

NOTE: THIS IS THE SYLLABUS THAT WAS USED IN 2016. THE GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE CLASS AND WORK LOAD WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED, THOUGH SOME READINGS WILL BE ADJUSTED.

History 106-20: History of the Atlantic World, 1450-1850

Summer 2016

MTWRF 1:00-2:30pm

ICC 208B

Instructor: Jordan Smith

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Office Hours: Monday and Thursday 2:45 to 3:45, and by appointment

From the establishment of an integrated Atlantic world in the late-fifteenth century until the early-nineteenth century, Africans, Amerindians, and Europeans met and interacted in Europe, Africa, the Americas, and the Atlantic Ocean in-between. They moved between places (often under coercion), exchanged knowledge, pathogens, and commodities, and created new societies, religious and cultural practices, and politics. Quite simply, they revolutionized the societies, cultures, economies, and politics of each of the Atlantic World's component parts. This course will investigate key themes in the history of the Atlantic world including discovery and conquest, the establishment of colonies, the development of the Transatlantic slave trade and new world slavery, and the age of revolutions. In the process, students will question how Europeans, Africans, Amerindians, and creoles interacted and adjusted to a changing world, and how a variety of transregional exchanges shaped the history of the Atlantic basin, and the modern world.

There are four primary course objectives for the class:

1. Through classroom experiences and the completion of course and individual readings, students will be exposed to many of the major themes underpinning the study of Atlantic history.
2. While encountering a plethora of types of primary and secondary sources, students will learn to evaluate these readings with an eye toward isolating key themes and evaluating the silences and biases contained within the written and material record.
3. Students will consider how migrations, cultural exchanges, and systems of class, gender, and racial inequality developed and practiced in the early modern Atlantic world shaped—and continue to shape—specific regions and the broader Atlantic world.
4. Students will refine their oral and written communication skills. Special attention will be paid to combining research and analysis in order to craft an original and clear thesis, and designing the remainder of a presentation or paper around proving that point. In essence, students will learn to think and communicate as historians.

I will put students in a position to meet these course objectives by assigning primary and secondary source readings highlighting key themes in Atlantic history. We will critically discuss these readings in a weekly discussion class (scheduled for Fridays), as well as shorter in-class activities accompanying each lecture. In addition to the secondary source reading assigned for

class each day, discussion classes will also address two or more passages from primary sources. Students will also learn about the history of the Atlantic world in three lectures and a movie day each week. In addition to thoughtful and engaged participation in classroom discussions and activities, students will complete three short written assignments and one final exam. Further information on each graded component will be disseminated in class at least one week before it is due. The papers will give students an opportunity to think about historical memory of the Atlantic world, the Atlantic Ocean as a physical space, and the major historical actors in Atlantic history. The final exam will engage students' grasp of the course readings and lectures.

It is impossible to cover every important topic and theme in the four hundred year history of the Atlantic world during the course of a five week class. As a result, I have chosen not to assign a formal textbook. Instead, lectures will provide broader contexts, and the course readings will encourage more in-depth engagement with selected topics. If you believe that a textbook would help you learn best, I recommend *The Atlantic World: 1400-1888* by Douglas Egerton, Alison Games, et al.

All students should plan to buy or borrow:

Judith Carney and Richard Rosomoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa's Botanical Legacies in the Atlantic World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011)

Wim Klooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World: A Comparative History* (New York: New York University Press, 2009)

Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)

Each of these books is available electronically through Lauinger Library. Other readings will be available electronically. Students should expect the daily reading load to average 25 pages.

Final Grades will be weighted in the following manner:

Class Participation: 25 % (half of this grade will be based on performance on discussion days)

First Paper: 15 %

Second Paper: 20 %

Third Paper: 20 %

Final Exam: 20 %

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance. As our class is only five weeks in length, students must come to class prepared to actively participate every day. Each student is allowed two absences that will not affect their class participation grade. Each subsequent absence will drop your class participation grade by a letter grade. Because there are only five discussion days, unexcused absences on any of those days will affect your class participation grade. Out of respect to the instructor, please inform me in advance of any absences.

Electronics. Computers can be great learning tools as they facilitate good note taking and allow ready access to many of the course readings. However, they can also be a great distraction. On lecture and movie days, students may use their computers to take notes. On discussion days, students may only use electronic devices that sit flat on the desk and do not interfere with your

ability to see your colleagues who you are engaging with. Use of all of these devices is a privilege and should not be abused. Cellular phones should be turned off before class begins.

Late Papers. Papers are due in hard copy at the beginning of class on the date listed in the syllabus. Students should strive to turn everything in on time. Extensions will only be granted **in advance** and for good reason. Late assignments will be docked a grade per day. The condensed summer school schedule makes it more important than ever to not fall behind!

Academic Honesty. Students should familiarize themselves with and carefully follow Georgetown's Honor System. Sources must be properly cited following the conventions of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated and will be reported.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities. If you have a documented disability on record with the university, please speak with me during the first week of class to discuss accommodations.

Sexual Misconduct and Harassment. I am committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, harassment, or assault. Students should be aware that University policy requires me to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role it is to coordinate the University's response to sexual misconduct.

CLASS SCHEDULE

July 11: Introduction to the Class and Atlantic History

Reading: Alison Games, "Introduction, Definitions, and Historiography: What is Atlantic History?," OAH, 2004

July 12: Seaborne Exploration and the "Discovery" of the Americas

Reading: Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, 1-26

In Class: Compare how maps of the Atlantic world changed in fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; Peruse website for [L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site](#); Read passages from Columbus's Journal.

July 13: Documentary Evidence of Conquest and Settlement at Georgetown (meet in Special Collections classroom, Fifth Floor of Lauinger Library)

Reading: Restall, *Seven Myths*, 27-63

July 14: Conquest

Reading: *Seven Myths*, 64-76; 100-130

In Class: Read the Requerimiento of 1513; Analyze images of Malinche in the Florentine Codex.

July 15: Class Discussion: “Discovery” and Conquest

Reading: Restall, *Seven Myths*, 131-146; Primary Sources: [selection of “Michele de Cuneo’s Letter on the Second Voyage, 1495”](#), pages 210-215; and selection from Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies* (will be distributed electronically).

July 18: The Columbian Exchange

Reading: Carney, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, 45-64 **or** 155-176; Come to class prepared to summarize your reading selection.

In Class: Read a selection from Dagomar Degroot, “Did the Spanish Empire Change Earth’s Climate?”; Chart the origins of plants and animals advertised in an issue of the *Virginia Gazette* or *Kingston Journal*.

July 19: Re-peopling the Americas: Forms of Unfreedom

In Class: Analyze a collection of runaway worker advertisements from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; Evaluate a letter from an indentured servant in Maryland to her father.

Reading: Carney, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, 65-79

Paper #1 Due.

July 20: Movie Day: “The Black Atlantic, 1500-1800” *PBS Documentary*

Reading: Carney, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, 80-99

July 21: Commodity Production and its Consequences

Reading: Carney, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, 139-154

In Class: Use your eyes, nose, and fingers to observe a fresh tobacco leaf; Listen to Thomas Weelkes’ song “Come, Sirrah Jack, Ho!”; Brainstorm what artifacts could support a museum exhibit on this week’s topics.

July 22: Class Activity and Discussion: Slavery and the Slave Trade

Reading: Carney, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, 123-138; **Primary Sources:** Passage from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, Assorted images (both will be distributed electronically), [“The ‘Code Noir’ \(1685\)”](#)

In Class: Bring computers to complete an exercise using the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database.

July 25: Were Pirates “villains of all nations?”

Reading: Marcus Rediker, “Under the Banner of King Death” ([JSTOR](#))

In Class: Compare “A Letter to a Member of Parliament concerning the Suppression of Piracy” to selection from *Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly of Maryland*.

Paper #2 Due.

July 26: Religion and the Atlantic World

Reading: John Thornton, “African Religions and Christianity in the Atlantic World” (distributed electronically)

In Class: Closely examine images of Christianity in the Kingdom of Kongo; [Watch and analyze short video about Santeria in Cuba.](#)

July 27: Movie Day: TBD

Reading: Rachel Sarah O’Toole, “In a War Against the Spanish’: Andean Protection and African Resistance on The Northern Peruvian Coast”

July 28: Old rivalries, New Actors: Atlantic components of political disputes

Reading: Pekka Hämäläinen, “The Politics of Grass” ([JSTOR](#))

In Class: Compare architecture on the French and British sections of St. Christopher; Analyze a Dutch WIC official’s defense of the fort system in West Africa.

July 29: Class Activity and Discussion: Atlantic Lives

Reading: Each student will read a seventeenth- or eighteenth-century travel narrative and give a short presentation in class on it.

In Class: Students will create a [customized Google Map](#) marking and annotating the locations mentioned in the various travel narratives.

August 1: Prelude to Revolutions: The Seven Years War

Reading: David Garrett, "His Majesty's Most Loyal Vassals": The Indian Nobility and Túpac Amaru” ([muse.jhu.edu](#))

In Class: Compare public complaints about the Sugar and Stamp Acts with a lampoon from the Andes and a letter penned by Tupac Amaru.

August 2: How Revolutionary was the American Revolution?

Reading: Klooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World*, 11-44.

In Class: Reflect on the political boundaries of North America as presented on a 1770 map; Read a selection of William Pitt's speech on the Stamp Act; [View and discuss a video clip of tarring and feathering](#); [Peruse the "Book of Negroes."](#)

August 3: Movie Day: *Egalite for All: Toussaint Louverture and the Haitian Revolution*, PBS Documentary

Reading: Klooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World*, 84-116.

August 4: Steam and Spanish-American Independence: Two Nineteenth-Century Revolutions

Reading: Klooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World*, 117-157.

In Class: Read Morelos' "Sentimientos de la Nación;" [View interactive maps showing the changing geography of slavery in the United States](#); Analyze descriptions of early nineteenth-century factory workers in England and compare to enslaved people.

August 5: Class Discussion: The Age of Revolutions

Reading: Klooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World*, 158-174; **Primary Sources:** Primary Sources: [Draft of US Declaration of Independence](#); [The US Bill of Rights](#); [1801 Constitution of Haiti](#); and "A South American Revolutionary Looks to the Future" (will distribute electronically).

In Class: Debate which Revolution was the most significant; Create a Venn-diagram comparing and contrasting the Revolutions.

August 8: Abolition and Emancipation in the Atlantic World

Reading: Ada Ferrer, "Haiti, Free Soil, and Antislavery in the Revolutionary Atlantic" (ahr.oxfordjournals.org); [David Olusoga, "The history of British slave ownership has been buried: now its scale can be revealed."](#)

In Class: Read William Cowper's "The Negro's Complaint;" View an antislavery picture book designed for children; Peruse "Legacies of British Slave-ownership" database.

Paper #3 Due.

August 9: Georgetown University and Slavery (meeting in Special Collections with the University Archivist and Professor Adam Rothman)

Reading: "What We Know" Pamphlet (via email); peruse [Georgetown Slavery Archive](#); [Rachel](#)

[Swarns, "272 Slaves Were Sold to Save Georgetown. What Does It Owe Their Descendants?;"](#)
[Matthew Quallen, "Georgetown Financed by Slave Trade."](#)

August 10: Class Discussion: Remembering and Historicizing the Atlantic World

Reading: Ta-Nehisi Coats, ["The Case for Reparations"](#)

Before Class: Write a 100-150 word paragraph that could potentially be used as an inscription on a memorial to the slave trade on Georgetown's campus.

August 11: Review Session

In Class: ["Jeopardy" review game](#); Chance for students to ask any clarifying questions.

August 12: Final Exam in Class.