

History 101, Section 81, CRN 16872
Indians and the Problem of Race in Early America

Professor Contact Information and Office Hours

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Class Time and Location

Tuesday and Thursday 2:20pm-3:35pm, 2020 K St., Room 11

Description

This first goal of this course is to introduce students to the kinds of writing conducted by professional historians, and to have them attempt such writing themselves. Such formats include synthetic literature reviews, book reviews, conference papers, and primary source research essays. Consistent with historians' methodology, we begin the semester by reading through and synthesizing current historiography and raising questions about its content and approach. In the second half of the semester, students will take their insights and questions to the primary sources and write up their findings.

The second goal of this course is to explore the ways in which the various peoples of early America invented the idea that Indians were a distinct racial group; used that idea also to define whiteness and blackness; and, finally, organized and reorganized society according to their evolving notions of race. To that end, we will discuss initial European and Indian understandings of their peoples' sameness and difference; the influences of inter-cultural violence, captivity, slavery, evangelization, sex, and marriage on early American ideas of race; the ways in which the law, government policy, and pan-Indian resistance movements reflected and generated racial divisions; and, finally, the manner in which "mixed-race" peoples challenged racial categories. By the end of the semester, students should be able to critique longstanding American notions that "race" is an actual biological fact rather than a cultural invention, and that the origins of our country's long struggle with race is a story of just blacks and whites rather than a "triangulated" story of whites, blacks, and Indians.

Assignments and Grade Breakdown

All assignments will be edited by the instructor for grammar, structure, and content, and then handed back by the next class for revision. Students must hand in second drafts by the following class meeting. See appendices A and B for a guide to writing historical papers and for an explanation of grading standards. For every assignment, the average grade of the two drafts will stand.

Synthetic literature reviews, 20 percent of course grade: Each week for the first eight weeks of the semester, students are responsible to hand in a two-to-three page review of the assigned readings. These reviews should summarize the readings' arguments, discuss the evidence they use, and explain what themes they have in common, where they diverge, and what questions they leave unanswered.

Book reviews and joint presentations, 20 percent of course grade: Each student is responsible to read one book from the following list by week eight and to write a four page review of the book that links its content to the course's themes. These reviews will be circulated among the other students. Students then join one or more students who have read books from the same cluster to give a five to ten minute presentation providing an overview of their books' common themes, disagreements, and approaches. **Due week nine.**

Cluster 1:

- ◆ John Wood Sweet, *Bodies Politic: Negotiating Race in the American North, 1730-1830* (Baltimore, 2003).
- ◆ Ramón Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sex, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford, 1991).
- ◆ Kirsten Fischer, *Suspect Relations: Sex, Race, and Resistance in Colonial North Carolina* (Ithaca, 2002).
- ◆ Ann Marie Plane, *Colonial Intimacies: Indian Marriage in Early New England* (Ithaca, 2000).
- ◆ Bernard W. Sheehan, *Savagism and Civility: Indians and Englishmen in Colonial Virginia* (New York, 1980).

Cluster 2:

- ◆ Theda Perdue, *"Mixed Blood" Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South* (Athens, 2002).
- ◆ Jack D. Forbes, *Africans and Native Americans: The Language of Race and the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples*, 2d ed. (Urbana, 1993).
- ◆ Tiya Miles, *Ties that Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom* (Berkeley, 2005).
- ◆ Claudio Saunt, *Black, White, and Indian: Race and the Unmaking of an American Family* (New York, 2005).

Cluster 3:

- ◆ James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York, 1985).
- ◆ David J. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries: Colonists, Christianity, and Community among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600-1871* (New York, 2005).
- ◆ Bernd C. Peyer, *The Tutor'd Mind: Indian Missionary Writers in Antebellum America* (Amherst, 1997).

Cluster 4:

- ◆ Nancy Shoemaker, *A Strange Likeness: Becoming Red and White in Eighteenth-Century North America* (New York, 2004).

- ◆ Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca, 2000).
- ◆ Joyce Chaplin, *Subject Matter: Technology, the Body, and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001).
- ◆ Olive P. Dickason, *Myth of the Savage and the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas* (Edmonton, 1984).

Cluster 5:

- ◆ Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York, 1998).
- ◆ Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian Hating and Empire Building* (Norman, Okla., 1997). Parts 1-4. Skim part 5.
- ◆ Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (Norman, Okla., 2000).

Cluster 6:

- ◆ Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, 1998).
- ◆ Robert E. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York, 1978).
- ◆ Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind* (Berkeley, 1988).
- ◆ Bernard W. Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (New York, 1973).
- ◆ Anthony F.C. Wallace, *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999).
- ◆ Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing Indian: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence, Ks., 1991).

Cluster 7:

- ◆ Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst, 2001).
- ◆ Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Norman, Ok., 1983).

Cluster 8:

- ◆ James H. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York, 1999).
- ◆ Jane T. Merritt, *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic Frontier, 1700-1763* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2003).

Research Paper 1, 20 percent of course grade. Answer one of the following questions in no more than eight pages using Rowlandson's, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* and the accompanying supporting documents. Half of the students will read these papers aloud to the class. **Due week twelve.**

- 1) How did New England colonists use religion to define Indianness and, implicitly, whiteness?

- 2) How did cross-cultural violence contribute to race consciousness in seventeenth-century New England?
- 3) Do you see evidence that Indians and Englishmen in seventeenth-century New England subscribe to a belief of fundamental racial difference? Discuss.

Research Paper 2, 20 percent of course grade: Answer one of the following questions in eight pages using Perdue's and Green's, *The Cherokee Removal*. Half of the students (those who did not present research paper #1) will read their own paper aloud to the class. **Due week fifteen.**

- 1) What were the racial underpinnings of United States removal policy during the 1830s?
- 2) From a racial perspective, what were the tensions between, on the one hand, U.S. removal policy and U.S. insistence on Indian "civilized" reforms, and, on the other, Cherokee acculturative reforms and insistence on autonomy?
- 3) Do you see a basic consensus in the 1830s U.S. on the meanings of Indianness and whiteness, or were those definitions contested?

Participation, 20 percent of the course grade: See grading guideline in the appendix.

Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism

Students are encouraged to discuss their assignments with one another as part of the mutual learning process. However, each student must act alone in collecting evidence and structuring and writing his or her essays. Moreover, he or she must be diligent about citing the sources of quotes and borrowed interpretations. The instructor will immediately report students who have improperly collaborated together or plagiarized to G.W.'s Office of Academic Integrity. For your reference, that office defines cheating and plagiarism as follows:

Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise . . . representing material prepared by another author as one's own work

Plagiarism: Intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information.

Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the GW Book Store and on Gelman 2 hour reserve. All articles and individual chapters, besides those by Alden Vaughan, are available on electronic reserve through Blackboard.

- ◆ Theda Perdue and Michael D. Green, eds., *The Cherokee Removal: A Brief History with Documents*, 2d ed. (Boston, 2005).
- ◆ Mary Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God, with Related Documents*, ed. Neal Salisbury (Boston, 1997).
- ◆ Alden T. Vaughan, *Roots of American Racism: Essays on the Colonial Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Weekly Assignments

Week 1: Introduction

9/1: Syllabus review

Week 2: Overview and Current Approaches

9/6: Lecture: Indians and the Problem of Race

9/8: Discussion

Reading:

- ◆ Vaughan, "From White Man to Red Skin: Changing Anglo-American Perceptions of the American Indian," *Roots of American Racism*, 3-34.
- ◆ Pauline Turner Strong and Barrik Van Winkle: "'Indian Blood': Reflections on the Reckoning and Refiguring of Native North American Identity," *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 11, no. 4 (Nov., 1996), 547-576. Electronic reserve.
- ◆ Patrick Wolfe, "Land, Labor, and Difference: Elementary Structures of Race," *American Historical Review*, vol. 106, no. 3 (June, 2001), 866-905. Electronic reserve.

Week 3: Early Contact

9/13: Lecture: Impressions at Early Contact

9/15: Discussion

Reading:

- ◆ Karen Ordahl Kupperman, "Presentment of Civility: English Reading of American Self-Presentation in the Early Years of Colonization," and Joyce Chaplin, "Natural Philosophy and an Early Racial Idiom in North America: Comparing English and Indian Bodies," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 54 (1997), 193-252. Electronic reserve.
- ◆ Vaughan, "Early English Paradigms for New World Natives," *Roots of American Racism*, 34-54..

Week 4: Captivity and Christianity

9/20: Lecture: Incorporation and its Limits

9/22: Discussion

Reading:

- ◆ Vaughan and Daniel K. Richter, "Crossing the Cultural Divide: Indians and New Englanders, 1605-1763," *Roots of American Racism*, 213-52.
- ◆ Claudio Saunt, "'The English has now a Mind to make Slaves of them all': Creeks, Seminoles, and the Problem of Slavery," *American Indian Quarterly* 22 (1998), 157-79. Electronic reserve.
- ◆ James Brooks, "'This Evil Extends Especially to the Feminine Sex': Negotiating Captivity in the New Mexico Borderlands," *Feminist Studies* 22 (1996), 279-309. Electronic reserve.

Week 5: Sex and Marriage

9/27: Lecture: Desire, Disgust, and Diplomacy in Indian-Colonial Relations

9/29: Discussion

Reading:

- ◆ Richard Godbeer, “Eroticizing the Middle Ground: Anglo-Indian Sexual Relations along the Eighteenth-Century Frontier,” in Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in American History* (New York, 1999). Electronic reserve.
- ◆ David D. Smits, “‘Abominable Mixture’: Toward the Repudiation of Anglo-Indian Intermarriage in Seventeenth-Century Virginia,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 95 (1987), 157-92. Electronic reserve.
- ◆ Susan Sleeper-Smith, “Women, Kin, and Catholicism: New Perspectives on the Fur Trade,” *Ethnohistory* 47 (2000), 423-52. Electronic reserve.

Week 6: Violence

10/4: War and Race Hatred in Early America

10/6: Discussion

Reading:

- ◆ Vaughan, “Expulsion of the Savages: English Policy and the Virginia Massacre of 1622,” and “Frontier Banditti and the Indians: The Paxton Boys’ Legacy, 1763-1775,” *Roots of American Racism*, 105-27, and 82-104.
 - ◆ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York, 1991), 366-412. Electronic reserve.
- Note: In White’s *Middle Ground*, “pays d’en haut” and “middle ground” refer to the Great Lakes region, specifically the region north of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi River, bordering Lakes Michigan, Huron, and Erie. He uses “Algonquians” as a shorthand for the various tribes who inhabited this area.

Week 7: Indian Race Consciousness

10/11: Lecture: The Emergence of Indian Racial Idioms

10/13: Discussion

Reading:

- ◆ Gregory Evans Dowd, “Thinking and Believing: Nativism and Unity in the Ages of Pontiac and Tecumseh,” *American Indian Quarterly* 16 (1992), 309-35. Electronic reserve.
- ◆ Nancy Shoemaker, “How Indians Got to Be Red,” *American Historical Review* 102 (1997), 625-44. Electronic reserve.
- ◆ James H. Merrell, “The Racial Education of the Catawba Indians,” *Journal of Southern History* 50 (1984), 363-84. Electronic reserve.

Week 8: People of Color

10/18: Lecture: Hybridity’s Challenge to Race

10/20: Discussion

Reading:

- ◆ Daniel R. Mandell, “Shifting Boundaries of Race and Ethnicity: Indian-Black Intermarriage in Southern New England, 1760-1880,” *Journal of American History* 85 (1998-99), 466-501. Electronic reserve.
- ◆ Ruth Wallis Herndon and Ella Wilcox Sekatau, “The Right to a Name: The Narragansett People and Rhode Island Officials in the Revolutionary Era,” *Ethnohistory* 44 (1997), 443-62. Electronic reserve.

- ◆ Tiya Miles, “Uncle Tom was an Indian: Tracing the Red in Black Slavery,” in James F. Brooks, ed., *Confounding the Color Line: The Indian-Black Experience in North America* (Norman, 2002), 137-60. Electronic reserve.
- ◆ Claudio Saunt, “The Paradox of Freedom: Tribal Sovereignty and Emancipation during the Reconstruction of Indian Territory,” *Journal of Southern History* (2004). Electronic reserve.
- ◆ Gary B. Nash, “The Hidden History of Mestizo America,” *Journal of American History* 82 (Dec. 1995), 941-64. Electronic reserve.

Week 9: Book Reviews and Presentations

10/25 and 10/27: Presentations

Week 10: Race and War in Colonial New England

11/1: Lecture: Race Hatred in King Philip’s War

11/3: Discussion

Reading:

- ◆ Rowlandson, *Sovereignty and Goodness of God*, 1-112.

Week 11: Instituting Race

11/8: Lecture: The New Racial Order in Post-War New England

11/10: Discussion

Reading:

- ◆ Supporting documents in Rowlandson, *Sovereignty and Goodness of God*, 115-68.

Week 12: Research paper #1 due.

11/15 and 11/17: Presentations

Week 13: Indians, Civility, and the Problems of Race in the Early Republic

11/22: Discussion

Reading:

- ◆ Perdue and Green, *The Cherokee Removal*, 1-128.

11/24: No class

Week 14: Primary Source Reading

11/29: Lecture: Northern Indian Removal

12/1: Discussion

Reading:

- ◆ Perdue and Green, *The Cherokee Removal*, 129-85.

Week 15: Research paper #2 due

12/5 and 12/7: Presentations

Appendix A

Writing History

(courtesy of James Axtell and Andrew Isenberg)

I. Organization

There is no mystery about writing history. Writing is simply the transfer of thought to paper; both writing and thinking are done in words. To be able to write clearly is to be able to think clearly--and vice-versa.

The purpose of writing is to communicate information, ideas, opinions, or feelings to other people. Unless the other people “get the message” you intend to convey, you have failed to communicate effectively. Thus, as a writer you have two major tasks. The first and most difficult is to establish clearly in your own mind what you want to say. The second task is to find the most effective way to convey your message to the reader.

The first task--straight thinking--can be greatly aided by an outline. After you have completed your research, put your notes aside. On a separate set of small cards jot down--one point to a card--all the points you need to make. Divide the cards into piles--one pile for each group of points closely related to each other. Arrange your piles of points into a sequence: which points are most important or come chronologically first, which should be saved for last? Which must you present before others in order to make the others understandable? Now, within each pile, do the same thing--arrange the points in logical, understandable order. This simple procedure will give you an outline, needing only a title, introduction, conclusion, and transitions between sections.

A title should, if possible, be like a line of poetry--capable of saying a great deal with hardly any words. It should in some way express the whole work, its themes, and even something of its outcomes.

An introduction, like a title, should “hook” the reader and engage his or her attention and interest right away, in the opening sentence if possible. The introduction should contain a thesis statement that expresses the idea, the argument, you want to communicate in your paper. The thesis carries the paper from the introduction to the conclusion. If you read a paper with a clearly articulated thesis, the central argument of the paper sticks with you after you put the paper down. By contrast, a paper with a weak or unclear thesis wanders, leaving the reader without a clear sense of the author’s argument.

In the body of your text, each paragraph should represent a complete, coherent idea, such as the top card in the aforementioned piles. The first sentence of the paragraph, the topic sentence, makes a statement. The sentences following provide evidence to support that statement. The full paragraph should contain at least four sentences. The concluding statement

rephrases the argument of the paragraph and provides a transition to the next paragraph. Ideally, it also demonstrates to the reader how the paragraph relates to the main thesis.

Your conclusion should actually conclude your argument, not merely repeat earlier material. Although no new material should be introduced, a conclusion should present a new perspective on the points already covered or suggest future directions for thinking about the subject.

II. Principles of Writing History

Accuracy: “In the realm of History, the moment we have reason to think we are be given fiction instead of fact, be the fiction ever so brilliant, our interest collapses like a pricked balloon.” (G.M. Trevelyan).

Clarity: “The written word should be clean as bone, clear as light, firm as stone . . .” (Anon.)

Conciseness: “. . . two words are not as good as one.” (Ibid.)

Vigor: “Dull history is bad history to the extent to which it is dull.” (Jack Hexter)

III. Do's and Don'ts

-- Find yourself a trusted proofreader, ideally someone who is reasonably intelligent and educated, but not an expert in your field. Have him or her read--or better yet, listen--to the final product. If he or she does not understand your argument or find your account compelling, you should go back to the writing block.

-- Do not assume that your reader knows anything about your topic. Introduce your characters, give dates and locations, and define terms that would be unknown to a college aged reading public (sachem, *encomienda*, New France, etc.).

-- Do not assume that your reader knows the meaning of the profession's jargon and catchphrases, such as contextualize, racialize, discourse, gendered, subaltern, imagined community, invention of tradition, middle ground, etc.

-- Use the simple past tense and an active voice. Passive construction (e.g. The soldiers were ordered by their commander to attack the Cheyennes. Dozens of men, women, and children were killed. Later, it was admitted that mistakes were made.) obscures agency and causation. The above example should read: The soldiers' commander ordered them to attack the Cheyennes. They killed dozens of men, women, and children. Later, the soldiers admitted that they made mistakes.

-- Be specific and direct rather than general or abstract. “The aborigines of New England could not contain their mirthful appreciation of the invaders,” really means “The Indians laughed at the Puritans.”

-- Refer to people, not books our sources. Not, “the *Jesuit Relations* tell us . . .” but “In 1642 Father Paul Le Jeune noted . . .”

-- Avoid unspecific referents (this, it, they). “The snow covered the cabin. It lasted all week.” (and then, presumably, collapsed . . .)

-- Avoid textual references to yourself. Use of “I” does not lend itself to objective distance, nor does use of “we” to refer to groups in the past (“our nation”; “we” instead of “Americans,” etc.). And as Mark Twain said, “only kings, editors, and people with tapeworm have the right to use the editorial ‘we.’”

-- Avoid the generic male. Use inclusive language.

--No prepositions (for, to, with) at the end of a sentence.

--Avoid over-reliance on block quotations and certainly never use more than one per paragraph (or per five pages for that matter). Avoid ending a paragraph with a block quotation.

--Always make sure the source of the quotation is clear:

Not: Indians believed that powerful spirits inhabited nature. “The Indian’s world was filled with superhuman and magical powers which controlled man’s destiny and nature’s course of events” (Martin, 1974).

But rather: Indians believed that powerful spirits inhabited nature. As the historian Calvin Martin writes, “The Indian’s world”

-- Conceal your scaffolding. Avoid “this paper will prove . . .,” “as I argue below,” and similar references to your own writing act. Just prove and argue your points without fanfare.

-- Occasionally integrate quotations into your prose and vary your introductions. “George Washington said . . .,” and “Martha Washington said . . .,” over and over again is boring. More interesting is: “The nation,” George Washington exclaimed, “runs the risk of dissolution.” The first time you introduce a speaker, give her or his full name and a brief identification.

-- Minimize the use of “very,” which is unspecific.

-- Clergymen: Father Leclerq (Catholic), but the fathers. Protestant clergymen have honorific, not ecclesiastical, titles: thus, the Reverend Hugh Johnson, but not Rev. Mather.

-- Dates: In the text centuries must be written out in lower case letters: “the seventeenth century,” not “the 17th Century.” If the date is a modifier, it is hyphenated as if one word: “fifteenth-century chivalry.” Decades do not get apostrophes: e.g. 1650s.

- Avoid contractions: can't, don't, wasn't, they're, etc.
- Do not use "feel" when you mean "think."
- Avoid slang: "After all the head-banging at Vicksburg and Gettysburg, the Confederate Army was wickedly reamed."
- Avoid ethnic clichés and outdated euphemisms: When the braves could stand no more, they went on the warpath against the white man. The red man, unlike the Negro, had the resources to fight back.
- Ellipses (. . .) are not needed in a quotation unless you omit something from the middle or end of a complete sentence that begins with a capitalized word. Ellipses warn the reader that something (perhaps vital) is missing. You may use any fragment of a quotation without ellipses at the front and back because the lack of a capitalized first word announces its incompleteness.
- In anything shorter than a book, thesis, or dissertation, a bibliography is unnecessary. Footnotes are sufficient. Make sure citations are in accordance with the *Chicago Manual of Style*.
- Proofreading is the essential last act of writing. Do it with a dictionary in hand and do not depend upon your computer's word or grammar check.

Appendix B

Grading Guideline

I. Papers

An **A** or **A-** paper is one that is good enough to be read aloud in class. It is clearly written and well organized. It demonstrates that the writer has conducted a close and critical reading of the texts, grappled with the issues raised in the course, synthesized the readings, discussions, and lectures, and formulated a perceptive, compelling, independent argument. The argument shows intellectual originality and creativity, is sensitive to historical context, and is supported by a well-chosen variety of specific examples.

A **B+** or **B** paper demonstrates many aspects of A- work but falls short of it in either the organization or clarity of its writing, the formulation and presentation of its argument, or the quality of research. Some papers or exams in this category show flashes of insight into many of the issues raised in the course. Others give evidence of independent thought, but the argument is not presented clearly or convincingly.

A **B-** paper demonstrates a command of course or research material and understanding of historical context but provides a less than thorough defense of the writer's independent argument because of weakness in writing, argument, organization, or use of evidence.

A **C+**, **C**, or **C-** paper offers little more than a mere summary of ideas and information covered in the course, is insensitive to historical context, does not respond to the assignment adequately, suffers from frequent factual error, unclear writing, poor organization, or inadequate primary research, or presents some combination of these problems.

Whereas the grading standards for written work between A and C- are concerned with the presentation of argument and evidence, a paper or exam that belongs to the D or F categories demonstrates inadequate command of course material.

A **D** paper demonstrates serious deficiencies or severe flaws in the student's command of course or research material.

An **F** paper demonstrates no competence in the course or research materials. It indicates a student's neglect or lack of effort in the course.