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### HIST 351.01: Colonial and Revolutionary America (1607-1800)

Ken Lockridge

*The University Of Montana*

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## COLONIAL AND REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA 1607-1800

We will read periodically in a textbook, Henretta and Nobles' Evolution and Revolution. This book will give us a broad view of the emergence of a distinctively American society in the years before, during, and after the American Revolution. As we cruise along through this textbook version of our early history, however, we will stop periodically to spend considerable amounts of time with some people who lived in this distant past and who wrote about their lives there. We will try to see early America through their eyes. They are a varied lot. Mary Rowlandson was a Puritan minister's wife, captured by the Indians in 1675. William Moraley, a rogue if there ever was one, came to Philadelphia as an indentured servant in 1729, and spent five fascinating years in the middle colonies before returning to England as poor as ever in 1734. Benjamin Franklin left Boston for Philadelphia in 1722, arriving just before Moraley. He spent most of his life there, and made himself into the perfect American, middle class, thrifty, inventive, politically involved. When he finally went to England in 1764, it was as a man of substance and a famous scientist. He later returned to help lead the movement for America's independence. Olaudah Equiano was enslaved in Nigeria in 1756. First as a slave and then as a free man, he witnessed the terrors of slavery in the Atlantic world of which America was a part—both before and after the American Revolution-- and finally became an active abolitionist. And Elizabeth Drinker was a wealthy Philadelphia Quaker lady, conservative in her views, who also lived through the era of the American Revolution and who sought to maintain an older America characterized by deference to wealth and to authority. Like Equiano, but in a still more divided way, she wrestled with the unsolved problems of race and slavery. She was equally divided on whether the revolution should liberate women.

Somewhere in the area triangulated by these lives of women and men, of poor and rich, of persons from New England and the Middle Colonies and in one case often in the South, lies a second American history, more alive, rich, and complicated than the best textbook can recount. Our first goal this term is to enter this richer, more human early America and to draw conclusions about the nature of America's history and culture from these five lives. One particular theme, for example, dominant in Rowlandson, present in Moraley, dominant in Equiano, and present in Drinker, is race: how did Americans of the various regions treat persons of other races? Also, many of our subjects were in some sense outcasts: They included not just Indians and slaves, but working men, and women, who were also outcasts in one sense or another in early America. What did a post-revolutionary America offer such persons? Wealth and power constitute a third theme: Mary Rowlandson was both powerless and powerful; Ben Franklin found a path to both wealth and power; and Katherine Drinker intended to keep both. They remind us that history is often the story of the wealthy and powerful. .Revolutions did not necessarily change this. We shall see all these things and a thousand more, things from the textbook and things never in any textbook, brought to life in these five lives, in a history that radiates surprise. I've never taught these five lives together. Who knows exactly what they will teach us?

One third [1/3] of the grade is based on discussions and on frequent spot quizzes, because reading the text and these documents analytically, and engaging in lively and informed discussions based on this active reading, are necessities if we are to enter the lively world of our subjects and learn what they have to teach us. The first quiz and discussion in September are not graded, so you will feel free to learn these skills slowly. As soon as you feel afraid or overwhelmed - and it is normal at first to feel this way - come see me and we can make things better. Your responses can also help make the course better. In class, cite chapter and verse: When you raise your hand, try to give us a quotation from the reading, citing page and paragraph, so we can turn to it and we can all deal with the passage that led to your question or contribution. And remember that discussion and quizzes count double in the last 1/3 of the term, when you are expert and we need to rely on you to stay involved.

The second 1/3 of the grade is based on a short exercise in analytical reading and basic expository writing, in the form of a 5-7 page paper due on Tuesday, October 2. The assignment is to provide at least five pieces of evidence, at least three of them in the form of brief quotations from Mary Rowlandson herself, quotations not used in the editor's

introduction, that suggest that the emotions aroused by her captivity were not resolved into the resignation to God's providential will for his chosen people, that she was expected to show. Put these pieces of evidence in a logical order and spend at least two paragraphs discussing (and citing) each, explaining to us very fully the exact words that suggest any lack of resolution of her feelings. You may also provide evidence that her emotions were resolved, if you feel that this is the case or that the picture is complex or unclear. Just keep a clear logical line relating each point to preceding and following points and to your thesis, or overall position, so that neither you nor the reader gets lost. In general, the "Advice on writing for historians" distributed with the syllabus describes the standards of full introduction, organization, clarity, and proofreading expected in the resulting paper. The exception is that in the paper at hand each major piece of evidence – each passage relevant to the issue of emotional resolution and Puritan expectations- gets a section to itself, and the quotations in the body of that section will largely come from within that piece of evidence itself. Remember also that 5-7 pages is very little space. Every word and sentence must contribute directly and logically to your argument or you will not have space to complete the task.

Help is available. Bring a list of your key pieces of evidence, whenever possible in the form of quotations, or, later, bring your projected first two pages to the grader during her/his office hours before the paper is due. These enable us to help you think it through. Study groups also work very well with paper assignments. If you feel you may need more help, go now to the English Department office on the ground floor of Liberal Arts, find out where their writing assistance is located, and schedule a series of appointments there. Papers which do not fulfill the assignment or do not meet the standards of clarity and proofreading specified in the "Advice on writing" will be returned for rewriting, with a 2/3 grade penalty deducted from the eventual grade on the rewrite to encourage you to seek help now as needed and meet these standards the first time around. Writing is hard work, but that is the price of learning what you think, whether it meets the test of evidence, and whether you can communicate convincing conclusions successfully to strangers. These are first-year composition skills, but valuable.

Those who are willing to accept final grades no higher than a B can take this course with only the discussions, quizzes, and this first paper as assignments, in which case each of those will then count as 1/3 of the grade. They need not write the final paper, and if none is turned in, I will assume that this means that the "no higher than a B" option has been chosen. As in all cases, the assignments will be graded by a high standard, so a B is by no means guaranteed.

Those who wish to improve their grades or to receive an A for the course as a whole must write a final paper of 10-12 pages, which will count the final 1/3 of the grade, with discussions and quizzes as 1/3 and the first paper as 1/3. To receive an A for the course, this final paper must be at least a B+, when other grades average B+ or above, or an A-, when other grades average B. The final paper will be assigned in conference during my office hours, so those who wish to write this paper should come see me as early as possible so we can find an agreeable topic and access sources in time. Interlibrary loan material must be requested by November 1 at the latest. At least four pages of the final paper must relate to work you have done in it to be at least two of the course readings, and I can help you find ways to do this. (I can also help in evaluating materials found on the Internet.) This paper is due at the scheduled final exam time, in my mailbox.

Our first aim, then, is to leap from the authoritative but sometimes God-like pages of the textbook, to the living history found in the accounts written by people at the time. A sense of living history is perhaps our first goal. We hope also and in particular to learn from these accounts more about how race, class, gender, and power operated in and characterized early America. We aim also to learn to read and discuss analytically and critically, both historians' writing and original documentary sources. And we aim to learn to incorporate these analyses into systematic thinking, written with such persuasive evidence and so clearly explained that even an easily confused stranger will understand our papers. Those are goals worthy of a lifetime. We aim to do a good term's worth.

## SCHEDULE

- Tues, Sept. 4:** Read syllabus, present course.
- Thurs., Sept. 6:** Prepare (this means read carefully, take notes, think critically, bring questions) Henretta and Nobles, Evolution and Revolution, chapters 1 and 2. Can we argue that Virginia was like modernizing England, but exaggerated to nightmare dimensions, while New England was an effort to balance modernity's sins with traditional values? Also, what was the place of women in Puritanism? Of Indians? **Quizzes possible.**
- Tues., Sept. 11:** Evolution and Revolution, chapters 3 and 4. The emergence of a colonial world. And, according to chapter 4, where were women in this world? Also, do the last pages of 4 suggest that some Americans were to blame for the eventual revolution?
- Thurs., Sept. 13:** Prepare the first part of Neal Salisbury's introduction to Sovereignty..., Mary Rowlandson's narrative, pp vii – 38. This is rich and amazing stuff. **Quizzes etc...**
- Tues., Sept. 18:** Prepare the rest of Salisbury's introduction Sovereignty, 38 – 55, and then on to Cotton Mather's introduction to the original edition of Rowlandson's narrative, on 63 – 68. All these men! Why did Mather write this introduction; what issues is he trying to deal with? Does this reflect on how much he did or did not "censor" her words?
- Thurs., Sept. 20:** Prepare, at last, Rowlandson herself? Sovereignty, 68 – 78. How would you react?
- Tues., Sept. 25:** Prepare Sovereignty, 78 – 94. How does she deal with it? Is the providential frame ever broken? What is the "Stockholm Syndrome?"
- Thurs., Sept. 27:** Sovereignty, 98 – 112. Dramatic and moving. For the issue here, see the first paper assignment in the syllabus above. Quiz always possible. **ALSO: DISCUSS PAPER ASSIGNMENT TOGETHER.**
- Tues., Oct. 2:** **PAPERS DUE. NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED.** This is a full regular class, and attendance is required.
- Thurs., Oct. 4:** Prepare Sovereignty, 113 – 119. King Philip (Metacom) gets the last word.
- Tues., Oct. 9:** **REWRITES DUE.** Reread Evolution and Revolution, chapter 4, and then prepare The Infortunate, (William Moraley), xi – 36, and 37 – 49, 151 – 155. Meet a rogue and n'er-do-well! Does he always lie?
- Thurs., Oct. 11:** Prepare Infortunate, 50 – 76. Is this a man we can trust? Quiz always possible.
- Tues., Oct. 16:** Prepare Infortunate, 76 – 121. When does he break into a convincing tone? Why? America as one poor man experienced it? These pages bear especially close analysis. Why is this "the best poor man's country (p 89)? Is it really?
- Thurs., Oct. 18:** Prepare Infortunate, 121 – 143. Are the standards for granting hospitality to the poor different in America and in England? What do we learn?
- Tues., Oct. 23:** Prepare Evolution and Revolution, chapter 5. What is the thesis of this chapter? Do the first words of chapter 6 help? How does each event or development listed in chapter 5 (the awakening, the wars, etc.) link, logically, to the thesis of the chapter? Franklin's America, 1750 – 1776, a land in change. Quiz possible, as usual.
- Thurs., Oct. 25:** **SEE ME ABOUT FINAL PAPER SOON.** Now let's meet over only famous man, Benjamin Franklin. The question is, surprisingly, can we trust him? Prepare The Autobiography, vii – 24, Loris Masur's introduction, and 161 – 163, the chronology of Franklin's life, and 164, questions that help us read Franklin's narrative.
- Tues., Oct. 30:** Prepare Autobiography, 27 – 98. Franklins himself. Who is this man, really, and what can we learn from him about the democritization of success? Make time, as this is thick reading.

- Thurs., Nov. 1:** **Final Paper ILL Requests Must Be In Latest Today.** Prepare Autobiography, 99 – 160. Make time as this is very thick reading. Who is he, as politician? Why does he help Braddock? Who are his enemies in Pennsylvania? What is he up to in England. (See pp 147 – 157 and get what you can – this is a very political animal.) Can we learn more from the First Outline on 158 – 160? Quiz always possible. What do we learn from Franklin’s life, to 1760? Through the revolution? Note: This is a difficult text, so, like historians, get what you can and we’ll figure out the rest together.
- Tues., Nov. 6:** Prepare Evolution and Revolution, chapters 6, 7, 8. Make chronology of events 1763 – 1790. (We can follow Franklin’s later life here.) Why is the book called “Evolution and Revolution?” Hint, see the back cover. What details in chapters 6, 7, 8 confirm the book’s thesis as hinted at on the back cover? Quizzes, etc. This quiz may be to turn in your chronologies!
- Thurs., Nov. 8:** Prepare The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, v –23, the editor’s introduction. Has he a bias? Does this mean he is wrong? Also, 197-201, this chronology is vital, as are map and pictures 204-211. The questions on 203 will help you read perceptively.
- Tues., Nov. 13:** Prepare Equiano, 23-86. What was un-civilizing his part of Africa? Was does he think he is, just before he is sold to the West Indies?
- Tues., Nov. 15:** Prepare Equiano, 87-121. Slavery, including American slavery, and freedom.
- Thurs., Nov. 20:** **Attendance is expected, and counts as a quiz**, (and quizzes and discussion now count double). Prepare Equiano, 121-196. What mistake does he make, once he is free, and what does it teach us? Why was he involved in a slave plantation as late as 1776? What did he do from 1777 to 1783? Why did he report the Zong massacre? What was his identity? What impact did the American Revolution have on his world?
- Tues., Nov. 27:** Prepare 1. Evolution and Revolution: reread chapters 6, 7, 8 quickly and prepare chapter 9 and add its events to your chronology. This is Elizabeth Drinker’s world. And, 2. Prepare The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker, ix-xix (editor’s introduction) and 3-54, a young woman, 1758-1775. “The rich,” said F. Scott Fitzgerald, “are very different from you and I, Earnest.” “Yes,” replied Hemmingway, “they have more money.”
- Thurs., Nov. 29:** Prepare Drinker, 55-111, surviving the revolution, 1776-1793. What pressure is she under during the revolution, 1776-1783? How do she and her husband emerge from the revolution, in what condition? What do we learn?
- Tues., Dec. 4:** Prepare Drinker, 111-220! Leave time, this is a biggie. Who is Black Hannah? Black Judey? Use the index cleverly to study all references to each. What do we learn? Is Drinker otherwise affected by the revolution, for example by the “second revolution” involved in the events of 1791-1800? Offer evidence of this. What is her preference among the contending parties? [Notes: Chapter 9 in Evolution and Revolution chronicles the political strife of the 1790’s, so you will need to reread it to be ready for any quiz on the last two of these questions. Some of the answer to the revolution question is in the next assignment.]
- Thurs., Dec. 6:** Prepare Drinker, 220-304, the second revolution completes itself, and an eventful life ebbs away. What have we learned?
- Tues., Dec. 11:** Final Class. An effort to summarize: What have we learned from these diverse lives? From lives in general, as opposed to textbooks? I evaluate you. You evaluate the course.
- Tues., Dec. 13:** Free. (The whole point is to work hard but offer a “B” option and finish early, so some of you have time to focus your energies wherever the need, and return may be greatest.)

But I will be at the Press Box at 5 p.m. on the 13<sup>th</sup>, buying snacks and nonalcoholic beverages for all comers from both classes, and, if I drink at all, will pay my fair share of the pitcher. Please arrive and leave on foot.