Instructor: Dr. James Paxton
Moravian College
Fall 2006
Class: Tuesday and Thursday 10:20am to 11:30am
Office: Comenius 306
Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00–3:00
             Wednesday 1:30-2:30
             Or by appointment
Contact: jpaxton@moravian.edu
        610-625-7897

Course Description

For many Americans, colonial history is synonymous with the thirteen English-speaking colonies that became the United States. But colonial America was a large, crowded, and diverse place that stretched from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific and from Hudson’s...
Bay in the north to the tip of South America. Within this arena, Native, English, Spanish, French, Dutch, Russian, and Swedish, and African peoples met, intermingled, and jostled for power. The impossibility of conveying New World societies in all their complexity and variety forces us to focus on a limited number of actors and a narrow range of themes. This broadly comparative course will explore common themes in English, French, and Spanish speaking North America. It will focus on the evolving relationships between America’s founding people, Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans, and the societies they created together.

Course Objectives
Students will

- become familiar with the main events and themes in colonial American history.
- become familiar with some of the major schools of thought and historiographical debates that have shaped historians’ understanding of the colonial period.
- understand the role of Native peoples and Africans in the development of New World societies.
- learn to critically evaluate secondary sources.
- further develop clear and effective oral and written communications skills.

Class Organization

Classes will be a combination of lecture and discussion. We will usually begin with a 20-30 minute introduction to the week’s topic followed by a student-led discussion of the assigned readings.

Required Texts


Required texts are available in the Moravian College bookstore. Additional readings are available on JSTOR or will be placed on reserve in Reeves Library.

Attendance

While there is no formal penalty for missing classes, students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes. Success in the course depends upon comprehension of the lecture material and participation in class discussions. Lateness will not be tolerated.

Please turn off or mute all electronic devices in the classroom.
Grade Distribution

Essay 1  10%
Essay 2  12%
Essay 3  15%
Journals  18%
Participation  25%
Final Exam  20%

The participation grade will reflect the quality and quantity of your contributions to class. It is not an attendance grade.

Journals
Throughout the semester you will write a total of six journal responses to the readings. Which classes you hand in a journal is up to you, but do not leave them to the end of the course. The journals should succinctly state the author(s) main arguments. When you are writing your journals, consider how the readings relate to one another and to the work we have done in the course. Journal entries should be 1-2 pages, typed, double-spaced, with a one-inch margin. In terms of style, journal entries may be less formal, but they will still be marked for spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Journals must be handed in at the beginning of the class in which they are due.

Assignments
During the course you will become an expert in one area of colonial American history. By the third week you will choose a topic, which you will explore in-depth through three essays. The essays will be historiographical in nature. Papers are due at the beginning of the class. The first essay will be a 2-3 page book review. The second essay will compare the book you reviewed in essay one with another book on the same subject. It should be 3-4 pages in length. The final essay will be a 6-7 page historiographical essay assessing five books. You may substitute three articles for a book. A historiographical essay provides comment and analysis on a number of works pertaining to one subject. Do not summarize the contents of the books. Instead, analyze the book’s evidence and conclusions and then compare the author’s evidence and conclusions with what you have found in other works.

Late Policy
Papers turned in after the beginning of the class on which they are due will be assessed a penalty of 10% for the first day they are late and 5% for each day thereafter. Computer and printing problems are not acceptable reasons for lateness.

Important Due Dates
September 14: Essay Topics and Bibliography
October 5: Essay 1
November 2: Essay 2
November 28: Essay 3

**Academic Dishonesty**

According to the Moravian College Student Handbook, the following constitutes plagiarism: “as the use, deliberate or not, of any outside source without proper acknowledgment.” Plagiarism will result in the offender receiving zero in the course. Please consult the Student Handbook for fuller details.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with physical, learning, or medical disabilities should speak to me and contact Laurie Roth, Director of the Learning Center, to arrange the appropriate accommodations. Please make these arrangements in the first weeks of the semester.

**Course Schedule**

Week 1
Aug. 29 – Introduction: What is colonial history?

Aug. 31 – Historiography

**I. Old Worlds**

Week 2
Sept. 5 – America

Sept. 7 – Europe

**II. New Worlds**

Week 3
Sept. 12 – Frontiers, Marchlands, and Borderlands


What is the difference between a frontier, borderland, and metropolis? Compare French and English encounters with America’s land and people.

Sept. 14 – Colonial Encounters
Some historians have described the destruction of Native Americans as a holocaust. Based on the articles do you agree or disagree? How would you characterize the Native experience in colonial America?

**Essay Topics and Bibliography Due**

**II. New World Societies**

Week 4 – How It Might Have Been
Sept. 19 – *The Life and Times of Captain N*
How does Glover characterize the interactions between Native Americans and Euro-Americans? Do you agree with his characterization? According to Glover, what is the meaning of the Revolution?

Sept. 21 – Spanish Colonization
In what ways did the Spanish influence Native societies? To what extent did Native peoples influence colonial society?

Week 5
Sept. 26– French Colonization

Sept. 28 – The English Colonies – Racism
Did racism result from economic imperatives or a cultural predisposition on the part of the English?
Week 6 - Slavery
Oct. 3
How do these readings alter your thinking about slavery? How were the experiences of slaves in the Chesapeake, New Jersey, and Louisiana similar and different?

Oct. 5 – Middle Colonies
**Essay One Due**

Week 7
Oct. 10 – **No Class – Fall Recess**

Oct. 12 – New England and Witchcraft
Why did the witch hunt occur?

Week 8
Oct. 17 – Virginia

Oct. 19 – British West Indies

III. Revolutions

Week 9
Oct. 24 – Religious
Fogelman, Hopeful Journeys, 100-126.
What was the Great Awakening? Did the Germans participate in the Great Awakening?

Oct. 26 – Economic

Week 10
Nov. 2 – Introduction to the Historiography of the American Revolution
Essay 2 Due

Week 11
Nov. 7 – Politics
Fogelman, Hopeful Journeys, 127-53.

Oct. 31

Nov. 9 – The Imperial Crisis in Britain’s Other Colonies
Why did Britain’s other colonies not join the Revolution?

Week 12
Nov. 14

Nov. 16 – Natives, Slaves, and Women in the Revolution
As these articles demonstrate, slaves, Anglo-American women, and Native Americans participated in the Revolution. For what did they struggle? And how does their struggle force us to revise an interpretation that the war was about freedom and the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuits of happiness?

IV. The New Order

Week 13
Nov. 21 – The Other Americans
Jane Errington, “And This Shall be a British Province” and “Upper Canada – an American Community?” *The Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada: A Developing Ideology* (Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1987), 20-54. Reserve
To what extent was Upper Canada American or British?

Nov. 23 – No Class – Thanksgiving

Week 14
Nov. 28 – Reading Day
**Essay 3 Due**

Nov. 30 – Consolidating the Revolution


Week 15 – American Identity
Dec. 5 – American Identity


What factor, event, or trend defines the essential American character?

Dec. 7 - Conclusion