

AMH 3931 – Pirates and Rebels in the Atlantic World

Spring 2020

T 7 (1:55 – 2:45) R 7-8 (1:55 – 3:50)

Anderson 013

Prof. Jon Sensbach

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This course will examine resistance to colonial expansion in the Atlantic world between the sixteenth century and the age of revolution in the late eighteenth century. As European powers occupied indigenous land in the Americas, commanded the oceans, developed slave-labor economies and exported millions overseas in chains, they encountered strong opposition from the people they dispossessed, dislocated, disaffected, disenfranchised and enslaved. Through the concept of “history from below” we will examine examples of Native American warfare against settler colonialism; slave rebellion at sea and on land; sailors, pirates and “masterlessness;” radical religious dissent against state power, with an emphasis on women’s agency; and revolutionary uprisings. These struggles by ordinary people against entrenched authority left an influential, if under-appreciated, legacy of freedom-seeking in the colonial and revolutionary Atlantic and on our own time.

Students will express their ideas through the elegance of the considered essay rather than the crabbed hastiness of the exam.

Required texts:

James D. Rice, *Tales from a Revolution: Bacon’s Rebellion and the Transformation of Early America* (Oxford, 2013).

Mark M. Smith, *Stono: Documenting and Interpreting a Southern Slave Rebellion* (South Carolina, 2005).

Marcus Rediker, *Outlaws of the Atlantic: Sailors, Pirates and Motley Crews in the Age of Sail* (Beacon, 2014).

Julius Scott, *A Common Wind: Afro-American Currents in the Age of the Haitian Revolution* (Verso, 2018).

All additional articles and primary documents are available online and will be posted in advance. Additional primary documents not listed on the syllabus may be distributed from time to time as warranted.

Requirements

1. Two five-page papers due **Feb. 27** and **March 26** on a pre-assigned set of questions.
2. One 2-page reading response essay due **Jan 23**.
3. Two in-class reading quizzes **Feb. 6** and **April 9** based on pre-assigned questions.

4. An essay-paper on assigned questions in lieu of a final exam, due **April 23**.

5. Class attendance and participation. Students will be expected to attend class regularly and to keep up with reading assignments, which average about 75 pages per week. Everyone is allowed two absences regardless of the reason; no excuse or physician's note is needed (except for a missed exam). Each subsequent absence, however, will result in a drop of half a letter grade in the final average for the term (students who are forced to miss more classes because of serious or chronic medical problems or family emergencies should consult with the instructor). The course will be lecture-based approximately half to two-thirds of the time, but there will also be a number of class discussions in which students should participate based on course readings. No digital devices in class, please.

Your final grade (based on a 10-point scale) will be determined as follows:

2 5-p. papers	40% (20% ea.)
2 quizzes	20% (10% ea.)
1 2-p. paper	5%
Participation/ Attendance	5%
Final essay	30%

Schedule

Week 1. Jan. 7-9. Introduction. History from Below: In Search of the "Masterless."

Reading:

Peter Linebaugh, "All the Atlantic Mountains Shook: *Labour/Le Travailleur* 10 (Autumn 1982), 87-121.

Week 2. Jan. 14-16. Settler Colonialism and Native Resistance.

Reading:

Alden T. Vaughan, "Expulsion of the Salvages": English Policy and the Virginia Massacre of 1622," *William and Mary Quarterly (WMQ)* 35 (Jan. 1978), 57-84.

William L. Ramsey, "Something Cloudy in Their Looks": The Origins of the Yamasee War Reconsidered," *Journal of American History* 90 (June 2003), 44-75.

Alejandra Dubcovsky, "Defying Indian Slavery: Apalachee Voices and Spanish Sources in the Eighteenth-Century Southeast," *WMQ* 75 (April 2018), 295-322.

Week 3. Jan. 21-23. Religious Radicals in Early New England

Reading:

Michael Zuckerman, "Pilgrims in the Wilderness: Community, Modernity, and the Maypole At Merry Mount," *New England Quarterly* 50 (June 1977), 255-77.

Lyle Koehler, "The Case of the American Jezebels: Anne Hutchinson and Female Agitation During the Years of Antinomian Turmoil, 1636-1638," *WMQ* 31 (1974), 55-78.

"The Examination of Anne Hutchinson," 1637

2-page reaction paper on Anne Hutchinson's trial due Thurs. 1/23

Week 4. Jan. 28-30. Spirited Rebels

Reading:

John Donoghue, "'Out of the Land of Bondage': The English Revolution and the Atlantic Origins of Abolition," *American Historical Review* 115 (Oct. 2010), 943-74.

Gerrard Winstanley, "A Declaration from the Poor Oppressed People of England" (1649).

Margaret Fell, "Women's Speaking Justified" (1666)

Week 5. Feb. 4-6. Rebellion in Red, White and Black

Reading:

Rice, *Tales from a Revolution*

In-class quiz on *Tales from a Revolution* Feb. 6

Week 6. Feb. 11-13. Resisting the African Slave Trade

Reading:

David Richardson, "Shipboard Revolts, African Authority and the African Slave Trade," *WMQ* 58 (Jan. 2001), 69-92.

Rediker, *Outlaws of the Atlantic*, chaps. 6-7.

Week 7. Feb. 18-20. Runaways and Maroons

Reading:

Simon Newman, "Hidden in Plain Sight: Escaped Slaves in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Jamaica," *WMQ*, Omohundro Institute reader app (2018)

Ayres, Beckles, Johnson, Leon, Naylor, and Newman, "Forum" on Newman's "Hidden in Plain Sight," *WMQ* 76 (Jan. 2019), 4-40.

Week 8. Feb. 25-27. Anatomy of a Slave Revolt

Reading:

Smith, *Stono*

5-page paper on Stono due Feb. 27

Spring Break March 2-7

Week 10. March 10-12. Maritime Rebels

Reading:

Rediker, *Outlaws of the Atlantic*, Prologue and chaps. 1-3

Week 11. March 17-19. I Fought the Law, and the Law Won: World of Pirates

Reading:

Rediker, *Outlaws of the Atlantic*, chap. 4

Charles Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates* (London, 1725), chap. 3: "Of Capt. Teach, alias Blackbeard," p. 70-90.

Week 12. March 24-26. No class Tue. 3/24, work on pirate paper. **Pirate paper due Thursday, 3/26**

Week 13. March 31 – April 2. Rebels in the American Revolution

Reading:

Rediker, *Outlaws*, chap. 5

Woody Holton, "Rebel Against Rebel: Enslaved Virginians and the Coming of the American Revolution," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 105, no. 2 (1997), 157-92.

Week 14. April 7-9. Age of Revolution

Reading:

Scott, *A Common Wind* – **in-class quiz 4/9**

Week 15. April 14-16. No class – work on final essay

Week 16. April 21-23. Essays due **April 23**