

SYLLABUS
HISTORY OF CONNECTICUT

HIST 3522-001
FALL 2017



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Office Hours: T, Th, 12:00 noon - 2:00 p.m.

Class meetings: T, Th, 101 Floriculture Greenhouse, 3:30-4:45 p.m.

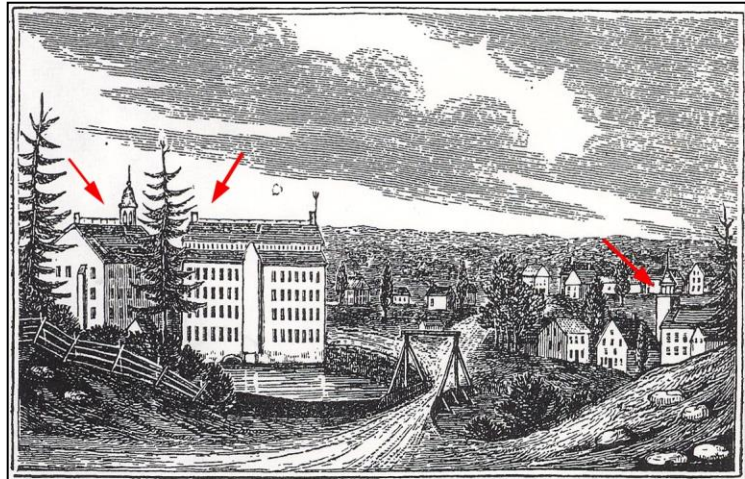
Objectives: What we'll be doing and what you'll get out of it

The short answer. The description in the UConn Course Catalog says: "A survey of Connecticut's history from 1633 to the present from a constitutional and political perspective." We will also include social, cultural, economic, and environmental history – because politics is shaped by society, culture, economics, and environment.

The long-winded answer. But really, our objectives this term go beyond this spare catalog description. Let me illustrate with a story.

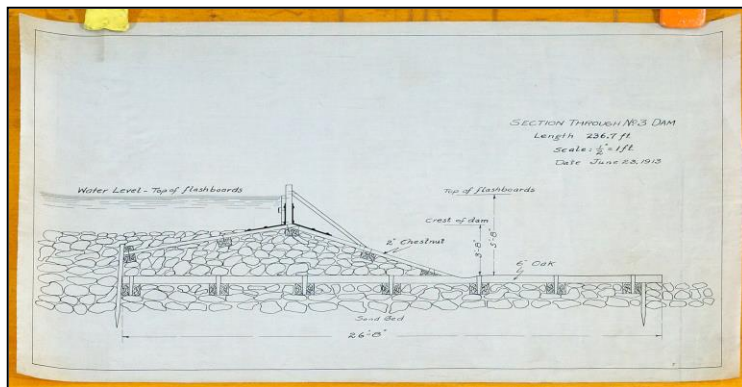
More than twenty years ago, I was asked to write a short (about five typed pages), non-academic (no citations or big words) article for the newsletter of the Connecticut League of History Organizations on the significance of doing Connecticut history. As I had grown up in Maine, and at the time was working on my doctoral dissertation, set in early 19th-century Maine (although I was writing it as a UConn graduate student), this was a challenge.

In conversations with folks I met in Connecticut (including many of students here at UConn), I had come to realize that most people Nutmeggers don't know very much about Connecticut history. As Maine History and Maine Lit are required subjects in Maine high schools, this lack of knowledge puzzled me.



So I began to research. I found out that, unlike most states, Connecticut high schools do not require any systematic study of Connecticut history or Connecticut literature. I found an article written by the late Bruce Fraser, at the time the Executive Director of the Connecticut Humanities Council, in which he argued that Connecticut lacked a distinct historical and cultural identity. It was “between New York and Boston” – a cultural suburb of the Modern Metropolis and the Athens of America, if you will. It lacked its own literature and its own history. It was rather a mixture of Red Sox fans, Yankees fans, and Mets fans; of Patriots fans, Giants fans, and Jets fans; of Celtics fans and Knicks fans (the Nets having decamped temporarily to New Jersey); of Bruins fans, Rangers fans, and Islanders fans, with the recent loss of the Hartford Whalers mourned by few. The state’s best-known writers – Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mark Twain, and Eugene O’Neil, among others – had lived in and mostly written about other places, and thus there was no quintessential Connecticut novel. Fairfield County was an affluent extension of New York City. Connecticut religion and politics were puritanical in origin, “the Land of Steady Habits,” an outgrowth of colonial Massachusetts. More than half of the adults living in Connecticut had been born somewhere else. While Harvard history graduate students were

doing pioneering work in the history of colonial Massachusetts, Yale history graduate students were doing pioneering work in the history of ... colonial Massachusetts.



Yet, I also found out that one of my UConn history professors, Dr. Karen Kupperman, although born in Minnesota and a specialist on the history of colonial Virginia, was

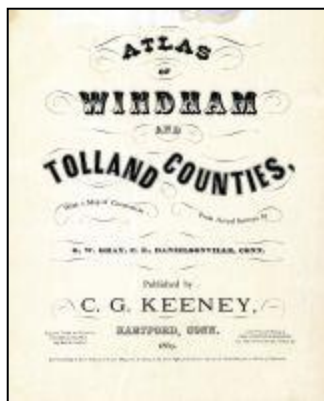
arguing that – in colonial times, at least – the Connecticut River Valley actually was very different from coastal Massachusetts, a perspective she (and her student, now Connecticut State Historian Walter Woodward, at the time my classmate at UConn) were calling the Connecticut Valley School. And it didn't take a lot of poking around for me to discover that there actually is a distinctive Connecticut literature – it's just that most people don't know it. I

even came up with my own historical nickname for Connecticut: applying refuge theory from environmental history to cultural history, I called Connecticut the “Great Refuge,” and eventually wrote a series of popular history articles about Connecticut under that name.

Therefore, I think there is a distinct Connecticut, with its own history, literature, and culture. And I think that people who live in Connecticut should know about it, to better know themselves. Admittedly, it includes as key themes Connecticut’s often uneasy relationships with its larger neighbors, New York and Boston, as well as the experiences of the repeated waves of new immigrants (and of the old immigrants who sometimes resisted them) that have made Connecticut culturally diverse and historically dynamic. Ultimately, that is what this class is about: for all of us to learn more about just what Connecticut is, and what themes have shaped its history.

Method: How all this happens

To achieve these objectives, we will use a variety of learning strategies, including analytical lectures, narrative lectures (storytelling), discussions, reading and reflecting on a variety of historical sources, writing essays, writing reaction papers, visiting museums, completing take-home assignments, and writing term papers.



By completing assignments on time and thinking critically about the material, you will be prepared to make active, informed, and thoughtful contributions to the class – both verbally and in writing – skills that will serve you throughout your study at the University, and beyond.

Required reading: The tools we’ll use to do this

- Walter W. Woodward, *Prospero’s America: John Winthrop, Jr., Alchemy, and the Creation of New England Culture, 1606-1676* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA), 2010.
- Eric D. Lehman, *Homegrown Terror: Benedict Arnold and the Burning of New London* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press), 2014.
- J. Ronald Spencer, ed., *A Connecticut Yankee in Lincoln’s Cabinet: Navy Secretary Gideon Welles Chronicles the Civil War* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press for the Acorn Club of Hartford, CT), 2014.
- Tom Anderson, *This Fine Piece of Water: An Environmental History of Long Island Sound* (New haven: Yale University Press), 2002.
- Jeremy Brecher, *Banded Together: Economic Democratization in the Brass Valley* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press), 2011.
- Occasional other short readings posted on HuskyCT.

Practice and assessment: Helping you assess yourself and improve

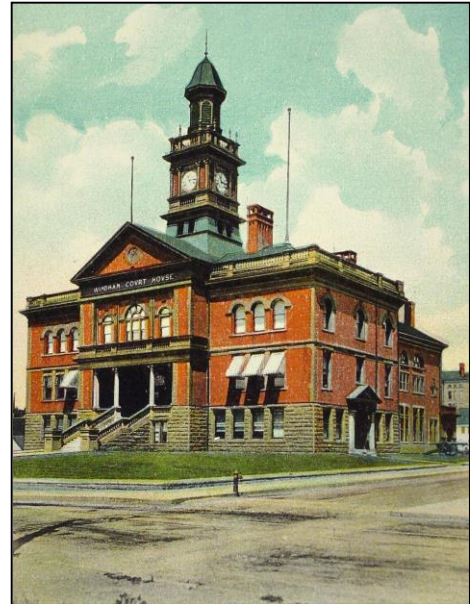
Class participation (10%)

I expect you to attend class and participate in class discussions. Participation is worth 10% of your grade, and will be based on both the quantity and quality of your verbal comments.

“Participate” means more than just showing up for class (which should be a given) – it means being able to offer both frequent and thoughtful analysis of the material.

“Analysis” means more that you have done all of the assigned reading (which also should be a given) – it means that you can use a combination of inductive reasoning and concepts covered in class to correctly interpret the historical data involved.

At the university level, students prepare *in advance* for class discussions. The best way for you to do this is (1) to complete the readings and other assignments on time, and (2) attempt to analyze each reading *before* the class when we are scheduled to discuss it. If you have not completed at least the majority of the assigned reading on the day that it is due, quite frankly I would prefer that you would not waste everyone else’s time and did not come to class at all.



Although I reserve the right to call on you at any time, the primary responsibility for participating is yours, and it is up to you to join in with the rest of the class. If you are concerned that you are not being called upon as frequently as you would like, or that you have not had as much opportunity to participate as you want, you should continue the discussion with me in my office hours.

Reaction papers (26%)

You will write five (5) short papers. Papers will be penalized one (1) letter grade for each class day they are late. Papers should be word processed, well written, and well organized, with introductions with thesis statements, paragraphs with topic sentences, and conclusions. Papers delivered to me by any means other than handing them to me in class are at your risk. Balky, unreliable word processors and printers are your problem, not mine. Due dates are in the class schedule later in this syllabus. Paper topics are as follows:

1. You will, on your own, visit TWO Connecticut history museums of your own choice. The museums you visit may not be located on the University campus. For each museum, you will write a short (1-2 pages) reaction paper in which you (a) identify and describe the museum, (b) explain what you learned about Connecticut history during your visit, and (c) explain whether or not what you learned reinforces or



undermines themes of Connecticut history we have covered in class. Each of these museum visit papers will be worth 4% of your semester grade.

2. You will read five assigned books (see above) during the semester. Each of you will choose THREE of the five (your choice which three – with the exception that you must write at least one of the first two) and write short (2-3 pages) reaction papers on them, in which you (1) identify the author’s topic, research question, and thesis (they are not the same thing), (b) discuss the evidence the author used to back up his thesis, and (c) explain whether or not you believe the book reinforces or undermines the idea that Connecticut has a distinctive history. Each of these reaction papers on assigned books will be worth 6% of your semester grade. (NOTE: Although you only have to write reaction papers on three of the assigned books, you still have to read all five.)

Research Paper (20%)

You will research and write a paper on a Connecticut history topic. The paper may be about Willimantic, or about some other community. Your research paper should be about ten (10) to twelve (12) pages long, double space. It must include endnotes, but they will not be part of your page count. It should be in essay form, with a one-paragraph introduction with a clear and obvious thesis statement, a body composed of real paragraphs with topic sentences, a full conclusion, and proper citations in the form of endnotes. Papers will be penalized one (1) letter grade for each class day they are late. Papers delivered to me by any means other than handing them to me in class are at your risk. Balky, unreliable word processors and printers are your problem, not mine. You *must* give proper citations for all quotes *and* data used in your papers; failure to do so will result in a two-letter-grade deduction. You must get my prior approval for your paper topic; please submit your topic to me in writing (email is okay); the date by which you need to submit your topic is listed in the class schedule later in the syllabus. Further instructions may be given in class.

Midterm examination (22%)

You will take an in-class midterm examination, which will be worth 22% of your grade. I will post a study guide in advance on HuskyCT. You will be allowed to bring one 8 ½ x 11” sheet of

paper with notes to the exam, which you will hand in with the exam. The exam will consist of two essay questions.

Final examination (22%)

You will take a final examination during final exam week, which will be worth 22% of your grade. It will focus

primarily on the second half of the course. I will post a study guide in advance on HuskyCT. You will be allowed to bring one 8 ½ x 11" sheet of paper with notes to the exam, which you will hand in with the exam. The exam will consist of two essay questions.



Who am I?

My name is Jamie Eves, and I have been teaching history for more than thirty 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 rise and fall of the American textile industry, the history of New England, frontier and migration history, and public history – although over the years I have taught more than a dozen different history 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 (the Mill Museum) in Willimantic, CT, and an 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 “fake history” or “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, and post a lot of local history content on the Museum’s FB page (<https://www.facebook.com/WindhamTextileandHistoryMuseum/?ref=bookmarks>) ; you are more than welcome to “like” the page. Like most academic and public historians, much 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, in the sub-basement, where I suspect it is daily nibbled by giant mutant rats. 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.

What you need to do for each class

<u>date:</u>	<u>topic:</u>	<u>assignment:</u>
29 Aug.	Introduction	
31 Aug.	Themes, Geography	
5 Sep.	Algonkian Connecticut	
7 Sep.	The Puritan Invasion	
12 Sep.	Puritans v. Algonkians	
14 Sep.	Puritans v. England	
19 Sep.	Discussion of Woodward	Paper on Woodward
21 Sep.	From Puritan to Yankee	
26 Sep.	Revolutionary Connecticut	
28 Sep.	Revolutionary Connecticut	
3 Oct.	Discussion of Lehman	Paper on Lehman
5 Oct.	Creating a State within a Federation	
10 Oct.	Emigration to New Connecticut	
12 Oct.	Midterm Exam	Midterm Exam
17 Oct.	The First Industrial Revolution	
19 Oct.	The First Industrial Revolution	First Museum Paper
24 Oct.	Antebellum Connecticut	
26 Oct.	Connecticut in the Civil War	Term Paper Topic

31 Oct.	Discussion of Spencer	Paper on Spencer
2 Nov.	The Second Industrial Revolution	
7 Nov.	Connecticut in the Gilded Age	
9 Nov.	Old Immigrants v. New Immigrants	
14 Nov.	Pastoral Preservation	
16 Nov.	Discussion of Anderson	Paper on Anderson
21 Nov.	THANKSGIVING	
23 Nov.	THANKSGIVING	
28 Nov.	Progressives, Depression, and War	Second Museum Paper
30 Nov.	Deindustrialization	
5 Dec.	The End of “Steady Habits”?	Term Paper
7 Dec.	Discussion of Brecher	Paper on Brecher

FINAL EXAM DURING FINALS WEEK

Other important things to remember

Academic Misconduct

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 or data without proper attribution; and “close” paraphrasing. In your take-home 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 take-home papers and in-class 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 take-home 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 appropriate university authorities for further action.

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.