

United States to 1865 Teaching Field Comprehensive Exam Reading List
Michael J. Jarvis (updated 10/14)

This list of books provides a basic grounding in early American and Antebellum U.S. history, circa 1500 to 1865. It is by no means comprehensive. Students are strongly encouraged to develop topical and temporal specialties within the expansive period that this field covers. A modest number of appropriate book substitutions (with my advanced permission) may also be made. Note that my conception of “early America” expands well beyond a colonial prehistory of what became the United States to encompass hemispheric, transnational, multicultural, and Atlantic approaches toward America’s past. Alan Taylor’s *American Colonies* and Donald Meinig’s *Atlantic America* provide good introductions to this more geographically expansive vision of early America prior to 1776. Students taking this exam field with me are strongly encouraged to TA for or audit U.S. survey I (HIS 160) or my Early America (HIS 162) and Democratic America (HIS 164) courses to help prepare.

Books

James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (Oxford, 1985)

Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967)

Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998)

Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge, Mass., 1974)

Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill, 1996)

Richard Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York, 1992)

Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990)

Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging A Nation, 1707-1837*(New Haven, 1992)

Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood* (New Haven, 1979)

Edward Countryman, *The American Revolution* (rev. ed., New York, 2003)

William Cronon, *Changes in the Land* (New York, 1983)

Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900B1900* (Cambridge, 1986)

Gregory Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815* (Baltimore, 1992)

Richard Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies* (Chapel Hill, 1972)

Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (Oxford, 1970)

J. H. Elliot, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492B1830* (New Haven, 2006)

John Mack Faragher, *Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie* (New Haven, 1986)

Sylvia Frey, *Water From the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age* (Princeton, 1988)

Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York, 1972)

Jack Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill, 1988)

Thomas Hietala, *Manifest Design: Anxious Aggrandizement in Late Jacksonian America* (Ithaca, rev. ed. 2003)

Michael Holt, *The Political Crisis of the 1850s* (New York, 1983)

James Horn, *Adapting to a New World: English Society in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake* (Chapel Hill, 1994)

Paul Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium* (New York, 1979)

Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic* (Chapel Hill, 1980)

Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Phillip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York, 1999)

Henry May, *The Enlightenment in America* (Oxford, 1976)

James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (Oxford, 1988)

Drew McCoy, *The Elusive Republic* (Chapel Hill, 1980)

John McCusker and Russell Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789* (Chapel Hill, 1985)

Forrest McDonald, *Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution* (Lawrence, 1985)

D. W. Meinig, *The Shaping of America, A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History, Volume 1: Atlantic America, 1492-1800* (New Haven, 1986)

Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York, 1975)

Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake and Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill, 1998)

Gary Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979) **NB NOT the abridged edition.**

Douglass North, *The Economic Growth of the United States, 1790-1860* (New York, 1961)

Daniel Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill, 1992)

David Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic* (Boston, rev. ed., 1990)

Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War* (Chapel Hill, 1979)

Darrett and Anita Rutman, *A Place in Time: Middlesex County, Virginia, 1650-1750* (New York, 1984)

David Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill, 1997)

Alan Taylor, *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York, 1995)

Alan Taylor, *American Colonies* (New York, 1999)

Peter Temin, *The Jacksonian Economy* (New York, 1969)

John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* (Cambridge, rev. ed., 1998)

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (New York, 1990)

Daniel Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen: Two Centuries of Work in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1630-1830* (Chapel Hill, 1994)

David Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven, 2009)

Sean Wilentz, *The Rise of American Democracy: Jefferson to Lincoln* (New York, 2005)

Gordon Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (Chapel Hill, 1969)
OR Forrest McDonald, *E Pluribus Unum: The Formation of the American Republic, 1776-1790* (Boston, 1965)

Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York, 1992)

Peter Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina* (New York, 1974)

Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (Oxford, 1982)

Articles

David Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History," in David Armitage and Michael Braddick, eds., *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (New York, 2002)

T.H. Breen, "'Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century" *Past and Present* CXIX (1988), 73-104 OR Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution* (Oxford, 2004)

Nicholas Canny, "The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America," *William and Mary Quarterly* XXX (1973), 575-598

David Eltis, "Free and Coerced Transatlantic Migrations: Some Comparisons," *American Historical Review* LXXXVIII (1983), 251-280

Alison Games, "Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities," *American Historical Review* CXI (2006), 741-757

Karen Kupperman, "The Puzzle of the American Climate in the Early Colonial Period," *American Historical Review*, LXXXVII (1982), 1262-1289

Jesse Lemische, "Jack Tar in the Streets," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd ser.,

XXV (1968), 371- 407

James Merrell, "The Indians' New World: The Catawba Experience," *William and Mary Quarterly* XLI (1984), 537-565

Jacob Price, "The Economic Function and the Growth of American Port Towns in the Eighteenth Century," *Perspectives in American History* VIII (1974), 121-186

Neal Salisbury, "The Indians' Old World: Native Americans and the Coming of Europeans," *William and Mary Quarterly* LIII (1996), 435-458

Patricia Seed, "Introduction," in Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), 1-15

Barbara Solow, "Introduction," in Solow, ed., *Slavery and the Rise of the Atlantic System* (Cambridge, 1991), 1-42

Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in John Mack Farragher, ed., *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner* (New York, 1994), 31-60

Alden Vaughn, "The Origins Debate: Slavery and Racism in Seventeenth-Century Virginia," in Vaughan, *Roots of American Racism: Essays on the Colonial Experience* (Oxford, 1995), 136-174

Primary Sources

The Declaration of Independence (1776) and U.S. Constitution (1787)

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845)

Olaudah Equiano, *Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789), ed. Vincent Carretta (New York, 1995)

George Fitzhugh, *Cannibals All!, Or Slaves Without Masters* (1856)

Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography* (1771 et. seq.)

Richard Hakluyt, "A Discourse Concerning Western Planting" (1584)

Alexander Hamilton, "Report on Manufactures" (1791)

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1860)

Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1787)

British Navigation Acts of 1651, 1660, and 1696

Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776)