

HIST 300X: SINNERS AND SAINTS: EARLY AMERICAN RELIGIOUS CONTACTS

Dr. Jason Sellers

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Office: 218 Monroe Hall

Class times/locations: TTh 2-3:15, Monroe 111

Office Hours: MWF 2-3, TTh 3:30-4:30

Course description:

Many immigrants to North America's European colonies were religious dissenters possessed of competing strains of Christianity. They encountered Native American peoples with their own spiritual beliefs and practices, who engaged with Christianity in processes of conversion and nativism. Africans also introduced distinct religious elements as they retained traditional beliefs and created syncretic religions in the Americas. Tension surrounding these varying practices sometimes produced concerns about witchcraft, notably but not exclusively at Salem in 1692. This class will explore the interactions of early Americans of diverse religious backgrounds from the colonial era through the Second Great Awakening, considering both the ideological and material dimensions of these religious encounters.

Course objectives and outcomes:

Students in this course will acquire/develop:

- Understanding and appreciation of the discipline's diverse methods and processes.
- Ability to locate, read critically, and analyze primary sources and modern authorities.
- Ability to synthesize research findings.
- Comprehension of historical process.
- Ability to write with clarity about the past, and to communicate in a group setting.

This course counts towards the History major.

Readings:

Required texts:

Carla Gardina Pestana, *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Elizabeth Reis, *Damned Women: Sinners and Witches in Puritan New England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).

Jason R. Young, *Rituals of Resistance: African Atlantic Religion in Kongo and the Lowcountry South in the Era of Slavery* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2011).

Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *The Kingdom of Matthias: A Story of Sex and Salvation in 19th-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Steven W. Hackel, *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

*Additional required readings (academic articles and primary sources) listed on the schedule below will be accessible through the library website or posted on Canvas. Learning to both locate and critically read these sources is a critical element of this course.

Grading and Participation:

Participation*: 20%

Article summary assignment: 15%

Presentation/short paper: 15%

Papers: 50% (25% each)

*Attendance will be taken regularly, and you are expected to attend having completed the assigned reading for that day so that you can contribute to discussions. After the second absence, additional absences will result in the loss of 1/10 of your participation points. Although I will sometimes lecture briefly, the majority of the class will be discussion, and so effective participation will be an important and substantial part of your overall grade. If it becomes clear from discussions that students are not completing the readings, I reserve the right to substitute reading quizzes (graded P/F) in place of simple attendance. To avoid quizzes, please actively contribute to conversations with your questions and ideas. I realize some students tend to be quieter in class, and I encourage those of you who are to meet with me early in the term to discuss how we can facilitate your participation.

This class will not have additional extra credit assignments. However, you may repeat one written assignment for a higher grade. If you elect to do so, you will need to complete an entirely new assignment, submit the new assignment within one week of the original assignment's return, and *turn in the original work along with the new assignment* (the rewrite will not be graded unless it is accompanied by the original assignment with my written feedback); it is often helpful to meet with me to make sure you understand what concerns need to be addressed. This option is available only if you have turned in the original assignment by the due date.

Students who have missed more than 5 classes, and/or who have not submitted assignments receiving passing grades by Week 8, will be reported as *unsatisfactory* on mid-semester reports.

Assignments:

During the second half of the semester you will use campus resources to locate a scholarly article (or book chapter) related to that week's general theme. You will prepare a brief (2-3 pages) summary of the article's main points and its relation to our other readings for the week. These assignments will be assessed based on the quality of the piece you locate and its applicability to the week's topic, as well as your success in conveying its content and relating it to other class materials; feel free to discuss your selection with me. Please make an effort to share information from your article that is pertinent to our in-class discussions and assigned readings. Students will sign up for days to present, so find topics that interest you and days that work with your schedule. A more detailed description of this assignment will be posted in the "Files" section of Canvas.

Students will also work in a small group to prepare short presentations and individual 2-3 page papers covering a book on New England/Salem witchcraft and identifying primary sources illustrating the arguments presented, and leading a brief discussion on the work and related

primary source documents. Students will sign up for one of the works provided. Presentations (including the discussions) will be around 15-20 minutes long, and will take place in Week 5. This assignment is intended to help us explore the multidimensional literature on New England witchcraft, but if you would prefer not to work on witchcraft for this assignment, please meet with me to discuss alternatives. A more detailed description of this assignment will be posted in the "Files" section of Canvas.

You will also need to use assigned readings to complete two 5-7 page formal papers, one based on careful analysis of a primary source/s, the other synthesizing secondary sources to produce an analytical argument. Students should identify, research, and develop unique topics and arguments, though I am happy to discuss your ideas with you in office hours or in class. More detailed descriptions of expectations for these papers, including some suggestions to get you thinking, will be posted on Canvas. The first paper will be due Week 8, and the second during Finals.

If you think you may need an extension, you *must* request it in advance; I will not grant extensions after assignments are due. If you are having printer problems, or for some reason are unable to attend class, email the electronic file to me as a Word document before class time, and bring a paper copy when you are able. If the assignment is not in my possession in some form at the time it is due, it will be considered late. Late assignments will receive an automatic deduction of one-third of a letter grade, and an additional deduction every day thereafter; I will not accept assignments that are more than one week late.

While I am willing to discuss assignment grades with students, you will need to wait at least 24 hours and have carefully reviewed my comments on your work. You have one week after the return of graded assignments to speak with me; after one week, grades are final.

Requirements for written assignments

All assignments should adhere to the department's standard style: 1" margins; 12 pt. Times New Roman font; a title page including the paper title the author's name (centered, all caps), course number and title, instructor, and date; pages numbered consecutively through all materials, excluding title page; and a bibliography conforming to the *Chicago Manual of Style*. For more information on proper bibliographic format for your sources, consult Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, or an equivalent abridgement of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. [Note the most recent versions of the *Chicago Manual of Style* (16th) and Turabian (7th) include updated information for electronic citations. Be sure to use the newest editions.] A helpful UMW library guide to citations is available at <http://libguides.umw.edu/content.php?pid=245752&sid=2029722#6812498>

Students with Disabilities

The Office of Disability Resources has been designated by the University as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you receive services through the Office of Disability Resources and require accommodations for this class, make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Bring your accommodation letter with you to the appointment. I will hold any information you share with me in strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise. If you have not

contacted the Office of Disability Resources and need accommodations, I will be happy to help you contact it. The office will require appropriate documentation of disability. The office is located in 401 Lee Hall, and can be reached by phone at 540.654.1266 and email at ods@umw.edu.

Honor System

Please write and sign the University of Mary Washington honor pledge (“I hereby declare upon my word of honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this work”) on every written assignment. More information about the Honor System is available at <http://students.umw.edu/fredericksburghonorcouncil/> You are welcome to discuss your work on assignments with classmates and work together to refine your writing, but your ideas and language must be your own.

Class and Reading Schedule

* While I will sometimes lecture briefly, most of our time in class will consist of discussions, which depend on your ability to engage with the readings. To facilitate that engagement, please bring the readings (or at least your meticulous notes) to class so that you may refer to them as we discuss—it is fine to load them on your laptop, e-reader, tablet, etc.

Week 1: Background

T 1/15: Introductions, syllabus, discussion guidelines; discussion of religion and religious contacts

Th 1/17: Atlantic religions and Christian expansion

+Pestana, Intro, chs. 1-3

+Primaries: Luther’s Ninety-five theses [Canvas]; Council of Trent

<http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent.html>

Week 2: Cosmologies and religious practices

T 1/22: West Africa

+John Thornton, “African religions and Christianity in the Atlantic world,” in *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 235-262. [Canvas]

+Sandra E. Green, “Religion, History and the Supreme Gods of Africa: A Contribution to the Debate,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 26, no. 2 (May, 1996): 122-138.

+Robin Law, “Human Sacrifice in Pre-Colonial West Africa,” *African Affairs* 84, no. 334 (January, 1985): 53-87.

Th 1/24: Native America

+Ramón A. Gutiérrez, “The Pueblo Indian World in the Sixteenth Century,” in *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991), 3-36. [Canvas]

+Helen C. Rountree, “Medicine and Religion,” in *The Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 126-139. [Canvas]

+Primaries: creation stories [Canvas]

Week 3: Mohawks and Catholics in New France

T 1/29: Religious and material worlds

+Greer, Preface, chs. 1-4

+Primaries: Jesuit Relations <http://puffin.creighton.edu/jesuit/relations/>

Th 1/31: Conversions

+Greer, chs. 5-9

+Primaries: Jesuit Relations <http://puffin.creighton.edu/jesuit/relations/> and news article on Tekakwitha canonization

<http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2012/10/18/canonization-of-kateri-tekakwitha-draws-at-least-2000-mohawks-to-vatican-ceremony-140784>

*Note: 2013 Jefferson Lecture celebrating the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, “Nothing Miraculous, All Things Ethical: A President and his Bible,” a lecture by David Holmes, Walter G. Mason Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies, College of William and Mary. Thursday, January 31, 7:30 PM, Dodd Auditorium, George Washington Hall.

Week 4: Protestants and Indians in England’s colonies

T 2/5: Indians and conversion

+David J. Silverman, “Indians, Missionaries, and Religious Conversion: Creating Wampanoag Christianity in Seventeenth-Century Martha’s Vineyard,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (April, 2005): 141-174.

+Douglas L. Winiarski, “Native American Popular Religion in New England’s Old Colony, 1670-1770,” *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 15, no. 2 (Summer, 2005): 147-186.

+Erik R. Seeman, “Reading Indians’ Deathbed Scenes: Ethnohistorical and Representational Approaches,” *The Journal of American History* 88, no. 1 (June, 2001): 17-47.

+optional: Glenda Goodman, “‘But they differ from us in sound’: Indian Psalmody and the Soundscape of Colonialism, 1651-1675,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (October, 2012): 793-821.

Th 2/7: The diversity of English colonization

+Pestana, chs. 4-6

***Week 5: Dissent**

T 2/12: Puritan dissenters

+Jessie Cheney, “If the Words Be Well Understood, or, What Did John Cotton Mean When He Accused Anne Hutchinson of Adultery?” *Religion & Literature* 36, no. 3 (Autumn, 2004): 23-43.

+James F. Cooper, Jr., “Anne Hutchinson and the ‘Lay Rebellion’ against the Clergy,” *New England Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (September, 1988): 381-397.

*Th 2/14: Witchcraft historiography presentations and discussions

+Primaries: Transcripts at <http://etext.virginia.edu/salem/witchcraft/>

Week 6: Salem witchcraft

T 2/19: Selves and Satan

+Reis, Intro, chs. 1-2

Th 2/21: Women, men, and witchcraft

+Reis, chs. 3-5, Epilogue

Week 7: Witchcraft and magic

T 2/26: Beyond Salem

+Walter W. Woodward, "New England's Other Witch-Hunt: The Hartford Witch-Hunt of the 1660s and Changing Patterns in Witchcraft Prosecution," *OAH Magazine of History* 17, no. 4 (July, 2003): 16-20.

+Diana Paton, "Witchcraft, Poison, Law, and Atlantic Slavery," *William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 2 (April, 2012): 235-264.

Th 2/28: Africans and Native Americans

+John Thornton, "Cannibals, Witches, and Slave Traders in the Atlantic World," *William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (April, 2003): 273-294.

+Elaine Breslaw, "Tituba's Confession: The Multicultural Dimensions of the 1692 Salem Witch-Hunt," *Ethnohistory* 44, no. 3 (Summer, 1997): 535-556.

+Amanda Porterfield, "Witchcraft and the Colonization of Algonquian and Iroquois Cultures," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 2, no. 1 (Winter, 1992): 103-124.

Spring Break, 3/4-3/8

***Week 8: African Atlantic Christianity**

T 3/12: Africans and conversion

+Young, Introduction, chs. 1-2

Th 3/14: In practice

+Young, chs. 3-4, Conclusion, Epilogue

*Paper 1 due in class

Week 9: African religion in America

T 3/19: Christianity and Islam

+Sue Peabody, "'A Dangerous Zeal': Catholic Missions to Slaves in the French Antilles, 1635-1800," *French Historical Studies* 25, no. 1 (Winter, 2002): 53-90.

+Erik R. Seeman, "Reassessing the 'Sankofa Symbol' in New York's African Burial Ground," *William and Mary Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (January, 2010): 101-122.

+Lecture: Islam in colonial North America

Th 3/21: Magic and voodoo

+Yvonne Chireau, "Conjure and Christianity in the Nineteenth Century: Religious Elements in African American Magic," *Religion and American Culture* 7, no. 2 (Summer, 1997): 225-246.

+Ina J. Fandrich, "Yoruba Influences on Haitian Vodou and New Orleans Voodoo," *Journal of Black Studies* 37, no. 5 (May, 2007): 775-791.

+optional: Carolyn Morrow Long, "Marie Laveau: A Nineteenth-Century Voodoo Priestess," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 46, no. 3 (Summer, 2005): 262-292.

Week 10: Evangelical revival

T 3/26: Anglo-Americans and the Great Awakening

+Pestana, ch. 7

+Erik R. Seeman, "The Spiritual Labour of John Barnard: An Eighteenth-Century Artisan Constructs His Piety," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 5, no. 2 (Summer, 1995): 181-215.

+Lecture: Commerce and media in George Whitefield's revivalism

+Primaries: Benjamin Franklin on Whitefield; critics' cartoons [Canvas]

Th 3/28: Native Americans and the Great Awakening

+Linford D. Fisher, "I Believe They Are Papists!": Natives, Moravians, and the Politics of Conversion in Eighteenth-Century Connecticut," *The New England Quarterly* 81, no. 3 (September, 2008): 410-437.

+Jane T. Merritt, "Dreaming of the Savior's Blood: Moravians and the Indian Great Awakening in Pennsylvania," *William and Mary Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (October, 1997): 723-746.

+Rachel Wheeler, "Women and Christian Practice in a Mahican Village," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 13, no. 1 (Winter, 2003): 27-67.

+Primaries: Samson Occom portrait and autobiography [Canvas]

Week 11: Religions and empires in the 18th century

T 4/2: Mid-century

+Ann M. Little, "Cloistered Bodies: Convents in the Anglo-American Imagination in the British Conquest of Canada," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39, no. 2 (Winter, 2006): 187-200.

+Alfred A. Cave, "The Delaware Prophet Neolin: A Reappraisal," *Ethnohistory* 46, no. 2 (Spring, 1999): 265-290.

Th 4/4: Late-century

+Pestana, ch. 8, Conclusion

+A. Owen Aldridge, "Natural Religion and Deism in America before Ethan Allen and Thomas Paine," *William and Mary Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (October, 1997): 835-848.

+Primaries: Jefferson's Bible v. King James Bible, Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom [Canvas]

Week 12: Spanish missions and colonization

T 4/9: Cultures and colonization

+Lecture: New Spain's missions and conquests

+Hackel, Introduction, chs. 1-3

+Primaries: Father Junipero Serra [Canvas]

Th 4/11: Mission life

+Hackel, chs. 4-8

Week 13: Nineteenth-century developments

T 4/16: Secularization

+Hackel, ch. 9, Epilogue

+Primaries: mission websites, San Carlos Borromeo <http://www.carmelmission.org/> and San Juan Capistrano <http://missionsjc.com/>

Th 4/18: Mormonism

+Philip L. Barlowe, "Before Mormonism: Joseph Smith's Use of the Bible, 1820-1829," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 57, no. 4 (Winter, 1989): 739-771.

+Steven C. Harper, "Infallible Proofs, Both Human and Divine: The Persuasiveness of Mormonism for Early Converts," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 10, no. 1 (Winter, 2000): 99-118.

+Primaries: Book of Mormon <http://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm?lang=eng>

Week 14: Second Great Awakening

T 4/23: The players

+Johnson and Wilentz, Prologue, chs. 1-2

+Lecture: Second Great Awakening, Charles Finney, and anti-revivalists

Th 4/25: The Kingdom

+Johnson and Wilentz, chs. 3-4, Epilogue

*Final Exam Period: Thursday, May 2, 3:30-6pm—Final paper due by 6pm (I welcome earlier submissions)