



BECOMING AMERICANS
American Studies 103W, 002
Tisch Learning Center 308

Professor M.C. Lynn
Spring 2009
Tu, Th, 11:10-12:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Introduction to the interdisciplinary study of American culture, past and present. Emphasizes reading critically, thinking historically, practicing interdisciplinarity and acknowledging diversity. Students will analyze and synthesize multiple kinds of primary sources (such as fiction, film, music, art) and disciplinary perspectives (sociology, economics, media criticism) to appreciate better the complexity of American life and culture. This section of this course fulfills the college requirement in expository writing.

BECOMING AMERICANS: This version of the Introduction to American Studies will focus on the 18th century experiences of British colonists in North America who ended the century as citizens of a new nation, the United States of America. Beginning with the so-called French and Indian Wars (King William's War, 1689-1697, Queen Anne's War, 1702-1713, King George's War, 1744-1748 and the Seven Years War, 1754-1763), the colonists and British forces struggled for control of North America against the French and their Indian Allies. At the same time, the African slave trade grew exponentially creating the plantation system (and the fortunes of the slave traders), while enslaved Africans came to comprise nearly one-fifth of the population of the thirteen colonies. The Great Awakening transformed the religious life of the colonies while establishing patterns of evangelism still important today; eventually, controversies over taxation to fund the British governance of the colonies led to the American Revolution and ultimately to constitutional government. These events will be considered from a variety of disciplinary perspectives and primary sources including those from cultural and political history, religion, literature, music and art history as well as the different ways in which this developing American culture has been portrayed in the 20th and 21st centuries.

REQUIRED TEXTS

John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive*
Jill Lepore, *New York Burning*
Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography*
William Byrd, *Diary & Life* (Blackboard)
Stephanie Grauman Wolf, *As Various As Their Land*
Fred Anderson, *The War That Made America*
Robert Gross, *The Minutemen and Their World*

SHORTER DOCUMENTS (Blackboard):

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun* (excerpts)
Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"
Phyllis Wheatley, "Elegy on Whitefield"
Charles Chauncey, "Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England"
Nathan Cole, "Born Again"
The Letters of John & Abigail Adams (excerpts)
Declaration of Independence
Constitution of the United States of America
Federalist Papers (excerpts)

FILMS (excerpts)

"*The Unredeemed Captive*"
"*John & Abigail Adams: Love & Liberty*"
"*Liberty! The American Revolution*"
"*The War That Made America*"
"*How the British Lost America*"
"*Amazing Grace*"

ADDITIONAL SOURCES:

Music: William Billings, Abraham Wood, various traditional pieces
Art: works by John Singleton Copley, Charles Willson Peale, Benjamin West, Gilbert Stuart, John Trumbull

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Class participation: This means timely completion of all assigned reading and participation in class discussion, both in our classroom and on e-mail. Attendance counts!; more than three absences will have a negative effect on your class performance grade. (Please see me after the first class if you anticipate missing class for surgery, major religious holidays, or college-related travel.)
2. Short papers: You will write three short (3-4 pp.) papers over the course of the semester--a formal assignment sheet will be handed out one week in advance. Papers are due on January 22, February 12, and April 21. Papers will be assessed and critiqued by student writing groups, and will be revised and resubmitted. (1st draft will count for one-third, the 2nd draft for two-thirds of your grade for each paper.)

3. Research paper: You will research and write an original paper 10-12 pages in length on some aspect of 18th century colonial American society and culture. You will hand in a topic statement on January 29, a preliminary bibliography on February 19, and an outline on March 5. Your rough draft is due March 27, and you will review it with me during the week of March 31. The final draft of the research paper is due in class on Thursday, April 16. The paper grade (one-third for the first draft, two-thirds for the final draft) will account for approximately two fifths of your final grade.

GRADES

Your class participation will account for about one-fifth of your final grade; your three short papers will account for two-fifths, and your research paper will account for the rest. Late submissions will incur a grade penalty.

FINDING ME

My office is TLC 329, my extension is 5025. You can also reach me through e-mail, which I check daily; my username is mcl. My office hours are Wednesdays and Fridays from 11:30 to noon, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 11 and 1:30 to 2:30. I am normally on campus every day from 8:30 to 4:30, so if you have classes during my office hours, send me an e-mail to schedule another time to meet. (In an emergency, you may call me at home at 587-0193.)

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Tuesday, January 20	Introduction: Two Inaugurations
Thursday, January 22	FIRST ESSAY DUE The Deerfield Raid: Demos, ch. 1-3
Tuesday, January 27	Global Conflict, Demos, ch. 3-6, Ulrich Choosing a feasible topic
Thursday, January 29	RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC STATEMENT DUE Frontier War, Demos, ch. 7-10 “War That Made America”
Tuesday, February 3	The Founding Father, Franklin, part one Revising your deathless prose
Thursday, February 5	REVISION OF FIRST ESSAY DUE Franklin, part two
Tuesday, February 10	A Great American Gentleman, Byrd 1709-1710
Thursday, February 12	SECOND ESSAY DUE Slavery & Civilization, Byrd, 1711-1712 Crafting a bibliography
Tuesday, February 17	The Slave Trade, LePore, ch. 1-3
Thursday, February 19	BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE Rebellion and Suppression, LePore, 4-6 College level research

Tuesday, February 24	Consequences, LePore, 7-end Review of Revision
Thursday, February 26	REVISION OF SECOND ESSAY DUE An Awakening Great and General, Edwards, Chauncey Cole, & Wheatley Organizing Your Research
Tuesday, MARCH 3 Thursday MARCH 5	Daily Lives: Wolf, part one OUTLINE DUE “Amazing Grace” Writing a Draft
SPRING BREAK	
Tuesday, March 17 Thursday, March 19	Making a Living: Wolf, Part two Creating Community: Wolf, Part Three
Tuesday, March 24 Thursday, March 27	The Revolutionary Town: Gross, prologue, ch. 1-3 DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE “Liberty!” Economic Issues: Gross, ch. 4
Tuesday, March 31 Thursday, April 2	CONFERENCES ON DRAFTS (3/30. 3/31. 4/1. 4/2, 4/3 Battles of Lexington & Concord: Gross, ch.5-7 Saratoga! Ketchum (excerpts) Field Trip: Saratoga National Historical Park
Tuesday, April 7 Thursday, April 9	Independence! Declaration, Adams, excerpts Billings & Wood (music) “How the British Lost America” “Liberty” (comparisons)
Tuesday, April 14 Thursday, April 16	Republic of Slavery: Schama, Rough Crossings (excerpt & video) Liberty! FINAL VERSION OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE Picturing the Revolution (West, Trumbull, Peale, Copley. Etc.)
NB: Kuroda Seminar Friday, April 17 (evening) Saturday, April 18 (morning) Attendance required!	
Tuesday, April 21 Thursday, April 23	Compromise and Creation: Constitution THIRD ESSAY DUE Convincing the Electorate: Federalist #10
Tuesday, April 28	Becoming Americans: the crises of Washington & Adams (the Whisky Rebellion and the undeclared war with France; the Alien & Sedition Acts)

MONDAY, MAY 4 (1ST DAY OF FINALS) REVISION OF THIRD ESSAY DUE

- FIRST ESSAY DUE Thursday, January 22, 2009
SUBJECT: Two inaugurations
SOURCES: George Washington's First Inaugural Address (1789); Barack Obama's Inaugural Address (2009)
- SECOND ESSAY: DUE: Thursday, February 12
SUBJECT: consideration of development of dramatically different American subcultures
SOURCES: :: comparison of Byrd's diary to Franklin's autobiography;
- THIRD ESSAY: DUE Thursday, April 23
SUBJECT: Revolutionary Landscapes
SOURCES: Two filmed introductions to Saratoga National Historical Park; two visitor's guides (1967, 2005)