

Trent University

HISTORY 3955

THE EARLY MODERN ATLANTIC WORLD

2008-2009

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INTRODUCTION

Comprising the western littorals of Europe and Africa, the Caribbean, as well as the eastern coastal rim of the Americas, the Atlantic World represents a major, perhaps the most important, unit of study in early modern history. This course encompasses developments from the beginning of European settlement in the New World to the pre-revolutionary period in the mid-eighteenth century. Topics include the destruction and reconfiguration of indigenous societies, cross-cultural relations, European transatlantic migration, the slave trade, overseas trade, as well as war and conflict in colonial empires. This course primarily deals with social, economic, and cultural issues rather than political history. Even though the emphasis is on the British in the Atlantic World, this course will also consider aspects of Swedish, Dutch, French, Spanish, and Portuguese overseas history.

OUTLINE

The weekly lectures usually address two related topics and are essential to the course. Most of the tutorials follow one topic of the week's lecture topics, examining selected problems and issues. In some instances the tutorials branch off, focusing on general problems of historiography or issues of social, economic, or cultural history in order to address a broad range of perspectives and themes.

The recommended textbook *The Atlantic World: A History, 1400-1888*, published in 2007, offers comprehensive background reading. In particular pages 77 to 322 serve as a complement to selected topics presented in lectures. Mandatory reading for the tutorials will be made accessible on WebCT.

Students are expected to write a research paper that is based on primary sources. The focus can be on cross-cultural relations — one of the “hottest” fields of historical research in recent years — but other issues or questions are also welcome. Towards the end of the academic year students have to present and discuss their research projects in class.

There will be a final exam in April.

EVALUATION

First term:

Seminar participation 15%

Research paper proposal 5%

Research paper draft 15%

Second term:

Seminar participation 15%

Seminar presentation 5%

Research paper 20%

Final exam 25%

Schedule

Lectures: Wednesday 15:00-16:50 BL 103

Tutorials: Thursday 17:00-17:50 BL 107.1

Thursday 18:00-18:50 BL 107.1

Thursday 19:00-19:50 CCN I1

Deadlines

October 30: Research paper proposal

November 26: Research paper draft

March 30: Research paper

Assignments must be handed in by the required date. There will be a late penalty of 5% per day.

Research Project

Students are encouraged to select their own research projects. This will normally be based on one or several published travel accounts accessible in Early English Books Online or the Eighteenth Century Collections Online (www.trentu.ca/admin/library/search/e-resources.html under E-books — the search term “voyage” or “travels” leads to numerous publications). Students should focus on one aspect of this source, such as cross-cultural relations. The paper must be analytical rather than descriptive. The argument should be presented in a coherent way, and the paper must deal with the relevant secondary literature. Preliminary drafts can be discussed with the instructor. A draft of 2000 to 5000 words must be submitted by November 26. The corrected and annotated manuscript will be returned to the students. The revised final version should be about 5000 words long. In the last few weeks of the second semester students are asked to present the results of their research in class.

Academic dishonesty and plagiarism

Academic dishonesty, which includes plagiarism and cheating, is an extremely serious academic offence and carries penalties varying from failure in an assignment to suspension from the university. Definitions, penalties, and procedures for dealing with plagiarism and cheating are set out in Trent University’s Academic Dishonesty Policy which is printed in the University Calendar and on the university web site at http://www.trentu.ca/deansoffice/policies_dishonesty.php

Upon request, students must be ready to present their research notes and explain their work to the instructor.

Access to Instruction

It is Trent University’s intent to create an inclusive learning environment. If a student has a disability and/or health consideration and feels that he/she may need accommodations to succeed in this course, the student should contact the Disability Services Office (BL Suite 109, 748-1281, disabilityservices@trentu.ca) as soon as possible.

SCHEDULE

Lecture 1, September 10: Introduction: What is Atlantic History?

Tutorial: Organization of the course

Lecture 2, September 17: Europe in the Age of Expansion — The Geography of the Atlantic World

Background reading: textbook, pp. 77-147

Tutorial: Why Europe? Reading: Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (London, 1988), pp. 3-30.

Lecture 3, September 24: Early Contacts, Disease, and Environmental Change

Tutorial: The Columbian Exchange, Reading: Noble David Cook, "Sickness, Starvation, and Death in Early Hispaniola," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 32,3 (2002), pp. 349-86

Lecture 4, October 1: Desperate Crossing-DVD

Background reading: textbook, pp. 149-83

Tutorial: Discussion of documentary

Lecture 5: October 8: Historical Research and the Use of Online Resources

Tutorial: Discussion of students' projects

Lecture 6, October 15: The Economic Development of the Colonies — Transatlantic Trade

Background reading: textbook, pp. 217-52

Tutorial: The Navigation Acts, Reading: John J. McCusker, "British Mercantilist Policies and the American Colonies," *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States*, ed. Stanley L. Engerman and Robert E. Gallman (Cambridge, 1996), vol. 1, pp. 337-62

October 22: Reading week

Lecture 7, October 29: The Transatlantic Slave Trade

Background reading: textbook, pp. 185-214

Tutorial: TBA

Lecture 8, November 5: Pre-Colonial Africa in the Atlantic World — Africa and the Slave Trade

Tutorial: The Impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade on Africa, Reading: Paul Lovejoy, “The Impact of the Slave Trade on Africa: A Review of the Literature,” *Journal of African History* 30 (1989), pp. 365-94

Lecture 9, November 12: The Middle Passage-DVD

Tutorial: Olaudah Equiano’s Narrative: Reading: Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (London, [1789]), vol. 1, pp. 70-85, plus recent publications by Vincent Carretta, Paul Lovejoy, and possibly others

Lecture 10, November 19: The Fateful Voyage of the *Excellent*, 1721-1723 — Mortality in the Notorious Triangle

Tutorial: Work with primary sources

Lecture 11, November 26: The Chartered Companies — Interlopers and Private Traders

Tutorial: The Free Trade Discussion, Reading: Tim Keirn, “Monopoly, Economic Thought, and the Royal African Company,” in *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, ed. John Brewer and Susan Staves (London, 1995), pp. 427-45

Lecture 12, December 3: Slavery in the New World — Maroon Societies

TBA

Lecture 13, January 7: Black Robe-DVD

Tutorial: Discussion of movie

Lecture 14, January 14: Transatlantic Migration: England and Ireland — Transatlantic Migration: Germany

Tutorial: Indentured Servitude, Reading: Hilary M. Beckles, “The Concept of ‘White Slavery’ in the English Caribbean during the Early Seventeenth Century,” in *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, ed. John Brewer and Susan Staves (London, 1995), pp. 572-83

Lecture 15, January 21: Women in the Atlantic World

Tutorial: Women in the Colonies, Reading: Lois Green Carr and Lorena S. Walsh, “The Planter’s Wife: The Experience of White Women in Seventeenth-Century Maryland,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 34 (1977), pp. 542-71; Trevor Burnard, “Inheritance and Independence: Women’s Status in Early Colonial Jamaica,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 48 (1991), pp. 93-114

Lecture 16, January 28: Comparative Colonization: Spain and England — Sweden, the Netherlands, Scotland, and France

Tutorial: Canada in the Early Modern Atlantic World, Reading: Cole Harris, “The Pattern of Early Canada,” *The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien* 31 (1987), pp. 290-98

Lecture 17, February 4: War and Conflict — Privateering and Piracy

Background reading: textbook, pp. 291-321

Tutorial: Maritime Depredations in the Atlantic World, Reading: Robert C. Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War against the Pirates* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), pp. 1-26; Nuala Zahedieh, “‘A Frugal, Prudential and Hopeful Trade’: Privateering in Jamaica, 1655-1689,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 18 (1990), pp. 145-68

Lecture 18, February 11: The Wooden World: Life at Sea

Tutorial: Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 205-53, 308-11

February 18: Reading week

Lecture 19, February 25: Transatlantic Communication — Money and Credit in the Atlantic World

Tutorial: TBA

Lecture 20, March 4: Atlantic Islands and the Emergence of Creole Societies

Background reading: textbook, pp. 255-89

Tutorial: TBA

Lecture 21, March 11: Transformations at the Periphery of the Atlantic World: Peru — Madagascar

Tutorial: Mike Parker Pearson, “Close Encounters of the Worst Kind: Malagasy Resistance and Colonial Disasters in Southern Madagascar,” *World Archaeology* 28 (1997), pp. 393-417; Pier M. Larson, “Colonies Lost: God, Hunger, and Conflict in Anosy (Madagascar) to 1674,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 27 (2007), pp. 345-66.

Lecture 22, March 18: Brazil in the South Atlantic World

Tutorial: Presentation and discussion of student projects

Lecture 23, March 25: Native Americans in Europe — Africans in Europe

Tutorial: Presentation and discussion of student projects

Lecture 24, April 1: Dietary and Consumer Revolutions in the Early Modern Period

Tutorial: Discussion of final exam