*

Readings: Tindall and Shi, 394-443; Heidler and Heidler, 1-47, 130-154

Week 10

April 1 *The Second Great Awakening and the Transcendentalists* (Guest Lecture by Nicolass Mink)

April 3 *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race*

Readings: Tindall and Shi, 492-571

Week 11

April 8 *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made*

April 10 *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War*

Readings: Tindall and Shi, 573-654

Week 12

April 15 *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South*

April 17 *The Civil War*, A Video Presentation of *The Civil War*, Vol. 1 by Ken Burns

Readings: Irons, 157-205

Week 13

April 22 *Grant and Lee: Victorious American and Vanquished Virginian*

April 24 *The Civil War in the American West*

Readings: Tindall and Shi, 655-712

Week 14

April 29 *Mark Twain in Hawaii*

May 1 *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*

Readings: Tindall and Shi, 713-758; Irons, 206-232

Week 15

May 6 *A People and a Nation*

May 8 Exam Review Session

Readings: None Assigned