

Made in Early America

Jessica Taylor
jxtayl@ufl.edu

Keene-Flint 111
Tuesday 8:30-10:25
Thursday 9:35-10:25

Office hours:
Thursday 10:30—
12:30

The evolution of early American material culture helps historians start larger conversations about adaptation, resistance to colonialism, and the sources we use to discover and write about the lives of oftentimes marginalized or nonliterate people. Through select case studies, students will learn the tools and frameworks to critically analyze objects and places from diverse cultures across North America. Participants in this class will also learn some of the ways that historians, archaeologists, museum officials, and other professionals talk and think about material culture. Finally, we will become active critics of public history as we evaluate historic or commemorative sites together.

This class is reading- and writing-intensive. Successful students will strengthen their abilities to analyze the work of others, formulate an argument and communicate their ideas and evidence efficiently. They will also learn about important research skills and resources for the study of early American history.

Texts for this class:

Tiya Miles, *Tales from the Haunted South* (2015)

Susan Kern, *The Jeffersons at Shadwell* (2010)

James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten* (1977)

PDFs and links to the other readings will be posted online. You should familiarize yourself with academic databases like JSTOR and Project MUSE. The academic journals listed after appropriate readings are good places to start looking for additional evidence for papers.

This class adheres to university policies on academic honesty, plagiarism, and accommodation:

1. **Academic Honesty:** Academic integrity is a fundamental value at this university. It must be at the heart of all our endeavors and must guide our actions every day as students and as members of the faculty, administration, and staff. Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception and is an educational objective of this institution. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students.
2. **Plagiarism:** It is plagiarism if you present the ideas or words of someone else as your own. You are responsible for understanding the university's definitions of plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Please read the Student Honor Code and ask me if you have any questions. Keep in mind that plagiarism is a serious violation of the student academic honor code and university policy recommends that, at a minimum, instructors should impose a course grade penalty and report any suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students.
3. **Accommodation** I am more than happy to work with anyone who needs extra help on a project or assignment. In line with university policy, please provide documentation as soon as possible (i.e., in the first two weeks) for me. We discuss controversial and difficult topics in this class that may hit some students close to home. If you need to leave the room or discuss concerns with me, please do. When it comes to triggers, respect your fellow students and their needs. Always let me know if you have any questions.
4. **Late/Absent Policy:** A late assignment cannot receive a higher grade than the lowest grade given to a paper or assignment turned in on time. Excessive tardiness and/or absence unacceptable and will result in a lower participation grade. People on their cell phones or laptops are not actually "here" and will be counted absent.

In the beginning there was no fire, and the world was cold, until the Thunders, who lived up in Galun lati, sent their lightning and put fire into the bottom of a hollow sycamore tree.

-Swimmer, Cherokee
c. 1900, Bureau of
Indian Ethnology

We sowed some six
acres of barley and
beans, and, according
to the manner of the
Indians, we manured
our ground with her-
rings...

-George Mourt, 1622

Grading Scale:

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33

Work is due online in .doc or .docx format by midnight Wednesday the week it is assigned.

Each paper should be 2 to 3 pages, TNR 12-point font, double-spaced, and 1" margins. Your name and title should be in the header. Your papers should balance fact and analysis, without resulting in either summary or op-ed. You should cite facts and ideas that are not yours. Please use Chicago-style footnotes. (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html) As a side note, your second and third papers are expected to improve stylistically on your first paper. Talk to me about any questions. The University Writing Center staff is available to you to help with all stages of your draft.

10% Essay 1: For this essay, due during Week 3, analyze an object you own, preferably one that is important to you. Answer the following questions: What is it? Where was it made, who made it, and what is it made of? How did you come by it? Who else has access to this object, or objects like it? Most importantly, what does it say about you? Be prepared to speak about your object and analysis for three to five minutes in class, and bring a picture of the object to class on the due date.

15% Essay 2: In two pages, evaluate the use of material culture in *The Witch*, *The Patriot*, *12 Years a Slave*, or another historical movie of your choice (just talk to me about your choice beforehand.) If mistakes were made, why do you think that is? If you believe the film was true to history, what do you feel authenticity added to your viewing experience?

15% Smithsonian Learning Lab Project: For this project, due Week 10, students will “curate” a collection of at least ten images of early American objects they choose from one of the online collections we discuss in class, or other online collections. The time period and categories are open, but the objects must relate to one another in a way obvious to the viewer. Each object will include a description, provenance, and how it relates to the story of your online exhibit. We will go over the basics of this program in class.

15% Essay 3: For this essay, students will write an analysis of *The Jeffersons at Shadwell*. Based on our discussions on the book, I will write and post the prompt to Canvas two weeks before the paper is due.

20% Final Museum Project: Students will discuss a community-based project with me or undertake the following: first, students will visit a museum, park, or historical site. In 2-3 pages, students will use specific examples to analyze these exhibits. What types of sources and objects are found here? Be sure to take pictures. In 4 pages, propose an alternative exhibit plan. What stakeholders would you involve in creating a new exhibit? What sources would you use, and what (2-3 specific) objects from our readings or class would you include? Include a one-page narrative of the story your exhibit will tell, and what you want visitors to learn.

5% Discussion Questions: Students will post discussion question pertaining to the reading or class discussions to our online class site by midnight Wednesday. Questions don't need to be perfect; they just need to demonstrate that you read and paid attention. We will use these to start discussions during class.

20% Class Participation: This is a small class, so participation from everyone is necessary for successful discussion periods. Admittedly, this grade is subjective and it is not an easy A component of your grade. Therefore, the most important thing you can do is be supportive, respectful and thoughtful of other students with your comments. Your contributions to discussion should demonstrate that you read for class and that you take the points of your colleagues into account. You are encouraged to come to office hours for further discussion or with any questions or concerns.

Schedule:

Readings are due the Thursday class of the week for which they are listed.

January 5: Introduction to “Material Culture” and “Landscape”

This week, we'll get the foundations of how archaeologists and historians discuss objects and places, and some of the challenges and biases associated with discussing them. What type of people and things to archaeologists and historians study? How does the study of objects change old historical ideas?

Jules Prown, "Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method," *Winterthur Portfolio*, 1-19.

Alice E. Ingerson, "What are Cultural Landscapes?" 1-5.

Invitation to Vernacular Architecture, Introduction, 1-2.

Krill, *Early American Decorative Arts*.

January 10: Objects and the Past

How did material culture support different societies and exchanges between them? How can studying early American material culture help us understand colonization's effects on the present day?

"Gwadal Zhen: Belongings from the Land," Canadian Museum of History Online Exhibit.

<http://www.historymuseum.ca/gwichin/>

James Deetz, "Recalling Things Forgotten" and "The Anglo-American Past" from *In Small Things Forgotten*

January 17: Ditches and Pre-contact History

ESSAY 1 DUE

How can archaeological fragments help us understand everyday life for Native Americans? How do the study of pre-contact Native Americans help us study nonliterate societies?

Helen Rountree, "Powhatan Indian Women: The People Captain John Smith Barely Saw," *Ethnohistory*, 1-29.

Martin Gallivan, "Powhatan's Werowocomoco: Constructing Place, Polity, and Personhood in the Chesapeake, CE 1200-CE 1609," *American Anthropologist*, 85-100.

January 24: Maps and Knowledge

Historians now look at maps as subjective, "expressions of desire" that describe the lands empires wish they controlled rather than reality. How can we "read" maps as materials? How do maps differ between cultures?

Alan Taylor, "Squaring the Circles: the Reach of Colonial America," 3-14.

Gregory Waselkov, "Indian Maps of the Colonial Southeast," 435-486. [Don't worry; this article contains many images!]

For discussion Thursday, find a map of North America, dated before 1700, in the John Carter Brown Library Map Collection. ([JCB.Lunamapping.com](http://www.lunamapping.com)) How does the information offered, material, and concepts of land ownership differ from the Nasaw map?

January 31: Pots and Exchange

Trade between Europeans and Native Americans altered the exchange networks of all involved. How did traders create communication systems which worked for everyone, or did they? How did trade in Native goods (and enslaved Native Americans) alter life in America? Deetz, "All the Earthenware Plain and Flowered."

B. L. Voss, "Domesticating Imperialism: Sexual Politics and the Archaeology of Empire," *American Anthropologist*, 191-203.

"Descendants of Native American Slaves," NPR, <http://www.npr.org/2016/12/29/505271148/descendants-of-native-american-slaves-in-new-mexico-emerge-from-obscurity>

Kent G. Lightfoot, Thomas A. Wake and Ann M. Schiff, "Native Responses to the Russian Mercantile Colony of Fort Ross, Northern California," *Journal of Field Archaeology*, 159-175.

"Were you not afraid to come into my father's country?" Pocahontas to John Smith, England, 1617

The Tlascalans, who, as well as the others, displayed to the inhabitants of the city the bodies of their countrymen cut into pieces, exclaiming at the same time, that they would have them for supper that night and for breakfast the next day, as was in fact the case."
-Hernan Cortes, Tenochtitlan, 1521

February 7: Houses and Inequality

Like people today, historical actors shared spaces but experienced them very differently based on race, class, and gender. How did places built by early Americans create or perpetuate inequality? How should we interpret places built by slave labor today?

“Vernacular Architecture Studies: Interpreting the Data” *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, 65-83.

Dell Upton, “White and Black Landscapes in Eighteenth-Century Virginia,” *Places*, 59-73.
Deetz, “I Would Have the Howse Strong in Timber.”

“What Makes a McMansion Bad Architecture?” <http://www.mcmansionhell.com/post/148605513816/mcmansions-101-what-makes-a-mcmansion-bad>

“Necessary and Sufficient,” *Colonial Williamsburg Journal* <http://www.history.org/Foundation/journal/Autumno2/necessary.cfm>

February 14: Houses and Adaptation

Construction of buildings and landscapes help historians understand how average emigrants adapted to North American environments and societies. What functions and values did Europeans and their descendants keep, what changed, and why?

Elsbeth Gordon, “The St. Augustine Style,” *Florida’s Colonial Architectural Heritage*.

Stella Nair, “Witnessing the In-visibility of Inca Architecture in Colonial Peru,” *Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*, 50-65.

Warren Hofstra, “Private Dwellings, Public Ways, and the Landscape of Early Rural Capitalism in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley,” *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, 211-224.

February 21: Cloth and Gender

Women’s work in early America—beer brewing, medicine and midwifery, fabric arts, cooking—was performed unnoticed by contemporary chroniclers and subsequently by historians. What was the economic and social impact of women’s work, and what larger cultural functions did it serve? How can we improve public interpretations of their labor?

Marla Miller, “Gender, Artisanry, and Craft Tradition in Early New England: The View through the Eye of a Needle,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 743-776.

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, “A Chimneypiece,” *Age of Homespun*, 142-173.

February 28: Beads and Slavery

ESSAY 2 DUE—NO CLASS 3/2

Historians turn to archaeology and material culture, instead of primary sources written by white men, to understand how enslaved peoples survived and developed social bonds in spite of slavery. How did the spread of slavery evolve and change? What role did slavery play in creating economic and social race relations in the United States today?

Deetz, “Parting Ways” and “The African-American Past.”

Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery Colonoware Exhibit. (DAACS.org).

“IndiVisible: African Native Lives in the Americas,” National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI.SI.edu).

Use the DAACS Image Query to find an artifact with a picture attached. Come to class ready to discuss its provenance (the site it came from), material, and how you think it came to be where it was found by archaeologists.

SPRING BREAK

March 14: Cabins and Surveillance

SMITHSONIAN PROJECT DUE

Now that we understand some of the ways that architecture perpetuates inequality and how enslaved people appropriate materials to survive, how do masters and slaves do battle on a plantation landscape?

Kern, 1-72.

IT IS THE OPINION OF THE COURT THAT THE SAID SLAVE KING IS GUILTY OF INSURRECTION AND FOR THE SAME THAT HE BE HANGED BY THE NECK UNTIL HE BE DEAD... THE COURT VALUED THE SAID SLAVE TO EIGHTY POUNDS.
-COURT OF OYER AND TERMINER, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, OCTOBER 3, 1800.

She died amidst friends in the wilderness, far from the consolations of religious guides, or those who could direct her to a Saviour. Her last words were, "I am gone before." I am informed that all present took her by the hand and bid her adieu! She died of the Pleurisy.
-Obituary for Oo-Day-Yee, Cherokee woman, Savannah, GA, 1828.

I Anna Barnhouse of Martin's Hundred, Widow, have given Mihill Gowen, negro, at this time servant to Robert Stafford, a male child born 25 Aug. 1655 of the body of my negro Prossa being baptized by Mr. Edward Johnson 25 Sept. 1655 & named William & I bind myself never to trouble Mihill Gowen or his son William or demand any service of them, 16 Sept. 1657.

March 21: Mirrors and Conspicuous Consumption

Conspicuous consumption—display of social status through consumer goods—is considered by historians to be one of the drivers of the American Revolution. How do different people see and use conspicuous consumption? What message do historical actors (and also, modern Americans) send with purchased goods?

Ann Smart Martin, “Suckey’s Looking Glass: African Americans as Consumers,” *Buying into the World of Goods*, 173-193.
Kern, 73-145.

March 28: Portraits and the Power of the State

Representatives of the British Empire and the early United States worked to develop an image of authority and majesty. Why do officials need to do this, and who is the intended audience? Did it work? How do portraits and symbols of state tie in consumerism and nationalist mythology?

Kevin Muller, “Pelt and Power, Mohawks and Myth: Benjamin West’s Portrait of Guy Johnson,” *Winterthur Portfolio*, 47-76.

Elizabeth Hutchinson, “The Dress of his Nation”: Romney’s Portrait of Joseph Brant, *Winterthur Portfolio*, 209-228.

Kern, 146-202.

April 4: Archaeology and Collective Memory

Archaeology can change both established history and popular myth. In what ways do myths and collective memory change, and why does change happen so slowly? What is our responsibility to the public as historians or informed citizens?

Kern, 203-260.

April 11: Human Bodies and Spirituality

ESSAY 3 DUE

Religious conversion is another facet of the evolution of American identities during the colonial period. Is it defeat, or a tool for self-preservation? How do people from different backgrounds find common ground through organized religion? How do people use ideas about the spiritual world to meet their own ends?

Allan Greer, “Catherine and her Sisters,” *Mohawk Saint*, 125-146.

Janet Moore Lindman, “Putting on Christianity,” *Bodies of Belief*, 71-90.

Miles, 1-79.

April 18: Tombstones and Declension

How did early Americans deal with “the end,” and how does it vary by region and time? Why are we so fascinated with it today?

Deetz, “Remember Me as You Pass By”

Miles, 80-132.

MUSEUMS PROJECT DUE on the last day of class!

HOP YOU WILL BE
PLEASED TO MOVE YE
LORDS & C. TO PRO-
CEED FOUR HUN-
DRED & FIFTY FIRE-
LOCK MUSKETS &
ONE HUNDRED CAR-
BYNS & ONE HUN-
DRED CASE OF PIS-
TOLS WITHOUT
WHICH WEE CAN-
NOT BE SAFE
AGAINST YE INDIANS,
WHO ARE WELL
ARMED BY THE
FRENCH

-EDWARD CRANFIELD
TO WILLIAM
BLATHWAYT, 1682

“It would greeve your
heart to talk to the ni-
gor slaves in this is-
land, and especially
with thos that are most
ingenious, with whom
I have had some dis-
course; and asking
them, whether they
know God, they sayd
noe.”

-John Berkinhead to
Secretary Thurloe, 1654