

SYLLABUS

AMERICAN REVOLUTION

HIST 3504-001

FALL 2013



Instructor: Dr. Jamie H. Eves, jamie.eves@uconn.edu; themillmuseum@gmail.com

Jamie's Student Hours: T/Th 11:30 AM -12:30 PM at the Beanery (the café in the Benton Art Museum)

Graduate Assistant: Aimee Loiselle, aimee.loiselle@uconn.edu

Aimee's Student Hours: W, 10:00-11:00 AM at 206 Wood Hall

Classroom: 204 JRB

Class Meetings: T/Th 9:30-10:45 AM

Subject: What we'll be doing

HIST 3504 is an upper-level undergraduate history course, designed primarily for History majors and majors in related fields. I assume that you already have a good general background in American history, American government, American society, and the history of Western Civilization. We will be exploring the American Revolution as a key event in the history and formation of the United States – its political systems, its society, and its culture – and in the histories of other peoples – Canadians, Latin Americans, Europeans, and others. As professional historians do, we will discuss both facts (objective data about the Revolution) and interpretations (subjective explanations for the Revolution and its meaning proposed by various historians who have studied it). We will begin with a general examination of the social/political/cultural/economic context of Britain and British America the mid-1700s, move on to an exploration of the French and Indian War (1754-63) as a causative factor, trace the political events of 1764-75 that led up to the Revolution, examine the decision to declare independence in 1776, discuss the War for Independence (1775-83), explore the Critical Period that immediately followed the war (1783-87), ask what happened to both patriots and loyalists in the immediate aftermath of the war, and finally look at the creation and ratification of the

Constitution of 1787. That's a lot of stuff to cover in one short semester, so we will be moving pretty quickly.

Outcomes: What you'll get out of this

1. **A structure of the history of the American Revolution:** You will acquire a basic outline of the events that led up to the American Revolution, the events that comprised the Revolution itself, and the events that immediately followed it.
2. **Theoretical tools to help you interpret (explain/analyze) the American Revolution:** You will learn basic revolutionary theory as it has been developed by historians and political scientists, and apply it to the American Revolution.
3. **A better understanding of the meaning of the American Revolution, both to the generation that lived through it and to the generations that followed:** We will examine the political, social, religious, and economic ideas of the Revolutionary generation (the "Founding Fathers" ... and "Mothers"), and how those ideas have been reinterpreted by later generations of Americans.
4. **Greater familiarity with the historiography of the American Revolution:** You will learn how some of our generation's best historians have interpreted the Revolution, and why they believe that a continual reexamination of the Revolution and its meaning is always needed.
5. **Improved critical thinking and writing skills:** You will improve your ability to think and write critically about complex subjects.
6. **Learning to think and behave like a professional:** You will have an opportunity to practice being a professional historian.

Method: How all this happens

To achieve these outcomes, we will use a variety of learning techniques, including analytical lectures, storytelling, reading books by leading historians, guided discussions, taking exams, and writing online posts and short papers. The reason that we will be doing so many different things is because different students learn best in different ways, and there will be a lot of diversity in this class.

On most days, I will deliver analytical lectures and/or tell stories. I do not intend to repeat or summarize the factual material from the readings. Rather, I will supplement them by providing broad interpretive frameworks into which the material in the readings can be fit. For this reason, I expect you to do the assigned readings, attend each class, take good notes, review those notes frequently, and think critically about what I have said and what you have read. Exams and papers will give you the opportunity to integrate your class notes with the readings. I encourage you to speak out in class, especially to challenge any ideas, information, or viewpoints that seem wrong to you. I especially want you to challenge me (I'm a husband and father; I'm used to it). But I also expect you to be able to back up what you say with hard data; historical interpretation (or explanation) is not simply a matter of having an opinion, but is

instead an honest and thorough application of logic and historical methods to empirical evidence.

Required readings: The tools we'll use to do this

1. Colin G. Calloway, *The Scratch of a Pen: 1763 and the Transformation of North America* (2006)
2. Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*
3. John Ferling, *Almost a Miracle: The American Victory in the War of Independence* (2007)
4. Carol Berkin, *Revolutionary Mothers: Women in Struggle for America's Independence* (2005)
5. Pauline Maier, *Ratification: The People Debate the Constitution, 1787-1788* (2010)
6. Various materials on Blackboard

Practice and assessment: Helping you test yourself and improve

I will grade you on the following activities.

Class participation (10%)

You will actively contribute to class discussions.

Online posts (30%)

Six times during the semester you will use Blackboard to post online blog-style responses to questions that I will have placed there for you. You must log your posts by midnight on the day before they are due. Each post should be at least a good, solid paragraph in length; thorough, original posts will receive better grades than cursory responses that don't say anything significant, or which merely repeat something that one of your classmates has already written. Each post will be worth 5% of your grade.

Papers (30%)

You will write three short papers: you may choose any three from the list below. Each paper will be worth 10% of your semester grade. Your papers should be typed, double spaced, and four-to-five pages long, using standard one-inch margins and an eleven-point Times New Roman font, which is the default setting for Microsoft Word. Late papers will be penalized one-half letter grade for each class day they are late. (Exceptions may be made if you can present empirical evidence of a genuine emergency. The acceptance of any and all such excuses is solely up to me.) Papers delivered to me by any means other than handing them to me during class are at your risk. Balky, unreliable word processors and printers are your problem, not mine. **For every quote, idea, example, or fact that you use, you must cite the source and page where that quote, idea, example, or fact can be found.** For learning purposes, I ask that you base your papers solely on class materials – please do not use any outside sources unless I have given you permission to do so.

First paper. According to Colin Calloway, what was the historical significance of the Treaty of Paris of 1763 (and of the other, related events that occurred that year)?

Second paper. What arguments did Thomas Paine make in favor of independence in *Common Sense*?

Third paper. According to John Ferling, why did the patriots win the War for Independence?

Fourth paper: What was the impact of the Revolution on American women, according to Carol Berkin?

Fifth paper: According to Pauline Maier, why did the federalists prevail over the anti-federalists in the debate over the Constitution?

Examinations (30%)

You will take two exams, a midterm exam (worth 10% of your semester grade) and a final exam (worth 20% of your semester grade). You will write them in ink during class, in exam booklets that I will provide for you. I will post study guides in advance on Blackboard. You will be allowed to bring one 8 ½ x 11" sheet of paper with notes to each exam, which you will hand in with the exam.

Instructor: Who am I?

My name is Jamie Eves, and I have been teaching history at the university level for more than twenty-five years. I have a Ph.D. in American History from the University of Connecticut, as well as an M. A. in American History from the University of Maine. My research specialties are eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American environmental history, the history of New England, and public history – although over the years I have taught more than a dozen different subjects. My doctoral dissertation was a study of the interrelationship of nature and culture in the Piscataquis River Valley in northern Maine, 1760-1870; my M.A. thesis traced a migration of farm families from Cape Cod in Massachusetts to the lower Penobscot River Valley in Maine, 1760-1820. I am also the Director of the Windham Textile and History Museum in Willimantic, CT, and the official town historian of Windham, CT. Most of my published articles have been about Maine and Connecticut history – some have appeared in professional history journals, while others have been in publications aimed more at popular audiences. I was drawn to history by a love of the narrative form, and I try to emphasize good storytelling in all my classes. I believe that history belongs to the people, and that everybody has a right to know their history – that history has to be accessible, readable, local, and affordable. I am particularly annoyed at “junk history” – history that is inaccurate, oversimplified, and/or bent towards some political, religious, or philosophical agenda. I am a husband, father, and grandfather. I am on Facebook, but I won’t “friend” you – at least, not as long as I am your teacher. Like most professional historians, most of what I do is easily available to the public at little or no cost. If you want to see some of the history I have written, check out the web site of the Windham Textile & History Museum (www.millmuseum.org) – most of the history content posted there is mine. My doctoral dissertation is shelved in Babbidge Library. I have published articles in

Technology and Culture, Connecticut History, and Maine History, and book reviews in a variety of journals. I'm also pretty sure that you can read all about me on ratemyprofessor.com.

Schedule: What you need to do for each class

First Week:	Introduction to the Course; Theories of Revolutions.
Second Week:	More Theories of Revolutions. <u>First online post due Thursday.</u>
Third Week:	British America in 1750. <u>Second online post due Thursday.</u>
Fourth Week:	French and Indian War, 1754-63. <u>First discussion paper and discussion of Calloway Thursday.</u>
Fifth Week:	The Reform Stage, 1763-74. <u>Third online post due Thursday.</u>
Sixth Week:	The Reform Stage, 1763-74, Cont'd. <u>Fourth online post due Thursday.</u>
Seventh Week:	Choosing Independence, 1775-76. <u>Second discussion paper and discussion of Paine Thursday.</u>
Eighth Week:	Choosing Independence, 1775-76. <u>Midterm examination Thursday.</u>
Ninth Week:	The War for Independence, 1775-83. <u>Fifth online post due Thursday.</u>
Tenth Week:	The War for Independence, 1775-83.
Eleventh Week:	The War for Independence, 1775-83, Cont'd. <u>Third discussion paper and discussion of Ferling Thursday.</u>
Twelfth Week:	The Impact of the Revolution on American Society. <u>Fourth discussion paper and discussion of Berkin Thursday.</u>
Thirteenth Week:	The Critical Period, 1783-87. <u>Sixth online post due Thursday.</u>
Fourteenth Week:	The Constitution, 1787-88 (and Beyond). <u>Fifth discussion paper and discussion of Maier Thursday.</u>
Fifteenth Week:	<u>Final exam.</u>

Classroom management: Other important things to remember

Accessibility

If you have a disability that you believe will require accommodations, it is your responsibility to contact the appropriate University official and obtain an accommodation letter. I cannot provide accommodations based on your disability without an accommodation letter.

Cheating

As always, cheating – including plagiarism – is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism includes quoting someone else without quotation marks and/or without proper citation; using someone else's ideas without proper attribution; and "close" paraphrasing. In your papers, you **MUST** cite all of the sources you have consulted. (Because of time and space constraints, I will not require you to use proper citations on exams, except in the case of direct quotes.) Unless it is enclosed in quotation marks and properly cited, all of the material included in your papers and exams **MUST** be in your own words. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, you should seek guidance from me. The penalty for plagiarism in this class will be: (1) For papers, you will receive a grade of "0" for the assignment. (2) For exams, you will receive a grade of "0" for the exam question on which the plagiarism occurred. (3) For a second offense, you will receive a grade of "F" for the course. Cases of plagiarism and other forms of cheating may also be reported to the Dean of Students for further action. For the full University of Connecticut Policy on Academic Misconduct, see <http://www.sp.uconn.edu/~m1201vc/misconduct.html>.

Attendance

You will be permitted two absences without penalty. After two absences (regardless of the reason you missed class), I will deduct 1% from your final course letter grade for each additional absence. (The only exception to this policy is missing class because you are participating in a University sanctioned event.) If you have serious illnesses or other issues that result in your missing numerous classes, you should discuss the situation with me during my office hours; I will address such issues on a case-by-case basis, and my decision in the matter will be final.

Etiquette

Although your participation is encouraged and your comments are welcome, I nevertheless expect you to treat me, your classmates, and the material with respect. I expect you to arrive on time, pack up to leave only after the class is dismissed, and refrain from getting up in the middle of class and wandering around. I reserve the right to remove disruptive and/or unprepared students from the classroom. I do not expect you to agree with everything I say or laugh at my lame jokes. I greatly respect and admire students who are able to present their own positions, provided that they do so in a rational, logical, and well-spoken manner.