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American Studies 355/ 30280/ History 355N 39125 Main Currents in American Culture Until 1865

Spring 2019
TTh 12:30-2
Burdine 130

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"Who is this new man, this American?" Hector St. John de Crevecoeur

"What do we mean by the Revolution? The war? That was no part of the revolution; it was only an effect and consequence of it. The revolution was in the minds of the people, and this was effected from 1760 to 1775, in the course of fifteen years before a drop of blood was shed at Lexington." John Adams

"Slavery...dishonors labor. It introduces idleness into society, and with idleness, ignorance and pride, luxury and distress. It enervates the powers of the mind and benumbs the activity of man." Alexis de Tocqueville

At the beginning of this course, we find scattered groups of Europeans huddled on the Atlantic shore of North America. Nearly two hundred years later there was still no nation called the United States and certainly no conception of anything called "American." Yet by 1865 this geographical entity would witness one of the most bloody and vicious wars of modern times precisely over this identity and even a reluctant Europe would recognize the national identity of Americans.

Although we today think of this emerging identity in political terms, this course will try to demonstrate that politics was only one of many developing institutions and perspectives that formed this identity. Indeed, this course will argue that religion was at least as important as politics. Yet, other factors such as economics, race, gender roles, painting, architecture, literature, occupations, philosophy, law, and social reform played important roles in this development as well. The assigned reading throughout the course points out the interaction of the lives of ordinary--and a few extraordinary--individuals with such ideas and institutions and how they influenced and were influenced by these historical events and patterns.

Course Format

The course will be conducted primarily upon a lecture basis. I have put suggested dates for the reading on the syllabus and we will spend small parts of class discussing the reading. Thus, it will be beneficial to you to keep up with the reading, but there will not be any quizzes in this course and you can all make your own decisions on when or whether you will do the reading. One of the key parts of the class and one of the things that many students have difficulty with is integrating the reading material with the lectures in the exams. The readings tend to take one theme or a specific event and discuss it in more specifics than the lectures. Please contact Mr. Barber or myself if you have any difficulty with this.

I will try to make the lectures clearer in two ways. First of all, I will send you a list of key words for each lecture via e-mail before each lecture. I advise you to print out a copy and take it to class. Each ID from the lectures (3 out of 5 ID questions) will come from these lists. During the class I will use an outline or an occasional PowerPoint to provide a clear class pattern.

Required Texts

Eve LaPlante American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson, the Woman Who Defied the Puritans

Alfred Young The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution

Paul Johnson Sam Patch, the Famous Jumper

Frederick Douglass A Narrative of the Life of

Film Ken Burns "The Shakers: Hands to Work, Hearts to God"

Examinations

There will be three examinations in the course; the first two will count 30% each and the third will count 40%. None of the exams will be cumulative and will cover only the material after the previous exam. As of the present time, exam dates are tentatively Thursday February 21st, Tuesday April 2nd, and Thursday May 9th. The third exam will be in the last class day, because I have found many of you must be in jobs, at weddings, etc. during the finals period.

Each exam will consist of three out of five identification questions and one out of two essay questions. The essay questions will be designed to incorporate material from the lectures and the reading; it might be only one book but it is more likely to be two or even for the last exam three books. Failure to incorporate reading into your answers will result in an essay grade of no better than a C. I will hand out a sample examination before the first test, and Mr. Moench will conduct review sessions before each test.

Make-up examinations are always a problem. If you absolutely have to miss an exam, please call my office at 512 232 2015 before the regular exam and leave a message noting your absence. You also may contact me by e-mail. Before the make-up, you need to contact me and explain why you did not take the exam. Make-up exams are given at 8:00 one week after the scheduled exam. In this case, that means Thursday February 28th and Tuesday April 8th. Meet outside my office at Burdine 428. Missing the third exam will result in an incomplete for the semester because there is not time to take the exam and then grade the exam. People tend to do poorer on make-ups than they do on regular tests. It may be the time factor, my grading the exam, or any number of reasons, but it is a statistical fact so try to avoid them.

There will be no substitutions or addition of extra work to improve your grade. I will not scale individual sets of exams. I do, however, almost always scale final grades by 1.5 to 2 points, especially on the B to A range. I also try to reward consistent improvement.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWING THE RULES IN THE CLASS. NOT KNOWING THE RULES IS NOT A LEGITIMATE EXCUSE.

Rules and Regulations

I have three rules for the class. The first is the above about makeup exams.

The second is just the very obvious about coming to class late and leaving early. If you need to do so, sit in the back. If you come in late, you forfeit your seat in the front. Late arrivals are not only disruptive but even a little dangerous. If you know that you will be leaving early, sit toward the back. Especially in a steep room like this, it is distracting to me and, more importantly, to your fellow students.

The third is I will not permit Internet surfing during class. Again, it is disruptive to your fellow students. You can do that anywhere. Check out your e-mail and YouTube before or after class. Mr. Barber will keep his eyes open and will patrol the room if necessary. I reserve the right to drop any repeat offenders.

Scholastic Honesty

Turning in work that is not your own, or any other form of scholastic dishonesty, will result in a major course penalty, possibly failure of the course. A report of the incident will also be made to the Office of the Dean of Students. This is the official word. The unofficial word from me is a failure is the best that can happen. My concern is people checking on their cellphones so we will monitor those closely.

On the other hand, studying in groups and/or establishing group study guides is not only acceptable but encouraged.

UT Policy Statement

Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with

Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. Again a personal note, I am more than willing to work with any individual in such a situation.

Flag: Cultural Diversity in the United States

This course carries the flag for Cultural Diversity in the United States. Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

AMS 355/HIS 355N COURSE SYLLABUS

Jan 22 Introduction--Searching for a National Identity

- 24 Chesapeake Society and White Slavery
- 29 Race and the Emergence of Black Slavery
- 31 The Slave Trade
- Feb 5 The Religion of Puritanism
American Jezebel
- 7 John Winthrop and the Politics of Puritanism
Jezebel, chapters
- 12 Power and Puritanism
Jezebel, chapters
- 14 Native Americans and Colonial Societies
- 19 Salem Witchcraft—One and Many
- 21 **FIRST TEST**
Lectures, American Jezebel
- 26 America's First Original Creations—The Religious
- Awakenings
- 28 Science and the American Enlightenment
- March 5 Tobacco, Religion, and the Revolutionary Spirit in the South
Shoemaker and Tea Party, Part One, chaps 1-5
- 7 Political Ideology of the American Revolution
Shoemaker, Part One chaps 6-12
- 12 The American Revolution—Changes in the American Mind
- 14 A Changing Sense of Place—Part 1

SPRING BREAK March 18 to 23rd

- 26 Sense of Place--Part 2
Shoemaker, Part Two chaps 1-5
- 28 Localism in American Political Life—The Whiskey Rebellion
Shoemaker, Part Two chaps 6-9
- April 2 **SECOND EXAM**
Lectures, Shoemaker and Tea Party
- 4 Westward Expansion and the Transportation Revolution
- 9 Transcendentalism and American Identity
- 11 Hudson River School and Romantic Painting
Sam Patch sections 1 and 2
- 16 Industrialism and the Artisan Revolt
Sam Patch, sections 3-5
- 18 Women and Work in America
- 23 Slavery and the Unchanging South
begin Frederick Douglass A Narrative of the Life, Preface-chapter 8
- 25 The Politics of Slavery
finish Douglass' Narrative
- 30 Perfectionism and the Queen of Reform
- May 2 Perfectionism and Utopian Communities
finish Douglass' Narrative
- 7 in-class film "Hands to Work, Hearts to God"
- '
_ 9 **THIRD EXAM**
LECTURES, Sam Patch, the Famous Jumper, Douglass' Narrative, and Shaker film