2014

405-01 The American Revolution

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This course examines the thirty-year period, dominated by two wars, that constituted America’s formative period. In 1754, Britain’s colonies were still limited to the Atlantic coastal shelf, with the interior of the continent controlled by Native peoples and their French patrons. By 1784, France had been ousted from the continent, most of Britain’s colonists had forcibly broken free from their mother country, and Native peoples were powerless to thwart the onrush of settlers who flooded the interior.

This course does not attempt to provide a comprehensive overview of these monumental changes. Instead, it examines some of the aspects that are less well-known in the United States today, such as the Seven Years’ War and the British perspective on the war. It also focuses on individual people. We will read biographical treatments of people who were well-known and people who were obscure to gain a sense of what the conflict looked like from their vantage points. We will consider the merits and limitations of the biographical genre in preparation for writing our own analyses of the Revolution based on the experience of an individual as reconstituted through primary sources.

COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

JANUARY 2014

14  Introduction
16  Causes of the Seven Years’ War
    Reading: *The War that Made America*, part one + de la Galissonière + Kennedy

21  The Indian Way of War Defined, Described, and Debated
    *The War that Made America*, part two + Robaud + Jemison

23  Apex
    *The War that Made America*, part three + Perry

28  Conquest
    Reading: *The War that Made America*, part four + Anon. + Franklin

30  Legacies
    Reading: Colin Calloway, *The Scratch of a Pen* (excerpt)
    ESSAY ONE DUE

FEBRUARY 2014
4 A Boston Shoemaker

6 A Frontier Translator

11 A Boston Artisan and a British Officer
   Reading: David Hackett Fischer, *Paul Revere’s Ride*, xiii-92

13 Preparations
   Reading: *Paul Revere’s Ride*, 93-148

18 The Alarm & the Fight
   Reading: *Paul Revere’s Ride*, 149-260

20 Aftermath
   Reading: *Paul Revere’s Ride*, 261-95

25 Playing With History
   Kieran Healy, “Using Metadata to find Paul Revere” [http://kieranhealy.org/blog](http://kieranhealy.org/blog)
   ESSAY TWO DUE

27 Playing With History
   Playing: Assassin’s Creed III; Reading, Kee, “Computerized History Games: Narrative Options” *Simulation & Gaming* 42 (2011)

MARCH

11 Research consultations
13 Research consultations

18 King & Prime Minister
   Reading: *The Men Who Lost America*, introduction + part one

20 Military Leaders in the North
   Reading: *The Men Who Lost America*, part two

25 The War in the South

27 Military Leaders in the South
   Reading: *The Men Who Lost America*, part three
   ESSAY THREE DUE
APRIL/MAY
1    A Boston Woman
     Reading: Jill Lepore, *Book of Ages*, pages TBA

3    Jane Franklin
     Reading: *Book of Ages*, pages TBA

8    Jane Franklin
     Reading: *Book of Ages*, pages TBA
10   Research consultations
     ESSAY FOUR DUE

15   Research consultations

22   Presentations
24   Presentations
29   Presentations
1    Presentations

EVALUATION
Participation  25%
Essays (4 x 1000 words)  40%
Oral presentation  10%
Final paper (10-12 pages)  25%