

The University of Southern Mississippi
Department of History

History 561/692

Spring 2009

9:30—10:45 T, Th.

**The World Turned Upside Down:
The Era of the American Revolution, 1760--1800**

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Office Hours: T, Th. 2:30-5PM & by appointment

“The Civil War divided a nation, whereas the American Revolution created and unified it. The Civil War exposed our vilest flaws, whereas the Revolution shaped our character and displayed our courage, principles, and highmindedness for all the world to see.”

--Michael Kammen, *A Season of Youth*, 1978

Statement of Purpose:

The era from 1760 to 1800 is arguably the most important period in the history of the United States. Thirteen diverse colonies, with few links to each other, came together to protest their weak position in the growing British Empire, joined to fight a war of independence, and forged a new country, the likes of which the world had never seen. The period of George Washington and Benedict Arnold; Thomas Jefferson and Abigail Adams—is one of the most exciting periods in America’s national story. While it is a time to celebrate, it is also a period which saw great promise lost. Women, Africans, and Native Americans were participants in, but not beneficiaries of, the grand experiment in republican government that came out of the war.

This course will examine the political, military, and social aspects of the period. We will focus on the imperial crisis that led to war, the politics of protest and nation-building, the military conflict from 1775-1783, the post-war crisis in national and state governments, the writing of and ratification fight over the new Constitution, the Federalist era, and Thomas Jefferson’s Revolution of 1800. The graduate class will also examine some of the major historians working on the era and the major historiographical debates about it. Ultimately, we will attempt to answer the question, “Just how revolutionary was the American Revolution?”

Mechanics of the Course:

As an undergraduate/graduate history course, class will be divided between lectures and discussions. You will also devote a considerable amount of time to outside reading.

In order to cover the vast amount of material necessary, the professor will lecture for the majority of class time on Tuesdays and the beginning of class on Thursdays. Audio-visual materials may be used during certain classes to stimulate understanding and discussion. The schedule of topics and the reading assigned to complement the lectures follows below.

On Thursdays, we will discuss the week's readings—especially the primary documents in the Brown reader. It is IMPERATIVE that you have the reading done by Thursday for the scheduled class discussion. There are also a number of times when the class will hold a scheduled discussion on one of the outside books assigned for the class. **Graduate students will also participate in a separate discussion section from time to time, at a time and place to be determined.** Active and thoughtful participation in the discussions is a requirement of the course. Read the class schedule below and listen for class announcements for changes in this general format.

Required Books (available at the Barnes & Noble on campus):

Brown, Richard. ed. *Major Problems in the Era of the American Revolution, 1760—1791*. 2nd ed. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 2000. **You MUST have the second edition.**

Holton, Woody. *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves, & the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.

Norton, Mary Beth. *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1980.

Royster, Charles. *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. New York: Knopf, 1992.

Additional Required Books for Graduate Students:

Nash, Gary B. *The Urban Crucible: The Northern Seaports and the Origins of the American Revolution*. Abridged ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787*. Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va., by the University of North Carolina Press, 1969.

Anderson, Fred. *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War*. Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va., by the University of North Carolina Press, 1984.

Frey, Sylvia R. *Water from the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Rosswurm, Steven. *Arms, Country, and Class: The Philadelphia Militia and "Lower Sort" during the American Revolution, 1775-1783*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987.

Assignments, Attendance, & Grading:

The first assignment of the class is the careful reading of this syllabus. Attendance at ALL classes is MANDATORY, including the additional graduate discussion sections.

There will be one book review and four outside papers for this class. Details on the paper topics will be discussed well in advance of the due date. More information on papers (mechanics, etc.) is listed below in “Course Policies.”

The first paper will be a critical book review of Woody Holton’s *Forced Founders*. A critical book review should briefly describe what the book is about and how the book fits into the historiography, but concentrate on identifying and commenting upon the author’s thesis: What is the author trying to get across, how does she/he argue the case and upon what evidence, and where and to what extent do you agree and disagree? If you are unsure how to write a critical book review, take a look at reviews in such publications as the *William and Mary Quarterly* or *Reviews in American History*.

All of the other papers will ask you to write about a specific question using the materials from the class, especially the monographs read by the entire class and the graduate students. Information on paper topics and size is listed below in the course schedule section of this syllabus and will be elaborated on during the graduate discussion sections with the instructor. Graduate students will also write a timed, take-home final exam which will resemble a portion of a graduate comprehensive examination. More details on this exam will come later in the course.

Grading Breakdown:

Anderson review	5%	50 points
Holton/Nash paper	15%	150 points
Royster/Rosswurm paper	15%	150 points
Frey/Norton paper	15%	150 points
Gordon Wood paper	20%	200 Points
Final Exam	20%	200 points
<u>Discussion</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>100 points</u>
Total	100%	1000 points

Class Grading Scale:

A=1000-900 points

B=899-800 points

C=799-700 points

D=699-600 points

F=below 600 points

Course Policies:

1. Class Climate: This course is designed to give you a chance to explore an area of academic interest through lectures, intensive reading, writing, and regular classroom discussion. In order for discussions to be productive, all students need to feel comfortable participating—especially the undergraduates. Graduate students will refrain from talking on any discussion point until the undergraduates have had a turn. 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 off when in class.

3. Support and Documentation: Support your paper arguments with specific textual references—in other words, you must use footnotes for all papers. The only exception is for book reviews, when you may use parenthetical citations of the book under review. Follow *Chicago Manual of Style* format and documentation.

Note: I do not accept the use of “Ibid” in citations—instead I prefer the short author/title system.

4. Manuscript Preparation: All papers should be computer-generated (12pt “normal” font) 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 and instructor, a description of the paper, and date of each assignment in the upper right hand corner of the first page.*

*Sample heading for papers:

Student Name
History 461—Dr. Zelner
Paper One
February 30, 2009

****Papers which do not conform to ALL of these rules WILL suffer a grade penalty.****

5. Delivery of Papers: Students are required to hand in TWO COPIES of each paper: one hard printed copy, which must be handed in at the place and time indicated on the course schedule and one electronic copy, which must be submitted to <http://www.turnitin.com> under the correct class and assignment.

Turnitin.com Class Information for History 561—Sec.01 Spring 2009 Dr. Zelner:

Class ID Number: 2543073 **Class Password** (case sensitive): history

You will need this information to log-on and create an account on the Turnitin web site, which is required of all students in the class by Thursday, January 22, 2009. If you need help, surf over to: <http://www.lib.usm.edu/research/plag/turnitin/index.php>

6. Late Papers: In graduate school, there should be no late papers. Extensions of a paper due date will be granted only in the event of a documented medical, academic, or personal emergency and only in advance of the paper due date. Decisions on the validity of the documentation and the penalty for any late paper (it will be severe) are within the sole purview of the instructor.

7. Academic Dishonesty: Scholastic dishonesty will not be condoned under any circumstance. See the current Graduate Bulletin for a good definition of such behavior. Cheating on an exam or demonstrated plagiarism on a paper will automatically lead to a grade of “F” for the course and probable dismissal from the university. 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 a student has a disability that qualifies under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) for information on appropriate policies and procedures. Disabilities covered by

ADA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, or chronic health disorders. Students can contact ODA if they are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies.

Address: The University of Southern Mississippi
Office for Disability Accommodations
118 College Drive # 8586
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Voice Telephone: (601) 266-5024 or (228) 214-3232 Fax: (601) 266-6035

Individuals with hearing impairments can contact ODA using the *Mississippi Relay Service* at 1-800-582-2233 (TTY) or email Suzy Hebert at Suzanne.Hebert@usm.edu.

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

The History Writing Lab; Room 464, Liberal Arts Building (LAB); phone: 601-266-4086; email: historywritinglab.usm@gmail.com. Web: <http://www.usm.edu/~history/writinglab.php>

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.

“The example of changing a constitution by assembling the wise men of the state, instead of assembling armies, will be worth as much to the world as the former examples we had give them. The constitution, too, which was the result of our deliberation, is unquestionably the wisest ever yet presented to men.”
--Thomas Jefferson, letter to David Humphreys, March 18, 1789

Course Schedule

Week 1—Introduction

Tuesday, Jan. 13—Course Introduction

Thursday, Jan. 15—Lecture & General Discussion

Week 2—Background: Colonial America

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chap. 2.

Tuesday, Jan. 20—Lecture & General Discussion

Thursday, Jan. 22—Lecture & Discussion of Brown Reading

***All students to register with www.turnitin.com by this date**

Week 3— The British Empire at War

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chap. 3; Holton, *Forced Founders*, pgs. xiii-73.

Graduate Additional Reading: Complete Anderson, *A People's Army*.

Tuesday, Jan. 27—Lecture & General Discussion

Thursday, Jan. 29—Lecture & Discussion of Brown Readings

Graduate Discussion Session on Anderson: _____

***Book review of Anderson's *A People's Army* (800 words max.) due at discussion session**

Week 4— British Reforms and the Beginning of Colonial Resistance

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chap. 4; Holton, *Forced Founders*, pgs. 75-163.

Tuesday, Feb. 3—Lecture & General Discussion

Thursday, Feb. 5—Lecture & Discussion of Brown Readings

Week 5— The Imperial Crisis Leads to Independence

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chap. 5; Holton, *Forced Founders*, pgs. 164-220.

Graduate Additional Reading: Complete Nash, *Urban Crucible*.

Tuesday, Feb. 10—Lecture & General Discussion

Thursday, Feb. 12—Discussion of Brown Readings and Holton's *Forced Founders*

Graduate Discussion Session on Nash/Holton: _____

Week 6—Fighting for Independence I: Northern Campaigns

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chap. 6; Royster, *Revolutionary People*, pgs. vii-126.

Tuesday, Feb. 17—Lecture & General Discussion

***Paper on the coming of the Revolution (Holton and Nash) due (1800 words max.)**

Thursday, Feb. 19—Discussion of Brown Readings

Week 7— Fighting for Independence II: Southern Campaigns

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chap. 7; Royster, *Revolutionary People*, pgs. 127-254.

Graduate Additional Reading: Complete Rosswurm, *Arms, Country, and Class*.

Tuesday, Feb. 24— Lecture & General Discussion

Thursday, Feb. 26— Lecture & Discussion of Brown Readings

Graduate Discussion Session on Rosswurm: _____

Week 8—The War for Independence and American Character

Reading Assignment: Royster, *Revolutionary People*, pgs. 255-368, 373-378.

Tuesday, March 3—Discussion of Royster's *A Revolutionary People at War*

Thursday, March 5—No Class for Grads

***Paper on the nature of the War for Independence (Rosswurm and Royster) due in Dr. Zelner's box by 5PM (1800 words max.)**

Week 9— Race in the Revolution

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chap. 8; Norton, *Liberty's Daughters*, pgs. xiii-151.

Graduate Additional Reading: Complete Frey, *Water from the Rock*.

Tuesday, March 10—Lecture & General Discussion

Thursday, March 12—Lecture & Discussion of Brown Readings

Graduate Discussion Session on Frey: _____

Week 10— Spring Break

Tuesday, March 17— Spring Break--NO CLASS!

Thursday, March 19—Spring Break--NO CLASS!

Week 11— A Woman's Place in a Revolutionary Republic?

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chap. 9; Norton, *Liberty's Daughters*, pgs. 155-299.

Tuesday, March 24— Lecture & General Discussion

Thursday, March 26—Discussion of Brown Readings and Norton's *Liberty's Daughters*

Week 12— The Failure of the Articles of Confederation

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chap. 11.

Graduate Additional Reading: Start Wood, *Creation of the American Republic*.

Tuesday, March 31—Lecture & General Discussion

***Paper on women and African-Americans in the Revolution (Norton and Frey) due (1800 words max.)**

Thursday, April 2—Lecture & Discussion of Brown Readings

Week 13— Constructing a Constitution

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chap. 12.

Graduate Additional Reading: Complete Wood, *Creation of the American Republic*.

Tuesday, April 7—Lecture & General Discussion

Thursday, April 9—Lecture & Discussion of Brown Readings

Graduate Discussion Session on Wood, *Creation*: _____

Week 14— Ratification Politics & the Bill of Rights

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chap.13.

Graduate Additional Reading: Start Wood, *Radicalism of the American Revolution*.

Tuesday, April 14—Lecture & General Discussion

Thursday, April 16— Lecture & Discussion of Brown Readings

Week 15— The Federalist’s Republic or Jeffersonianism Triumphant?

Graduate Additional Reading: Complete Wood, *Radicalism of the American Revolution*.

Tuesday, April 21—Lecture & General Discussion

Thursday, April 23—Lecture & General Discussion

Graduate Discussion Session on Wood, *Radicalism*: _____

Week 16—Assessing the Nature of the American Revolution

Reading Assignment: Brown, *Major Problems*, Chapters 1 and 14.

Tuesday, April 28—No class for Grads

***Paper on Gordon Wood (*Creation and Radicalism*) due by 4PM in Dr. Zelner’s box (2500 words max.)**

Thursday, April 30—Discussion of Brown Readings

***Final Exam:** Take-home exam due on Thursday, May 7th by 12PM in Dr. Zelner’s box.

“Revolution was effected before the war commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people This radical change in the principles, opinions, sentiments, and affections of the people was the real American Revolution.”

--John Adams, 1818