Graduate Seminar:

From Puritans to Witches to Yankees:
The Social History and Historiography of Colonial New England, 1600-1750

“. . . wee must be knitt together in this worke as one man, wee must entertaine each other in brotherly Affeccion, wee must be willing to abridge our selves of our superfluities, for the supply of others necessities, wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together in all meekenes, gentlenes, patience and liberality . . “

--John Winthrop, City on a Hill

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Office Hours: Tues. 11AM-12PM, Mon. & Wed. 10AM-11AM, and by appointment

Course Description:
This course examines the social history of colonial New England by considering numerous themes, including: the Great Migration of the 1630s and historical demography; Puritanism and popular religion; the New England town; men, women, and families; the effects of war on the region, colonial witchcraft, especially the episode in 1692 Salem, and the transformation of Puritan New England into Yankee New England in the early eighteenth century. We will also focus on the historiography of early New England by reading, discussing, and debating the contributions of numerous historians who worked or are working in the field. While some would argue that the heyday of the study of colonial New England was in the late 1960s and 1970s, coinciding with the emergence of “the New Social History” in this country, there are still exciting questions to pose about the region and many skilled historians are doing so, as we shall see.
Texts Available for Purchase (available at the USM Textbook Center):

NOTE: Most books below are also on reserve at Cook Library. Additional readings, as listed below on the class schedule, are available on JSTOR or on the class CD-ROM (to be handed out first day of class).


Course Requirements and Assignments:
Note: Students must complete all of the assignments to pass the course. The first assignment is the careful reading of this syllabus.

1. **Class Participation:** 10% of final grade. As a seminar, high-quality class discussion is vital to the success of the course. Students should come to class thoroughly familiar with all of the reading assigned for that day (and any class handouts) and prepared to discuss the readings in an informed manner. **Students are required to bring all assigned reading materials to class discussion.**

   Because having a good class discussion depends on the participation of all students, your presence in class is essential. **You will be allowed one unexcused absences--no questions asked. Each unexcused absence** from the second one on will lower your grade by one letter grade (A to B, for example). Excused absences include those arranged with the professor beforehand and those accompanied by appropriate documentation (Health Center note, etc.).

   Each student will also lead one week’s discussion, which will factor into their participation grade and offer good experience for later teaching careers. A sign-up sheet will be circulated the first week of class to allow students to pick a week’s discussion to lead. Students are required to prepare questions or topics for discussion and ensure that the conversation highlights the relevant themes for that week. In order to ensure adequate preparation, students are required to meet with the professor early on the day they lead discussion to confer about their arrangements. Students are NOT expected to lead the whole discussion period—but they should have adequately prepared questions/topics to start the week’s debate and keep it going for at least an hour. The professor is always ultimately responsible for the discussion.

2. **Critical Book Reviews or Historiographical Reviews (8 total):** 8% (each) of final grade=total 65% of final grade. Students will complete eight short (4-5 pages) papers during the semester, either critically reviewing one of the course books or exploring a historiographical
debate on a week’s topic (for examples, see the critical book reviews in Reviews in American History or the recent historiographical reviews in the William & Mary Quarterly). Students can choose which eight books/weeks to write about—but two of the papers must be turned in before September 29th. Papers will be turned in at the beginning of the class in which the book/topic is to be discussed. It is up to individual students to turn in all eight (8) assignments. Students should take note: those who turn papers in early will clear their schedule near the end of the term, freeing them to work on large projects and final exams.

3. Historiographical Term Paper: 25% of final grade. Each student will complete a large term paper (15-20 pages), due on Wednesday, December 15th at 4PM in the professor’s office, dealing with an important historiographical debate in the history of colonial New England. Extensive outside research in the secondary literature will permit students to scrutinize an important debate among historians and share their own perspectives on the dispute. Students are free to choose topics covered in class (extensive reading beyond class work is expected) or a topic not dealt with in class. Students must consult with the professor about their choice of topic by September 21st and keep in regular contact with the professor about their progress through the semester.

A Note about Office Hours:
I will hold office hours (see page 1) for any interested students at posted times and will be happy to arrange a different time for you to come in and see me if those times do not fit into your schedule. If for some reason I can not make my office hours, I will try to announce it in class and I will post it on my office door. This is time I have set aside for you to come in and talk about your questions or comments about the class, history, writing, the college, or whatever (including "The West Wing"). It is a great time to come in and discuss paper topics or questions. It is unfortunate that more students don't take advantage of faculty office hours--we're not just available in the classroom.

Course Policies:

1. Class Climate: This course is a seminar, designed to give you a chance to explore an academic area of interest through intensive reading, writing, and discussion. Accordingly, most class periods will be filled by discussion of the assigned reading, with frequent opportunities to write. In order for discussions to be productive, all students need to feel comfortable participating. We will create and maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect in which everyone’s ideas can be heard.

2. Pagers and Cell Phones: All pagers and cell phones must be turned to silent mode (vibrate) or turned off when in class! If you must take or make a call an emergency call, leave the classroom (and re-enter) quietly so you will not disturb others.

4. **Manuscript Preparation:** All papers should be computer-generated (12pt font, Times New Roman) and should be double-spaced with one-inch margins. Papers should always be handed in with the pages numbered and stapled together. Proofread carefully. Clearly place your name, the course, a description of the paper, and date of each assignment in the upper right hand corner of the first page.*

*Sample heading for papers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History 201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper One [or Revision—Paper One, etc.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 13, 2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **Copies of Papers:** It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each paper that you submit. In the unlikely event that I misplace the paper, you should be able to produce your copy that same day. Students unable to produce the requested copy will fail the assignment.

6. **Late Papers:** Papers submitted between one and five days after the due date will be penalized one full letter grade. Papers submitted six or seven days after the due date will be penalized two full letter grades. Papers submitted more than one week after the due date will not be accepted. Extensions of a due date will be granted only in the event of a documented medical or family emergency.

7. **Academic Dishonesty:** Scholastic dishonesty will not be condoned under any circumstance. See the current Graduate Bulletin for a good definition of such behavior. Demonstrated plagiarism on a paper will automatically lead to a grade of “F” for the course and can result in dismissal from the college. The instructor reserves the right to use electronic resources, such as turnitin.com, to detect plagiarism. If you have questions or concerns about this policy—please see the instructor during office hours.

8. **Students with Disabilities:** If you have any disabilities that might affect your performance in this class, please let the professor know. You must also register with the Office of Disability Accommodations (ODA). They can help students by officially notifying faculty of a student’s special needs. Their phone numbers are (601) 266-5024 (Voice) or (601) 266-6837 (TTY). The ODA’s web site is http://www.ids.usm.edu/ODA.

9. **A Resource for Improving Writing:** While I am always available to discuss your ideas and look over drafts before the paper due dates, I also encourage you to use the following resource:

   The Writing Center (303 LAB, Phone: 266-4821, Web: [http://www.usm.edu/english/writingcenter/](http://www.usm.edu/english/writingcenter/))

   From their web site:
   The Writing Center is a free tutorial service available to any USM student who wants assistance with a writing project. We offer one-to-one writing instruction that’s designed to help
you become a more effective writer. We offer tutorial service on a walk-in basis or by appointment (on the hour for an hour). However, the appointments usually book up several days in advance, so at some points during the year it is extremely difficult for us to have enough tutors available for walk in appointments – so making an appointment is always a good idea.

In your session, a tutor talks with you about your writing project, asking you questions that will help you clarify your thoughts, specify your purpose, and decide how to proceed. We don’t write a paper for you – your writing is your own – but we will help you find ways to develop your ideas more fully and express them more effectively.

10. Syllabus: This syllabus is a mutual contract between the professor and student and the student and professor. It will not be altered lightly, however if circumstances make it necessary, the changes will be made as far in advance as is possible and in writing.
Course Schedule

Week 1—The English Background to New England

Wednesday, Aug. 25—Course Introduction & Discussion


Week 2—The Great Migration & Historical Demography of New England

Wednesday, Sept. 1—Discussion:


Week 3—Classical Puritanism

Wednesday, Sept. 8—Discussion:


**Week 4—Historiographical Corrective: Popular Religion in New England**

Wednesday, Sept. 15—**Discussion:**


**Week 5— The New England Town**

Wednesday, Sept. 22—**DEADLINE FOR TERM PAPER TOPIC & MEETING WITH THE PROFESSOR**

Wednesday, Sept. 22—**Discussion:**


Week 6—The New England Family—Traditional Views?

Wednesday, Sept. 29—Discussion:


Week 7—The New England Family—Modern Correctives?

Wednesday, Oct. 6—Discussion:


Week 8—Puritan Women in New England

Wednesday, Oct. 13—Discussion:


Week 9—Puritan Men in New England

Wednesday, Oct. 20—Discussion:

Week 10—Labor in New England: The World of Work

Wednesday, Oct. 27—Discussion:


Week 11—The New England Frontier: Indians, Trade, & Warfare

Wednesday, Nov. 3—Discussion:


Week 12—Witchcraft in Salem I—Old “New” School Theories

Wednesday, Nov. 10—Discussion:


Week 13—Witchcraft in Salem II—The Cutting Edge?

Wednesday, Nov. 17—Discussion:

James E. Kences, “Some Unexplored Relationships of Essex County Witchcraft to the Indian Wars of 1675 and 1689” *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, 120 no. 3 (1984), 179-212. CLASS CD-ROM

**Week 14—Thanksgiving (Our Most “Puritan” Holiday)**

Wednesday, Nov. 24—**Thanksgiving Holiday—NO CLASS!**

Give thanks in an appropriately Puritan way!

**Week 15—Seventeenth Century Roundup—Time for a Synthesis?**

Wednesday, Dec. 1—**Discussion:**


**Week 16—Beyond the Seventeenth Century—from Puritan to Yankee**

Wednesday, Dec. 8—**Discussion:**


**Final Paper Due:**

Wednesday, December 15 at 4PM in Professor Zelner’s Office (447 LAB)