

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE
Department of History

History 1U
Spring 2008
Wednesday, 1.15-3.55
Trotter 210

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First-Year Seminar
New Cities, New Societies, New Cultures:
The Making of an Atlantic World

Between the fifteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the many societies of the multiethnic and polyglot basin encompassing the New World and the Old came willingly and unwillingly, peacefully and aggressively, into sustained contact. The resulting “Atlantic World” is often considered a prototype of contemporary globalization—for good and for ill. Discussions based on readings drawn from recent scholarship will allow us consider the cultures, societies, religions, economies, material lives, identities, ideologies, and technologies that citizens of the Atlantic world invented; in the final weeks, we will focus on urban centers as exemplars and proponents of the complex relations that characterized the Atlantic. Across the semester, we will examine themes such as transplants, innovations, re-contextualizations, and creative adaptations; intended and unintended plans, projects, and consequences; willful and innocent misunderstandings; appropriations and rejections; racial, ethnic, and gender re-orderings; metropolitan and colonial transformations.

The requirements for the course are:

- 1) Regular, on-time attendance in class.
- 2) Informed and consistent participation in the class discussions.
- 3) Leadership of a class discussion in week 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12.
- 4) A short essay of about 1000 words (3-4 typed pages), due Wednesday, 13 February.
Complete information is given in a separate posting.
- 5) An essay of 1500 words (5-6 typed pages), due Wednesday, 5 March. A separate posting gives full details.
- 6) A final paper, on a subject chosen in consultation with the instructor, of 15-20 typed pages (4500-5000 words), due at 5 p.m. on Saturday, 17 May. Again, consult the “Paper Assignments” folder on Blackboard for complete information.

The course will be discussion-based, so all students **must** participate actively and in an informed manner in class discussions. A substantial part of each student’s grade will be determined by the quality of class participation. I do not determine final grades according to a strict mathematical formula but according to the trend of grades on papers and class participation so that improvement is properly rewarded.

The history department has implemented the following policy on attendance: Students are required to attend all classes for the successful completion of the course. Unexcused absences will result in a lower grade.

Every student should buy the following paperbacks:

Susan Dwyer Amussen, **Caribbean Exchanges** (University of North Carolina Press)

Jay Kinsbruner, **The Colonial Spanish-American City. Urban Life in the Age of Atlantic Capitalism** (University of Texas Press)

Daniel K. Richter, **Facing East from Indian Country** (Harvard University Press)

Londa Schiebinger, **Plants and Empire. Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World** (Harvard University Press)

Other reading will be posted on Blackboard or will be available through ebrary.

This course, like any other, is premised on mutual respect and honesty. Thus I expect that the work you submit is your own. Plagiarism will be severely penalized: any work containing plagiarized material will be granted the grade of no credit and may subject you to prosecution before the CJC. In order to clarify the issue of academic honesty, I will distribute copies of the History Department's guidelines. When in doubt, check with me.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. (23 January) Introduction

2. (30 January) What was the Atlantic World?

Reading (all on Blackboard):

David Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History"

John Thornton, **Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World**, chap. 1

Suggested:

Alison Games, "Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities"

3. (6 February) Atlantic Relations: Africans and Europeans

Reading:

James H. Sweet, **Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion** (ebrary via Tripod)

4. (13 February) Atlantic Relations: Native Americans and Europeans

Reading:

Daniel K. Richter, **Facing East from Indian Country**

Short Paper due. See #4, above.

5. (20 February) Atlantic Relations: Things, Ideas, Techniques, Ideologies

Reading:

Londa Schiebinger, **Plants and Empire**

6. (27 February) Atlantic Relations: The Social and Cultural Effects of Slavery

Reading:

Susan Dwyer Amussen, **Caribbean Exchanges**

7. (5 March) Atlantic Relations: Economic Effects of Slavery

Reading (all on Blackboard):

Ralph Austen and Woodruff Smith, "Private Tooth Decay as Public Economic Virtue: The Slave-Sugar Triangle, Consumerism, and European Industrialization"

David Eltis and Lawrence Jennings, "Trade between Western Africa and the Atlantic World in the Pre-Colonial Era"

David Eltis, Frank Lewis, and Kenneth Sokoloff, **Slavery in the Development of the Americas**, Introduction

Joseph Inikori, "Africa and the globalization process: western Africa, 1450-1850"

Paul Lovejoy, "The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on Africa"

Paper due. See #5, above.

SPRING VACATION

8. (19 March) Atlantic Relations: Commodities

Reading (all on Blackboard):

David Hancock, "Commerce and Conversation in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic: The Invention of Madeira Wine"

Robert DuPlessis, "Cloth and the Emergence of the Atlantic Economy"

T. H. Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776"

9. (26 March) An Imperial Atlantic?

Reading (all on Blackboard):

Pieter Emmer and Wim Klooster, "The Dutch Atlantic, 1600-1800. Expansion Without Empire"

David Hancock, "The British Atlantic World"

Silvia Marzagalli, "The French Atlantic"

Carla R. Phillips, "The Iberian Atlantic"

Friday, 28 March, 5 p.m.: **prospectus due** (see detailed assignment for Paper 3)

10. (2 April) Thinking About Atlantic Cities

Reading (all on Blackboard):

David Buisseret, "Urbanization in the Old World and in the New"

Bill Freund, **The African City. A History**, chap. 2

Gilbert Stelter, "Military Considerations and Colonial Town Planning: France and New France in the Seventeenth Century"

11. (9 April) Atlantic Cities and Spanish American Cities

Reading:

Jay Kinsbruner, **The Colonial Spanish-American City**

Susan Migden Socolow and Lyman Johnson, "Urbanization in Colonial Latin America"
(Blackboard)

Friday, 11 April, 5 p.m.: **outline due** (see detailed assignment for Paper 3)

12. (16 April) Atlantic Port Cities: Atlantic or Continental?

Reading (all on Blackboard):

Jacob Price, "Economic Function and the Growth of American Port Towns in the
Eighteenth Century"

Robin Law, "The Port of Ouidah in the Atlantic Community"

A. J. R. Russell-Wood, "Ports of Colonial Brazil"

Susan Socolow, "Buenos Aires: Atlantic Port and Hinterland in the Eighteenth Century"

Jacob Price, "Summation: The American Panorama of Atlantic Port Cities"

13. (23 April): Oral Reports

Written version of oral report due (see detailed assignment for Paper 3)

14. (30 April): Oral Reports

Written version of oral report due (see detailed assignment for Paper 3)

17 May. FINAL PAPERS DUE at 5 p.m. See #6, above