HISTORY 5A: EARLY AMERICAN HISTORY

COURSE INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTOR
Swarthmore College, Fall 2019
Mon.-Wed.-Fri. 10:30-11:20; Trotter 301
Bruce Dorsey
Trotter 214, bdorsey1@swarthmore.edu
Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. 11:30-12:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES
This course is designed to introduce students to important themes in the history of the United States between the earliest history of European colonization in North America and the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction. An emphasis of the course will be on the cultural history of the colonial era, the American Revolution, and the first century of the new republic.

These are the principal learning objectives of this course:
• Expose students to the art of critical reading and historical analysis of primary source documents.
• Allow students to develop their own interpretative frameworks for understanding the significance of various developments in the United States’ first century.
• Provide students with a strong conceptual background to interpret conflict and change in American culture both in the past and in the present.
• Expose students to the geography and genealogy of cultural change in America.

REQUIRED READINGS:
The following books are required readings and available at the College Bookstore:
• Marcus Rediker, The Fearless Benjamin Lay.
• Alfred F. Young, The Shoemaker and the Tea Party.
• Theda Perdue and Michael Green, eds., The Cherokee Removal. 3rd Edition.
• Amy S. Greenberg, ed, Manifest Destiny and American Territorial Expansionism, 2nd Ed.
• Moodle: The vast majority of the required readings for this course, as well as the supplemental readings for the writing assignments, are available on the course’s Moodle site. We will read significant sections of a primary-source reader: Bruce Dorsey and Woody Register, eds., Crosscurrents in American Culture (available on Moodle).

Students are responsible for bringing copies of the week’s assigned readings to class, since classroom discussions will focus on the interpretation and discussion of the primary-source documents in the assigned readings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE:
Students are required to attend all class meetings, complete all assigned readings, and be prepared to discuss the readings each week. Students are expected to contribute actively to the collective learning experience of the course, and will be evaluated on their class participation.
**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:**

**PAPERS:**
Two papers (approximately six double-spaced pages [1,500-2,000 words]) will be written throughout the semester. These are not research papers. The papers should be based on the assigned course readings (including primary-source documents), classroom discussions, and readings from the supplemental list on Moodle. The expectations and requirements for the papers, as well as the choice of topics and supplemental readings, are described under Paper Assignments on Moodle.

**PAPER DUE DATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper Type</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>First Paper</td>
<td>Oct. 25 by 8:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Paper</td>
<td>Dec. 9 by 8:00 p.m.*</td>
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<td>* (depending on final exam schedule)</td>
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**REFLECTION ESSAYS:**
Four short essays (ranging between one and three double-spaced pages) will be written as interpretations and reflections on various primary-source reading assignments. Thoughtful reflection and analysis are expected for these brief writing assignments. The topic and question for each essay, and a more extensive description of the Reflection Essay assignments, can be found on the course Moodle page.

**REFLECTION ESSAY DUE DATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essay Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date (before class)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. John Rolfe’s Letter</td>
<td>Sept. 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Quakers &amp; slavery workshop</td>
<td>Sept. 30</td>
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<td>3. Solomon Northup, 12 Years</td>
<td>Nov. 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4a. Nativism</td>
<td>Nov. 15 [or]</td>
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<tr>
<td>4b. Anti-Mexican Violence</td>
<td>Nov. 22</td>
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**FINAL EXAMINATION**
A comprehensive final examination covering the material for the entire semester will be given on the scheduled exam date. The professor will not schedule make-up or early exams.

**POLICIES:**

**EVALUATION/GRADING**

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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Grade Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Papers</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection Essays</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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*Note: Students must complete all writing assignments to pass this course.*

**ATTENDANCE & COMMUNICATION**
The following is the History Department policy on attendance & communication:
Students are required to attend all classes. Unexcused absences will result in a lower grade for the course. If you are having a medical or personal emergency, please contact the Dean’s Office as well as the instructor. It is your responsibility to inform your instructor as soon as possible. It is essential that you check your email on a regular basis since History professors will contact you via email. We also expect you to use email to contact History professors.
**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Students must submit their own original written work and properly acknowledge and cite sources of information, argument, and prose. Read the History Department’s statement on Academic Honesty (posted on Moodle) for guidance on these matters. The College’s standards on academic integrity define academic misconduct as consisting of “cheating on an exam, plagiarism on an academic assignment, or unauthorized collaborative work.”

**LAPTOPS & ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

To facilitate discussion and to avoid distractions, I am going to ask that you do not use a laptop or other electronic device for notetaking in class. You can consult the readings on an electronic device during discussions. All social media and internet browsers must be turned off, and all phones silenced, during class. (Disability accommodations requiring the use of a computer are not covered by this policy.)

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITY:**

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (Parrish 113W) or email studentdisabilityservices@swarthmore.edu to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs. As appropriate, the Office will issue students with documented disabilities a formal Accommodations Letter. Since accommodations require early planning and are not retroactive, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services as soon as possible. For details about the accommodations process, visit the Student Disability Service website at https://www.swarthmore.edu/academic-advising-support/welcome-to-student-disability-service. You are also welcome to contact me privately to discuss your academic needs. However, all disability-related accommodations must be arranged through the Office of Student Disability Services.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

**PART 1: CULTURAL CONTACTS/CONFLICT DURING COLONIAL ENCOUNTERS**

**Sext. 2: INTRODUCTION**

**Sext. 4: COLONIAL DREAMS: IMAGININGS OF EXPLORATION & CONQUEST**

**Readings:**

**Sext. 6: SEEING NEW PEOPLES: VISUAL IMAGES OF COLONIZATION**

**Readings:**
- Dorsey & Register, *Crosscurrents in American Culture*, 22-35.

**Sext. 9: NEW WORLDS AND OLD WORLDS: CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS IN THE AMERICAS**

**Readings:**
SEPT. 11: QUAKERS & SLAVERY: PART 1 (INTRODUCTION)

GUEST SPEAKERS: ARCHIVIST AND/OR CURATOR, FRIENDS HISTORICAL LIBRARY, SWARTHMORE

READINGS:
Marcus Rediker, *The Fearless Benjamin Lay* (2017), 1-45, 48-70. [begin this reading]

SEPT. 13: RACE AND GENDER IN ENGLAND’S COLONIZATION OF VIRGINIA

READINGS:
Dorsey & Register, *Crosscurrents in American Culture*, 41-54.

Reflection Essay 1 Due: Crosscurrents, p. 50.

SEPT. 16: PURITANS & WHITE INDIANS IN NEW ENGLAND

READINGS:
Dorsey & Register, *Crosscurrents in American Culture*, 54-71.

PART 2: ORIGINS OF SLAVERY IN THE AMERICAS & QUAKERS AND SLAVERY

SEPT. 18: ORIGINS OF SLAVERY IN NORTH AMERICA

READINGS:
Dorsey & Register, *Crosscurrents in American Culture*, 72-85.

SEPT. 20: MIDDLE PASSAGE: TALES OF THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

READINGS:

SEPT. 23: PENNSYLVANIA & THE MIDDLE COLONIES: PLURALISM & DIVERSITY

READINGS:

SEPT. 25: QUAKERS & SLAVERY: WORKSHOP IN DIGITAL AND ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

SEPT. 27: QUAKERS & SLAVERY: WORKSHOP IN DIGITAL AND ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

During these two class meetings (Wed. & Fri.), students will be divided into two groups. One group will meet with the archivists at the Friends Historical Library (first floor entrance of McCabe Library) to read and discuss original manuscripts regarding Quakers and slavery and antislavery during the 18th century. The other group will meet with the professor in a McCabe Library computer room to discuss documents from the digital collection, Quakers & Slavery, created from the holdings at the FHL at Swarthmore and the Quaker Collections at Haverford. And for the next class meeting, students will switch locations and assignments. A description of the workshop and expected student work before class will be posted on Moodle.
PART 3: COMPETING VISIONS OF FREEDOM IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTION

SEPTEMBER 30: COLONIAL AMUSEMENTS & THE GREAT AWAKENING

READINGS:
- Dorsey & Register, Crosscurrents in American Culture, 96-107.
- Reflection Essay 2 Due: Quakers and Slavery workshop

OCTOBER 2: EMPIRE AND REBELLION IN THE BRITISH COLONIES

READINGS:

OCTOBER 4: THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

READINGS:
- Dorsey & Register, Crosscurrents in American Culture, 108-22.

OCTOBER 7: MEMORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION & CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

READINGS:

OCTOBER 9: COMPETING VISIONS OF FREEDOM & EQUALITY DURING A REVOLUTION

READINGS:
- Dorsey & Register, Crosscurrents in American Culture, 122-31.

OCTOBER 11: REFLECTIONS ON THE HISTORY OF THE CONSTITUTION

READINGS:

FALL BREAK: NO CLASS OCT. 14, 16, 18 & 21

OCTOBER 23: THE CONSTITUTION AND THE RACIAL ORIGINS OF THE NEW NATION

READINGS:

OCTOBER 25: SIGNS AND LANGUAGES OF A NEW NATIONALISM

READINGS:
- Dorsey & Register, Crosscurrents in American Culture, 131-40.

FIRST PAPER DUE: FRIDAY, OCT. 25, BY 8:00 PM
PART 4: SLAVERY, CAPITALISM, AND THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC

**Oct. 28: A MARKET REVOLUTION: CREATING CONSUMER DESIRE & DEBATES OVER MANUFACTURING**

**Readings:**
- Dorsey & Register, *Crosscurrents in American Culture*, 141-50.

**Oct. 30: INDUSTRIALIZATION & THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE NORTH**

**Readings:**
- Dorsey & Register, *Crosscurrents in American Culture*, 151-70.

**Nov. 1: SLAVERY IN THE SOUTH: THE ECONOMICS OF SLAVERY**

**Readings:**

**Nov. 4: SLAVERY IN THE SOUTH: RESISTANCE & AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE**

**Readings:**
- Dorsey & Register, *Crosscurrents in American Culture*, 171-85.

Reflection Essay 3 Due: *Crosscurrents*, p. 179

PART 5: INDIAN REMOVAL

**Nov. 6: INDIAN REMOVAL & “CIVILIZATION”**

**Readings:**

**Nov. 8: INDIAN REMOVAL & “CIVILIZATION” [*DISCUSSION]***

**Readings:**

**Nov. 11: REFORMING AMERICA: RELIGIOUS REVIVALISM & REFORMS**

**Readings:**

PART 6: IMMIGRATION AND ANTI-IMMIGRATION POLITICS

**Nov. 13: REFORMING AMERICA: NATIVISM (ANTI-IMMIGRATIONISM)**

**Readings:**
- Primary Source Documents on Anti-Catholic and Anti-Immigrant Politics

**Nov. 15: AMERICA’S ANTI-IMMIGRATION AND CONSPIRACY POLITICS**

**Readings:**
- Primary Source Documents on Know Nothing Party & other Anti-Immigrant Politics
- Reflection Essay 4a Due: *Nativism*
PART 7: “MANIFEST DESTINY” & EMPIRE / CULTURE OF DEMOCRACY

Nov. 18: CULTURAL MEANINGS OF EXPANSIONISM & THE WESTERN FRONTIER

READINGS:
Dorsey & Register, Crosscurrents in American Culture, 232-33, 240-44.

Nov. 20: “MANIFEST DESTINY”: EXPANSIONISM & CONQUEST

READINGS:
Greenberg, Manifest Destiny and Territorial Expansionism, 26-38, 84-136, 141-52.
Dorsey & Register, Crosscurrents in American Culture, 244-51.

Nov. 22: ANTI-MEXICAN VIOLENCE & LYNCHING IN THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST

READINGS:
Primary Source Documents on Anti-Mexican Rhetoric & Violence.
Reflection Essay 4b Due: Manifest Destiny/Anti-Mexican Violence

Nov. 25: CULTURE OF DEMOCRACY: COMMERCIAL POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT

READINGS:
Dorsey & Register, Crosscurrents in American Culture, 252-71.

Nov. 27: SECTIONAL CULTURES AND CONFLICTS

READINGS:

THANKSGIVING BREAK: No Class Nov. 29

PART 8: CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION: A SECOND AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Dec. 2: JOHN BROWN’S BODY: SYMBOLS & MEANINGS OF THE CIVIL WAR

READINGS:
Dorsey & Register, Crosscurrents in American Culture, 281-99.
Edward Ayers, What Caused the Civil War (2005), 131-44.
Chandra Manning, Troubled Refuge: Struggling for Freedom in the Civil War (2016), ch. 3-4.

Dec. 4: INTERPRETING THE CIVIL WAR

READINGS:
“Jeff Davis in Drag,” draft, 2nd ed., Crosscurrents in American Culture.

Dec. 6: FREE AT LAST!: EMANCIPATION & AFRICAN AMERICAN FREEDOM

READINGS:
Steven Hahn, A Nation under Our Feet (2007), 216-41; 249-64.
Dorsey & Register, *Crosscurrents in American Culture*, 300-322.

**Dec. 9: RECONSTRUCTION: THE SECOND FOUNDING**

**Readings:**
- Dorsey & Register, *Crosscurrents in American Culture*, 322-335.

**Second Paper Due:** Either Mon., Dec. 9 or Thur., Dec. 12, by 8:00 PM (Depending on the final exam schedule to be announced by Oct. 1)

**Final Examination: Date & Time:** ____________________________