

History 212: Democracy in America
Spring 2020

Tuesday 10:00-11:50 & Thursday 10:00-10:50

HSSC S3325

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 1-4 pm, Wednesday 4:15-5pm, and by appointment. I am always happy to make time for you on an individual basis. Please come see me during office hours or make an appointment. Feel free to call or e-mail any time if you have problems or questions.

Course Objectives

Course Focus:

This course examines United States history between 1789 and 1848, a time of deep contradiction in American life and a period of particularly rapid social, political, economic, and cultural change. Our task this semester will be to discover how and why these changes were important and how Americans experienced them. Together, we will examine how a unique American political culture formed in the period between the formation of the first federal government and the Mexican-American War. We will investigate everything from the creation of political parties, to the rise of capitalism, to taste in furniture styles in order to uncover how diverse Americans lived their lives and how they understood the world around them.

The course will focus specifically on the creation of party politics, reform movements, economic growth and class conflict, expansionism, race, and gender in the period. In our investigation of political culture, we will particularly examine the tensions created in American society by the simultaneous rise of “democracy” and demands for rights by those who continued to be excluded from various forms of power. We will attempt to discover how American democracy was created and what it meant to people between 1789 and 1848.

Skills Objectives:

This course challenges students to form their own arguments about the past as they examine primary sources and evaluate how other historians have composed their arguments. Students will enhance their skills at critical thinking, research, reading, speaking, writing, and developing arguments as they engage in a dialogue with the past. We will all learn how to become better historians this semester.

In paper assignments, students in this course will work on strengthening their abilities to revise, to analyze coherently, to argue from sources (both primary and secondary), and to use appropriate grammar and style. Historians, as the members of a specific academic discipline, use particular conventions in their writing. Students will learn to recognize

many of these conventions in their readings and will integrate historical research skills and writing as they learn strategies to improve their own written work.

Texts:

Joyce Appleby, *Recollections of the Early Republic* (Northeastern University Press, 1997)

David Brion Davis, *Antebellum American Culture: An Interpretive Anthology* (Penn State UP, 1997) –Optional purchase. Most of the text is on GOOGLE BOOKS.

Paul Johnson, *The Early American Republic* (Oxford UP, 2007)

Paul Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *The Kingdom of Matthias*, 2nd Ed. (Oxford UP, 2012)

Herman Melville, *Bartleby and Benito Cereno* (Dover, 1990)

Henry David Thoreau, *Civil Disobedience and Other Essays* (Dover, 1993)

Harry L. Watson, *Liberty and Power*, Updated Ed. (Hill & Wang, 2006)

Ashli White, *Encountering Revolution* (Johns Hopkins, 2010)

Note: We will also be using many digitized book chapters and articles. It is your responsibility to print these out and bring them to class with you (or to bring them on a portable device that is not disruptive to class).

Student Responsibilities and Evaluation:

Our class meetings will be comprised primarily of discussion and in-class exercises with an occasional lecture for context, so it is essential that students attend class having done the assigned reading and ready to discuss it. The class has a lot of reading assignments, so please ask for help with reading strategies anytime. Our object will be to gain deep insight about the reading in class. Everyone has something to contribute, so speak up, and share your ideas with your classmates!

Please check your email and P-web regularly; I will use both to communicate with you.

All papers for this class must be typed, double-spaced, in a 10 or 12-point font with footnotes or endnotes in University of Chicago style. Additional paper guidelines will be discussed in class, and specific assignments will be distributed. The due dates appear in the schedule below. Note: papers must be turned in on time. Any paper that is turned in late without a prior-approved extension granted by the instructor will be docked half a letter-grade per day. If you need more time, please ask Prof. Purcell.

Class participation is very important in this class, so attendance is essential. You cannot participate if you are not in class.

Please bring all the reading for each day to class with you. You may use electronic devices of any kind in class, but please keep your attention and your device focused on course material. Don't distract yourself or your classmates.

One thing to note: some of our primary sources from the nineteenth century contain extremely offensive language. To quote literary scholar Dr. Koritha Mitchell, we are scholars, "not re-enactors, so we need not let the text dictate what we *give life to* in the classroom (korithamitchell.com)." We can't pass over all racist, sexist, and other offensive language in our sources—but we always need to remember the historical context. Some slurs are too much. I, for one, do not ever say "the N-word" out loud, and I would prefer no one to do so in this class. If you want to read a quotation out loud with the word in it, just say "N" or "N-word," instead.

Grades will be assigned according to the following formula:

article paper	10%
think piece	5%
5 page papers	17.5% each
research note	10%
class participation	20%
take-home final	20%

Improvement over the course of the semester will help your grade.

If you need to miss class for sickness, emergency, extra-curricular activities, or athletics, please let Ms. Purcell know as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to make up the work you miss.

You are expected to abide by Grinnell College standards of academic honesty in this class. Please consult the Student Handbook or speak with Ms. Purcell if you need a refresher on academic honesty; I'm happy to help any time.

If you require accommodations for any diagnosed disability, please speak with me during the first week of class to make arrangements. Grinnell college, and this class, provide reasonable accommodations, and I'm happy to grant them. Students must also arrange their accommodations with Accessibility and Disability Services; contact John Hirschman at 641-269-3710.

Schedule, Topics, and Assignments

Tuesday (Jan 21) The Legacy of the American Revolution

Before class please read/skim the following if you can:

[The American Yawp](http://www.americanyawp.com/), Ch. 5 "The American Revolution" & Ch. 6 "A New Nation"

<http://www.americanyawp.com/>

Thursday (Jan 23) NO CLASS MEETING (Prof. Purcell is away giving a talk in Washington D.C.) Watch on YouTube: Joanne Freeman (Yale University) lecture “Being an American: The Legacy of the Revolution”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RtlB13DleLk>

Tuesday (Jan 28) The Rise of Party Politics: The First Party System
*Reading Due: Watson, Liberty and Power, Introduction; Johnson Early American Republic, pp. ix-29; Rosemarie Zagarri, “Political Parties in the Early Republic,” Mapping Early American Elections (2019),
<https://doi.org/10.31835/meae.essays.02>*

Thursday (Jan 30) Federal Style: Politics & Material Culture
*Reading Due: *e-reserve* Rosemarie Zagarri, “Gender and the First Party System” in Federalists Reconsidered, ed. Doron Ben-Atar & Barbara Oberg (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), pp. 118-134; newspaper excerpts; Watch this video: “This Is Not a Chair,”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MurjslsVJuo> (8 minutes)*

Tuesday (Feb 4) Jefferson in Power
*Reading Due: Johnson, Early American Republic, pp. 30-39; *e-reserve* Joanne Freeman, “Dueling as Politics: Re-interpreting the Burr Hamilton Duel,” William and Mary Quarterly 53 (April 1996): 289-319
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2947402>; Marbury v. Madison “Opinion” and “Annotation” (be sure to click both tabs) found at U.S. Supreme Court, Justia website: <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/5/137/#annotation>*

RESEARCH LAB: How Historians Use Articles

Thursday (Feb 6) The Politics and Experience of Slavery in the Early Republic
Reading Due: Johnson, Early American Republic, 84-109; Charles Ball in Recollections, pp. 103-129; Antebellum Culture, pp. 273-278

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 7 5:00 PM ARTICLE PAPER DUE IN P-WEB

Tuesday (Feb 11) The U.S. and the Haitian Revolution
*Reading Due: Ashli White, Encountering Revolution (entire book); Browse Website: “In Motion” Haitian Immigration: 18th and 19th Centuries
<http://www.inmotionaame.org/migrations/landing.cfm?migration=5>*

Thursday (Feb 13) Westward Expansion, Indian Responses
*Reading Due: *e-reserve* Robert M. Owens, “Jeffersonian Benevolence on the Ground: The Indian Land Cession Treaties of William Henry Harrison,” Journal of the Early Republic 22 (2002): 405-435 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3124810>
Allen Trimble in Recollections, pp. 186-222; Speeches (distributed in class)*

Tuesday (Feb 18) Gender, “Republican Womanhood,” & Education for a New Republic
*Reading Due: Julia Anne Hieronymous Tevis in Recollections, pp. 68-102; John Ball in Recollections, pp. 1-17; Harriet B. Cooke in Recollections, pp. 223-243; *e-reserve* Lucia McMahan, “Of the Utmost Importance to Our Country: Women, Education, and Society, 1790-1820,” Journal of the Early Republic 29 (2009): 475-506 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40541858>*

Thursday (Feb 20) The U.S. and North Africa
*Reading Due: *e-reserve* Craig Symonds, “A Squadron of Observation: Thomas Jefferson and America’s First War against Terrorism,” White House Studies 4 (2004): 125-136, <https://search-ebscohost.com.grinnell.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=31h&AN=45860524&site=e-host-live>; Robert Battistini, “Glimpses of the Other before Orientalism: The Muslim World in Early American Periodicals,” Early American Studies 8 (2010): 446-474 [10.1353/eam.0.0047](https://doi.org/10.1353/eam.0.0047)*

Tuesday (Feb 25) The War of 1812
*Reading Due: Johnson, Early American Republic, pp. 40-53; *e-reserve* Paul A. Gilje, “Free Trade and Sailors’ Rights: The Rhetoric of the War of 1812,” Journal of the Early American Republic 30 (2010): 1-23 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40662251>; Listen to: “Backstory Radio: 1812, Which One Was That?” <http://backstoryradio.org/shows/the-war-of-1812-2> (Be sure to listen to all the segments)*

Thursday (Feb 27) The Rise of Markets
Reading Due: Johnson, Early American Republic, pp. 54-83; Review Allen Trimble in Recollections, pp. 186-222

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28 5:00 PM 5-PAGE PAPER DUE IN P-WEB

Tuesday (March 3) American Manufacturing & The Rise of Class Consciousness
Reading Due: Watson, Liberty and Power, Ch. 1; Chauncey Jerome in Recollections, pp. 159-185; Antebellum Culture, pp. 85-88

Thursday (March 5) History, Slavery, and Public Memory
*Reading Due: *e-reserve* Jewel L. Spangler, “Slavery’s Archive, Slavery’s Memory: Telling the Story of Gilbert Hunt, Hero of the Richmond Theatre Fire of 1811,” Journal of the Early American Republic 39 (Winter 2019): 677-708, [10.1353/jer.2019.0086](https://doi.org/10.1353/jer.2019.0086)*

Tuesday (March 10) The Era of Good Feelings?
Reading Due: Johnson, Early American Republic, pp. 136-159

RESEARCH LAB: How To Use a Newspaper Database

Thursday (March 12) Jacksonian Politics

Reading Due: Watson, *Liberty and Power*, Ch. 2-5; *Antebellum Culture*, pp. 187-201, 231-251

FRIDAY MARCH 13 5:00 PM REVISED PAPER DUE IN P-WEB

SPRING BREAK March 15-29

Tuesday (March 31) The Second Party System

Reading Due: Watson, *Liberty and Power*, Ch. 6-Ch. 8; *e-reserve* William A. Blair, "Vagabond Voters and Racial Suffrage in Jacksonian-Era Pennsylvania," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 9 (December 2019): 569-587, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/742090>

Thursday (Apr 2) The Second Great Awakening and Perfectionism

Reading Due: Johnson, *Early American Republic*, pp. 110-134; *Antebellum Culture*, pp. 367-379 & 389-391; Alfred Lorrain in *Recollections*, pp. 244-276

FRIDAY APRIL 3 5:00 PM RESEARCH NOTE DUE IN P-WEB

Tuesday (Apr 7) The Kingdom of Matthias

Reading Due: Johnson and Wilentz, *The Kingdom of Matthias* (entire book)

Thursday (Apr 9) Enslaved Life, Free Life & The Politics of Anti-Slavery

Reading Due: *Antebellum Culture*, pp. 283-325; *e-reserve* Lisa A. Lindsay, "Scipio Vaughan's South Carolina," *Atlantic Bonds* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 13-42, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9781469631134_lindsay.4

Tuesday (Apr 14) The "Cult of True Womanhood" and Class

Reading Due: *Antebellum Culture*, pp. 13-20, 73-83, 385-389; *e-reserve* Elizabeth R. Varon, "Tippecanoe and the Ladies Too: Whig Womanhood and Party Politics in Antebellum Virginia," *Journal of American History* 82 (1995): 494-521, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2082184>; SKIM: Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," *American Quarterly Summer* 1966: 151-174, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2711179>.

Thursday (Apr 16) Foreign Observers of American Democracy

Reading Due: Johnson, *Early American Republic*, pp. 161-165; *Antebellum Culture*, pp. 105-109, 121-122; additional Tocqueville, Dickens, Trollope excerpts

FRIDAY APRIL 17 5:00 PM 5-PAGE PAPER DUE IN P-WEB

Tuesday (Apr 21) Abolitionism

Reading Due: **JSTOR book:** Gerda Lerner, *The Grimké Sisters from South Carolina*, Introduction (http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9780807868096_lerner.5) & pp. 3-115

http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9780807868096_lerner.6); *Antebellum Culture*, pp. 418-428

Thursday (Apr 23) Reform or Social Control?: Education and Temperance
Reading Due: Antebellum Culture, pp. 29-32, 35-55, 393-409

FRIDAY APRIL 24 5:00 PM THINK PIECE DUE IN P-WEB

Tuesday (Apr 28) The Women's Rights Movement
Reading Due: JSTOR book: Lerner, Grimké Sisters, pp. 116-264
http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9780807868096_lerner.6); *Antebellum Culture*, pp. 88-97

Thursday (Apr 30) Manifest Destiny
Reading Due: Thoreau, "Walking," pp. 49-74; *Antebellum Culture*, pp. 129-144, 262-265, 456-67, 459-461; *e-reserve* Julius W. Pratt, "The Origin of 'Manifest Destiny,'" *American Historical Review* 32 (July 1927): 795-798, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1837859>; Rachel A. Sheldon, "Not So Strange Bedfellows, Northern and Southern Whigs and the Texas Annexation Controversy, 1844-45," *A Political Nation* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 11-35, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt6wrhqt.5>

Tuesday (May 5) The Mexican-American War & Uneasy Settlement
Reading Due: Antebellum Culture, pp. 201-208, 253-262; Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience," pp. 1-18

Thursday (May 7) Age of Progress or Age of Disaffection?
Reading Due: Melville, Bartleby; Watson, Liberty & Power, Afterward: Questions & Controversies

**TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM DUE WEDNESDAY, MAY 13 at NOON
at Prof. Purcell's office: Mears 212**