CONFLICTS AND CULTURES IN AMERICAN SOCIETY: THE 1820s
AMST-203 Fall 2018
Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00–11:15 AM

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Course Description and Objectives
As the dust of the American Revolution began to settle, a new generation of Americans spent the 1820s struggling to define themselves. This meant asking who, what, and where was, and perhaps more importantly, was not American. Through this process, some Americans set themselves apart—in real and imagined ways—from their neighbors at home and around the world, all while relying on those connections. We will follow these debates as they wind through American and transnational history. In doing so, we will pay particular attention to those who did not receive the full benefits of this era’s alleged expansion of democracy, and how they fought for a voice and a place in the nation’s political system nonetheless.

Instead of trying to cover every event in the history of the 1820s and surrounding decades, this course will highlight the social, political, economic, and cultural forces that shaped the epoch and changed the nation. Some of the issues we will investigate include: the construction of American identities, and the people excluded from those new frameworks; the rise of new American political system and the assumptions of race, class and gender at its foundation; Native-American history and the history of their displacement; the expansion of the United States and its influence across the continent and throughout the world; the shaping and reshaping of slavery, emancipation, and freedom; and the processes of historical memory and periodization.

By the end of this course, we will:
- Analyze the national transformations of the era and situate those upheavals in a broader context of American history, politics, and culture.
- Trace the creation of new American identities by diverse historical actors, with special attention to uneven power dynamics and how they made it more difficult for many to assert belonging. We will place this American paradox in conversation with the supposed expansion of democracy that many argue defined this era.
- Consider the periodization of history. How and why are 1820s often treated as preface or suffix rather than subject? How that has shaped our understanding of the era, and why it is underrepresented in scholarly work and popular memory alike.
- Hone the critical skills required to analyze primary and secondary sources—in their various written, visual, aural, and material forms—in order to identify and develop well-supported historical arguments.
Expectations
1. Respect: The foremost principle of any classroom has to be respect. We must ensure we are actively contributing to, and fostering, an environment of respect for all members of the class and our ideas. With that in mind, we can all feel safe taking intellectual risks as we learn together. No one will be 100% right 100% of the time, but there are plenty of ways to respectfully and constructively disagree, just as there are plenty of ways to respectfully express our ideas.

2. Attendance and participation: Your learning depends upon your participation. Punctuality and attendance are therefore expected at all class meetings and will be factored in your grade, and missed classes cannot be made up or excused. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be marked absent for the day, and if you miss five classes, you will fail the course.

You are also expected to contribute actively to the class. Thoughtful comments in class discussion and group work are central to this task, but conversations during office hours and other engagement with the course material outside of class will be considered too. Please note that good participation means actively creating spaces for your classmates to participate too.

3. Reading: This is an American Studies seminar, and there is a significant amount of reading assigned for each class. The length and density will vary, but the need to complete them will remain constant. We will spend time each class discussing the readings in depth, but we will not summarize them in their entirety. Readings are for the day they are listed, which means an assignment under 2/12, for instance, should be completed in preparation for class that day.

4. Computers: These classes are discussion-based seminars and you will never need to transcribe the class word for word. The distractions presented by computers hinder an open class dynamic. **Print and bring all readings to class.** If printing is cost prohibitive, speak with me and I will provide the printed material for you. If you a have specific reason that necessitates the use of a computer in class, speak with the professor at the beginning of the semester (and see academic accommodations below). Mobile devices must be turned off. If you are using your computer or mobile devices repeatedly for non-course-related reasons, I may mark you as absent.

5. Professor responsibilities: My goal is to help everyone in the class learn and succeed. As such, I will do my best to foster an open and collaborative classroom environment, and to be available outside of class via email, during office hours, or by appointment to provide feedback on your work or receive feedback on my own.

The assignments detailed below are designed to facilitate critical engagement with the past and our relation to it. They are not intended to trick you or make you figure out the secret to writing a good paper. The path to success in this course is straightforward, and I will mark it as clearly as I can, but confusion and miscommunications happen. Please read the syllabus, assignments, and prior communications from me carefully. If anything is still unclear, about the course or the assignments, please do not hesitate to ask. Keep in mind, however, that I am not constantly checking my email so please allow 24 hours to respond during the week, and make sure to check your Trinity email at least once a day. All emails should have a relevant subject line, a salutation that includes the name of the recipient, and a sign off that includes your name.
Statement on Academic Integrity

Intellectual integrity is the cornerstone of good scholarship and good learning. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated or excused. There is no mitigating circumstance, ever, for plagiarism. Whenever you draw upon somebody else’s words or ideas to make a point, give them credit in a footnote. Plagiarism is more often the result of haste or carelessness than it is the result of deliberate dishonesty. As such, make sure to clearly distinguish and attribute your thoughts from those of others, in your writing and your note taking. If you are ever unsure, it is better to err on the side of caution and provide a citation. Do not wait to the last minute to complete assignments. Procrastination fosters desperation, which in turn leads to plagiarism.

Students of Trinity College are held to the Student Integrity Contract. Students should be familiar with the principles outlined by the contract and must understand and respect the intellectual property of other people. Your work will be graded according to the rubric designed by your instructor. Cheating and plagiarizing will be dealt with according to university guidelines. A plagiarized essay will result in a failing grade for the course. Only original work, done by the student, should be submitted to the instructor. Plagiarism, cheating, or other incidents of academic dishonesty will be reviewed and reported as outlined by the Academic Affairs Committee. Their rules and procedures can be read here: http://www.trincoll.edu/SiteCollectionDocuments/StudentHandbook.pdf

Resources

Students with Academic Accommodations
Trinity College is committed to creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have approval for academic accommodations, please notify faculty during the first two weeks of the semester or a minimum of ten days prior to needing your accommodations. Please be sure to meet with me privately to discuss implementation. If you do not have approved accommodations, but have a disability requiring academic accommodations or have questions about applying, please contact Lori Clapis, Coordinator of Accessibility Resources, at (860) 297-4025 or at Lori.Clapis@trincoll.edu. The Student Accessibility Resource Center is located in rooms A78 and A79 of the library.

The Writing Center
You are encouraged to use the Writing Center, staffed by specially trained Writing Associates, to improve your writing—no matter your skill level. I suggest taking your writing projects to the Writing Center several times during the process of composing. To reserve an appointment via the online scheduling system use: https://trincoll.mywconline.com/. The main Writing Center is in room 109 of the English House at 115 Vernon Street. For more information about hours and Writing Associates, please visit: http://writingcenter.trincoll.edu. Drop-ins are welcome.

The Library and the Watkinson
The Trinity College Library offers resources far greater than you might expect at a college of this size. Beyond a quite place to study, CTW and Interlibrary Loan provide access to books from libraries in across Connecticut and around the world. There are many digital resources available also, but I encourage everyone to use digital and physical research tools.
The Library is an especially hospitable place for researchers like you. The library’s research guides are a great place to start for any subject (http://courseguides.trincoll.edu). The research librarians are also kind and wonderful people who will help you with just about any assignment, from crafting historical questions to finding and evaluating research sources. Jeff Liszka (http://courseguides.trincoll.edu/jeff) is the librarian assigned to American Studies courses, but you can make appointments and visit with any of them.

The Watkinson Library maintains a renowned rare book, manuscript, and archival collection that has just about every kind of primary source material you can imagine. (http://www.trincoll.edu/LITC/Watkinson/Pages/default.aspx) The library is free and open to the public. If you choose to use the Watkinson, I recommend you go in person to speak with an archivist there, but the more specific your questions the more helpful they can be.

Health and Mental Health
The Health Center (TCHC), located in Wheaton Hall, offers health care for all Trinity students enrolled in at least 2 classes. The center is licensed by the state of Connecticut as an Outpatient Clinic and is a primary care office, similar to your home physician's office. Urgent and emergent care is referred off campus to local providers. They are affiliated with Connecticut Children's Medical Center and can coordinate subspecialists with home providers as needed. Phone: (860) 297-2018
You can find more information here: http://www.trincoll.edu/StudentLife/HealthWellness/health/Pages/default.aspx

The Trinity Counseling and Wellness Center provides a full range of counseling and psychological services to all students who desire assistance in coping with personal and emotional difficulties and social relationships. All services offered by the center are free, and all contact with members of the staff is privileged and confidential as provided by law. The center is located at 135 Allen Place, accessible from the Campus Safety parking lot in the gray and white building near the handicapped ramp at the back of the lot. Phone: (860) 297-2415
You can find more information on the Counseling and Wellness Center here: http://www.trincoll.edu/StudentLife/HealthWellness/counseling/Pages/default.aspx
Evaluation
Attendance and participation: 15%
Moodle Forum Posts: 10%
Wikipedia Contribution: 5%
Midterm: 20%
Short Writing Assignments: 25%
Final Paper: 25%

All assignments (except moodle posts and the final paper) are due as hardcopies and uploaded to the assignments sections of Moodle at the start of class on the day that they are due. Please make sure the assignment is paper-clipped or stapled, and that each page is numbered with your name on it. Any assignment handed in but not uploaded, or uploaded but not handed in, will be considered late.

Late assignments lose two-thirds of a letter grade per day. E.g., a B+ paper submitted the morning after it was due, will receive a B-. Papers more than 48 hours late will receive an F, and will not be accepted more than a week late. I will not grant any extensions.

Please also be aware of, and adhere to the course’s and the college’s academic honesty policies. See the syllabus and the Student Handbook for more details, but in short, do not plagiarize. If you use any idea that is not your own, cite it, even if you do not quote it directly. When in doubt, cite it.

In addition, you are expected to master the citation style that is common among historians. This style is known as Chicago Style and includes the use of footnotes. The full manual is available at most bookstores and the reference section at the library. A quick guide can be accessed on the course’s Moodle site or here: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

Primary Source Lab Days

Each section of the course, after the first, contains a “Lab Day.” On these days, I’ve assigned longer primary sources that will tie together themes of the unit as well as related writing assignments, which will stack over the course of the semester as we incorporate more skills. You should come to class prepared to discuss these sources and your writing because the majority of the day will be spent doing just that with your lab group (which I will assign at the beginning of the semester), in close consultation with the Professor and the Teaching Assistant. These sessions will hone your ability to evaluate and use evidence in the construction and critique of historical arguments, and allow you ample opportunity to connect with your classmates as you investigate the past together.
Course Texts

The following texts are required. They are available at the campus bookstore and on reserve at the library. In the interest of cost, you can also purchase these books used from local bookstores around the country on abebooks.com, though shipping time may vary so please plan ahead. Other readings will be made available on the course’s website or in a course reader.

Walker, David. *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World.*

Course Schedule [subject to change]

SECTION 1: GROWING PAINS

(W 9/5) Class 1: “Everything Was Strange”

(M 9/10) Class 2: A New Nation in a World of Change

(W 9/12) Class 3: Political Transformations

(M 9/17) Class 4: Economic Transformations

(W 9/19) Class 5: Spiritual Transformations

(M 9/24) Class 6: Literary Transformations

SECTION 2: REMEMBERING THE REVOLUTION

(W 9/26) Class 7: The Post-Revolutionary Generation
(M 10/1) Class 8: Lafayette Returns
- Auguste Levasseur, Lafayette in America in 1824 and 1825; or, Journal of a Voyage to the United States, John Godman trans. (selections)

(W 10/3) Class 9: America Codified
- John James Audubon, Birds of America (selections)
  o color images also available here: http://www.audubon.org/birds-of-america
- Noah Webster, An American Dictionary of the English Language (selections)

(M 10/8) Trinity Days – No Class

(W 10/10) Class 10: Remembering the Revolution (Lab Day)
- James Fennimore Cooper, The Spy (selections)
- John Neal, Seventy-Six (selections)

SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENT 1

SECTION 3: THE RISE OF JACKSONIAN “DEMOCRACY”

(M 10/15) Class 11: Populism for Whom?

(W 10/17) Class 12: Scraping By

(M 10/22) Class 13: Women at Home and Work (Lab Day)
- Lydia Maria Child, The American Frugal Housewife (selections)
  o Also available here: http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/13493
- Lowell Offering (selection)

SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENT 2

INTERSESSION – LIBRARY SEMINARS AND MIDTERM

(W 10/24) Class 14: Library Visit 1: Watkinson and Primary Sources

MEET IN THE WATKINSON LIBRARY
(M 10/29) Class 15: Library Visit 2: Scholarly Sources and Online Databases
  - Reading T.B.D
MEET IN THE LIBRARY – Phelan Classroom, Level A

(W 10/31) Class 16: IN-CLASS MIDTERM

SECTION 4: EMPIRE AND EXPANSION AND INDIAN REMOVAL

(M 11/5) Class 17: Jackson and Indian Removal

(W 11/7) Class 18: Territory and Expansion

(M 11/12) Class 19: Making Empire and Martial Manhood

(W 11/14) Class 20: Latin American Independence Movements and the Monroe Doctrine
Available here: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29465

(M 11/19) Class 21: Perspectives on Cherokee Removal (Lab Day)
  - *Cherokee Removal: A Brief History with Documents*, Theda Perdue ed. (selections)
SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENT 3

(W 11/21) Thanksgiving – No Class

SECTION 5: SLAVERY AND EARLY EMANCIPATION

(M 11/26) Class 22: Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner, and Fear of a Slave Uprising
  - “Denmark Vesey” on teachinghistory.org
    o Essay and four primary sources here: http://teachinghistory.org/history-content/beyond-the-textbook/24126
(W 11/28) Class 23: The Internal Slave Trade

(M 12/3) Class 24: Early Emancipation

(W 12/5) Class 25: David Walker’s Appeal and New Abolitionism (Lab Day)

SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENT 4

(R 12/6) American Studies Jan Cohn Lecture, (Required)
- Joshua Freeman, Title T.B.D.
- Distinguished Professor of Labor History, City University of New York
- 4:30 PM

(M 12/10) Class 26: Everything Was (Still) Strange
- Washington Irving, “Rip Van Winkle.” Available here:

FINAL PAPERS AND WIKIPEDIA CONTRIBUTION DUE
DECEMBER 18th at 12:00 PM