

JACK MILLER CENTER

The Age Of *Experiments*

“The Age of Experiments”: The United States, 1789-1845

History 4720

Lewis and Clark

Professor Michelle Orihel

Southern Utah University

Fall 2010

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10-11:20 a.m.

Location: SC 225

—This I hope will be the age of experiments in government, and that their basis will be founded on principles of honesty, not of mere force. We have seen no instance of this since the days of the Roman republic, nor do we read of any before that.¶

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, February 28, 1796

Course Description

From catalog: —A study of the new nation, the War of 1812, the Jacksonian era, placing special emphasis on the political, social, and economic democratization of the United States, together with the difficulties created by change.¶

In an era dominated by monarchical powers, a group of British North American colonists in 1776 declared their independence from King George III. They established a republic, a government based on the consent of the people. This republican experiment was a bold move, a —leap in the dark,¶ as historian John Ferling has called it. Throughout history, most republics had failed. Never before did a people attempt to establish a republican government over such a large and expanding territory. How did Americans confront the challenge of establishing and securing a republican form of government? How did they adjust to their new roles as republican citizens rather than monarchical subjects? What other challenges did Americans face during the early years of the new republic, a period marked by tremendous political, economic, social, and cultural change?

This course will examine these and other questions about the nature of the early republic, providing an overview of the major political, social, economic, and cultural developments in the United States from roughly the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. We will cover such topics as the creation of a new national government, the development of conflict between Federalists and Jeffersonian-Republicans during the 1790s, the Jeffersonian Presidency, the

Lewis and Clark expedition, the War of 1812, the development of a market economy, religious revivalism, the growth of reform movements and abolitionism, the expansion of slavery in the South, the rise of sectional conflict, Jacksonian democracy, and western expansion. As an upper-division course, this course will combine lectures with discussions. Active student participation is encouraged and expected for students to gain the most from taking the course. Ultimately, this course aims to provide students with an opportunity to enter into an ongoing and vibrant debate about the revolutionary origins of the early republic, the nature of the American founding, and its implications for the United States today.

Learning Objectives.

Students will be able to identify and understand better the main issues, themes, events, and historical actors in the United States from 1789 to 1845.

Through readings in the primary sources and through a variety of active learning exercises, students will gain a vivid understanding of what it meant to live through such a period of tremendous social, economic, and political change.

In this reading-intensive course, readings in primary and secondary sources will help students to develop such practical skills as interpreting evidence, making arguments based on that evidence, and evaluating other historians' arguments.

Class discussions and written assignments will further help students to hone the habits of critical thinking, reading, and writing.

Required Books

1. Bookstore: Sean Wilentz, ed., *Major Problems in the Early Republic, 1787-1848*. 2nd edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004. (ISBN-13: 978-0-618-52258-3)

2. Bookstore: Gunther Barth, ed., *The Lewis and Clark Expedition: Selections from the Journals Arranged by Topic*. Boston: Bedford/ St. Martins, 1998. (ISBN-13: 978-0-312-11118-2)

3. Online: Lance Banning, ed., *Liberty and Order: The First American Party Struggle*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004. (ISBN: 0-86597-418-7)

Note: This textbook is available to download for free as a complete pdf file at the Liberty Fund's —Online Library of Liberty website; go to the following

webpage: http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=875&Itemid=27

4. Online: Various items on electronic reserve at the library's website

Evaluation

Participation/ Effort: 15%

Reading Journal: 10%

Annotated Bibliography: 10%
Peer Review of Gerrit Smith Document Analysis: 5%
Gerrit Smith Final Document Analysis: 30%
Final Exam: 30%

Assignments

Reading Journal

Over the course of the semester, students will keep a journal that records their reactions to and assessments of the assigned readings for each class. For some classes, the instructor will provide a question for the student to focus on in their reflection. For other classes, the student will decide what question or issues seem most pressing from that day's reading. These entries should be between one and two pages. They should demonstrate that you have read and understood the assigned course materials. Students should particularly write about what intrigues them the most about the reading and how that reading helps to advance their understanding of the early American republic. The instructor will collect journal entries at the end of each class. Late entries will not be accepted. These entries will be graded on a Pass/ Fail basis. Therefore, the only grades for this assignment will be 100 (pass) and 0 (fail). These grades will then be tallied at the end of the semester for the final reading journal grade. However, students can opt out of turning in up to three journal entries without it adversely affecting their final grade.

Other Assignments

Information and instructions on the annotated bibliography, the Gerrit Smith essay assignment (peer review and essay), as well as on the final, take-home exam will be forthcoming.

Weekly Schedule of Topics and Readings (Subject to Revision)

Unless marked as optional, all readings are required.

Abbreviations:

MP = Sean Wilentz, ed., *Major Problems in the Early Republic, 1787-1848*.

LO = Lance Banning, ed. *Liberty and Order: The First American Party Struggle*

Week One—Aug 23

TUESDAY:

From Subjects to Citizens: Introduction to the History of the Early American Republic

THURSDAY:

The Revolutionary Origins of the Early Republic

Reading:

1. The Declaration of Independence (you can download and print a transcript of the D of I at this website: <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration.html>)
2. MP, chapter 3, essay by Waldstreicher
3. Online Exhibition: —Declaring Independence: Creating and Re-Creating America’s Document, organized by the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia, (<http://www2.lib.virginia.edu/exhibits/declaration/index.html>)

Week Two – Aug 30

TUESDAY:

The Constitutional Settlement of 1787-88

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 2: documents 1-4, 6, essay by Wood
2. LO, chapter 1: pp. 3-9
3. (Optional) Online Exhibition: Library of Congress, online exhibition on —Madison’s Treasures, which illuminates Madison’s role in drafting the constitution, in the subsequent debates over ratification, and in producing the Bill of Rights: <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/madison/>
4. (Optional) Podcast Listening: Monticello podcasts, —Jefferson’s Worlds: Three Letters on the New Constitution, listed at: <http://www.monticello.org/podcasts/index.html>

THURSDAY:

Understanding the Process of Historical Change: Interpreting the Early Republic

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 1: essays by Wilentz, Rossiter, Pasley, Perkins 5 5

Week Three—Sept 6

TUESDAY:

Forming a New National Government and George Washington’s Leadership

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 3: documents 1, 2
2. LO, chapter 2: TBA
3. Simon P. Newman, —Principles or Men?: George Washington and the Political Culture of National Leadership, 1776-1801, *Journal of the Early Republic* 12, 4 (Winter, 1992), 477-507. (Electronic Reserve)
4. Online Exhibition: —Alexander Hamilton and the Creation of the United States, organized by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History: <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/collection/online/hamilton/index.html>

THURSDAY:

The Impact of the French Revolution on America: Popular Politics and Partisan Conflict

Reading:

1. LO, chapter 3: pp. 141-150; 169-170
2. Handout of newspaper articles that covered celebrations of the French Revolution

3. Albrecht Koschnik, —The Democratic Societies of Philadelphia and the Limits of the American Public Sphere, circa 1793-95, || *William and Mary Quarterly* 58, 3 (2001): . (Electronic Reserve)

Week Four – Sept 13

TUESDAY:

The Deepening of Political Divisions: From Jay’s Treaty to Washington’s Farewell

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 3: documents 5-7
2. LO, chapter 3: 188-197; 203-221
3. Todd Estes, —Shaping the Politics of Public Opinion: Federalists and the Jay Treaty Debate,|| *Journal of the Early Republic* 20, 3 (Fall 2000), 393-422. (Electronic Reserve)

THURSDAY:

The Presidency of John Adams

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 3: documents 8-11 6 6
2. LO, chapter 4: TBA
3. James Morton Smith, —The ‘Aurora’ and the Alien and Sedition Laws: Part I: The Editorship of Benjamin Franklin Bache, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 77, 1 (Jan 1953), 3-23. (Electronic Reserve)

Week Five—Sept 20

TUESDAY:

The Second American Revolution?: The Election of 1800

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 3, documents 12-13; two essays in chapter
2. Handout of newspaper editorials on the election
3. Douglas R. Egerton, —Gabriel’s Conspiracy and the Election of 1800,” *Journal of Southern History* 56, 2 (May 1990), 191-214. (Electronic Reserve)

THURSDAY:

Thomas Jefferson: His Presidency and Political Thought

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 4, documents 1-3; 5-10, essays by Appleby, McDonald, Gordon-Reed
2. LO, TBA
3. Website Viewing (Spend some time viewing ONE of the two links from the Monticello website):

For links about Monticello (a virtual tour of the house and images), go to the following website:

<http://www.monticello.org/house/index.html>

For links about the lives of enslaved African Americans who lived and worked at Monticello, go to the following website:

<http://www.monticello.org/plantation/index.html>

4. (Optional) Website Viewing for additional information:

For links to such topics as —A Day in the Life of Thomas Jefferson,|| A —Brief Biography of Thomas Jefferson,|| A —Timeline of Jefferson’s Life,|| and —The Thomas Jefferson

Encyclopedia,|| go to the following website: <http://www.monticello.org/jefferson/index.html>

For an online exhibition of Jefferson’s life and works organized by the Library of Congress, go to: <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/jefferson/>

Week Six—Sept 27

TUESDAY

The First American West: The Settlement of the Ohio Valley

Reading:

1. Gail S. Terry, —Sustaining the Bonds of Kinship in a Trans-Appalachian Migration, 1790-1811: The Cabell-Breckinridge Slaves Move West,|| *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* (October 1994): 455-476. (Electronic Reserve)

2. Online Reading Assignment: TBA—selected documents from —The First American West: The Ohio River Valley, 1750-1820,|| American Memory Project, Library of Congress:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award99/icuhtml/>

THURSDAY

Library Instruction Session (preparation for the annotated bibliography)

Week Seven – Oct 4

TUESDAY and THURSDAY :

The Corps of Discovery: the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Reading:

1. Gunther Barth, ed., *The Lewis and Clark Expedition: Selections from the Journals Arranged by Topic*.

2. (Optional) Website Viewing:

To browse through primary sources on the Lewis and Clark expedition at the American Philosophical Society, including images of the original journals, go to the following website:

<http://www.amphilsoc.org/library/digcoll/landc>

For background on Jefferson’s role in the expedition, go to:

<http://www.monticello.org/jefferson/lewisandclark/index.html>

Week Eight—Oct 11

TUESDAY:

The Second War for American Independence: The War of 1812

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 5

THURSDAY:

The Market Revolution: The Modernization of the American Economy

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 7 8 8
2. Online Exhibition: —Risky Business: Winning and Losing in the Early American Economy, 1780-1850, organized by the Library Company of Philadelphia:
<http://www.librarycompany.org/Economics/RiskyBusiness/index.htm>
3. (Optional) Website Viewing: For maps and historical images of the Erie Canal, go to:
<http://www.eriecanal.org>

Week Nine, Oct 18

TUESDAY

The Expansion of Slavery in the South

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 8, documents 1-2; 4-6; 8-10; essays by Johnson and McCurry
2. MP, chapter 13, essay by Genovese

THURSDAY (Instructor will be away at a conference) The Experiences of Enslaved African Americans

1. Film Viewing (in-class): —Solomon Northup's Odyssey
2. Optional Reading: Solomon Northup, *Twelve Years a Slave: Narrative of Solomon Northup, a Citizen of New York, Kidnapped in Washington City in 1841, and Rescued in 1853*. Electronic edition available at the website, —Documenting the American South: Primary Resources for the Study of Southern History, Literature, and Culture, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/northup/northup.html>
3. Optional Listening: To listen to recordings of interviews with former slaves, go to the Library of Congress American Memory Project, —Voices from the Days of Slavery: Former Slaves Tell Their Stories: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/voices/>

Week Ten – Oct 25

TUESDAY

Finish viewing —Solomon Northup's Odyssey and discuss the experience of slavery

THURSDAY

The Missouri Crisis and the Rise of Sectionalism

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 10

Week Eleven – Nov 1

TUESDAY

Jacksonians, Whigs, and 1830s Politics

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 11 9 9

THURSDAY Native Americans, Western Expansion, and the Trail of Tears

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 9

2. (Optional) Website Viewing:

For an exhibition on eastern Indian wars organized by the Smithsonian Museum of American History, go to: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/militaryhistory/printable/section.asp?id=3>

For information about the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, go to: <http://www.nps.gov/trte/index.htm>

For a link to the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, go to:

http://www.cherokeemuseum.org/html/collections_tot.html

3. Optional Audio Interview:

For an interview with documentary film maker Philip Coulter who traveled along the Trail of Tears, go to <http://www.cbc.ca/ideas/features/trail-of-tears/index.html>

Week Twelve – Nov 8

TUESDAY:

Antebellum Reform Movements

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 12

THURSDAY Abolitionism and the Underground Railroad

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 13, documents 1-5; 10; essay by Jeffrey

2. Website Viewing:

Online exhibition from the Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library: —‘That laboratory of abolitionism, libel, and treason’: Syracuse and the Underground Railroad, <http://libwww.syr.edu/digital/exhibits/u/undergroundrr/>

Week Thirteen—Nov. 15

The Literature of Politics, Reform, and Abolition: The Gerrit Smith Broadside Collection

To view the various pamphlets contained in the Gerrit Smith Broadside collection, go to:

<http://libwww.syr.edu/information/spcollections/digital/gerritsmith/>

TUESDAY

Writing workshop 10 10

Reading:

George Orwell, —Politics and the English Language, (Electronic Reserve)

THURSDAY

Bring draft of your Gerrit Smith document analysis to class

Peer Review

Week Fourteen – Nov. 22

TUESDAY:

The Second Great Awakening

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 6

2. Website Viewing:

Library of Congress, online exhibition on —Religion and the Founding of the American Republic, | <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel07.html>

THURSDAY:

THANKSGIVING

Week Fifteen – Nov. 29

TUESDAY:

Manifest Destiny, Slavery, and the Politics of Western Expansion

Reading:

1. MP, chapter 15

THURSDAY Final Assessment and Review

December 10, 2010: 11am-12:50pm.: Final Exam