

History 360W/460: America and the World I
T. Slaughter
Fall 2018, Monday, 9:00-11:40

Office hours: RR 369 T 12-1 and by appointment

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If this course has an imbedded narrative of which I am conscious, it is about the age of Europe's empires (c.1500-1865) and the rise of their global hegemony. It is about the causes, consequences, and spread of an international market economy as both the impulse (cause) of European political expansion and as the partner (sponsor) of imperialism. It is about the creation of the United States as a nation, with an emergent identity and global imperial ambitions. It is about how the world created the United States, how the U.S. affected the world, and how the push and pull of those two integrated processes account for the distribution of power, the prevalence and nature of war, and global identities and relationships in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. It is about the birth and growth of the modern, and of a global empire that always contained the seeds of its overextension and demise.

Readings marked by an asterisk (*) are required for discussion in class the week they are listed.

Course requirements

Students are required to write two review essays (covering the listed readings for one week, not just the required readings), one during the first half of the semester, which is due no later than 9:00 A.M. on the day of the class meeting in which the readings are discussed, and another during the second half of the semester, which is due on the same schedule. There will also be a final writing assignment, which is due on December 17 at 9:00 A.M.

I will assign no "incomplete" grades except in a case of extraordinary personal circumstances. Students will be graded on the quality of their written work and their active, knowledgeable participation in each week's discussion. I expect you to read the assigned texts and take an active, knowledgeable part in every class discussion. I expect you to attend every class —no exceptions for travel; class is your highest priority.

Except for the two weeks' readings addressed in your essays, you decide whether you want to read only the books and articles labeled with an asterisk.

The class is yours, not mine; talk to each other. No personal attacks; be kind, but feel free to disagree, preferably passionately. Take personal responsibility for leading, not dominating, discussion. Listen. Think. One of you every week will start the discussion, and it will not be someone I designate. Work together; work it out. Teach yourselves; that's what a humanist education means—that you are capable of teaching yourself new subjects of great complexity (maybe not brain surgery). You do not really need me here at all; well, maybe a little.

P.S. I do not care whether you like the books; that is beside the point. You need to come to terms with them, while avoiding caricature and simple-minded reductionism. Try starting

your analysis from a point of modesty; assume that the author is smarter than you are (not necessarily true) and knows vastly more about the subject than you do (highly likely). If the author makes an argument that seems to you wrong, try to imagine her/his rejoinder to your criticism. Then, and only then, engage in critical analysis. Assume also that you do not know how to write a book as ambitious as the ones assigned; if you ever do, we will all be very proud.

–Week 1 (September 10): Introduction

*Anderson, Kurt. *Fantasyland: How America Went Haywire: A 500-Year History*. NY, 2017, 3-113.

–Week 2 (September 17):

*Bailyn, Barnard. *The Barbarous Years: The Peopling of British North America: The Conflict of Civilizations, 1600-1675*. NY, 2012.

Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. NY, 1998.

–Week 3 (September 24):

*Colley, Linda. *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*. New Haven, 1992.

Elliott, J.H. *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830*. New Haven, 2006.

*Bender, Thomas. *A Nation Among Nations: America's Place in World History*. NY, 2006, ix-60.

–Week 4 (October 1):

*Brown, Kathleen M. *Foul Bodies: Cleanliness in Early America*. New Haven, 2009.

Davis, Natalie. *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives*. Cambridge, MA, 1995.

–Week 5 (October 8):

*Silver, Peter. *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America*. NY, 2008.

Demos, John. *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America*. NY, 1994.

–Week 6 (October 22):

*Breen, Timothy. *Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. New York, 2004.

Holton, Woody. *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia*. Chapel Hill, 1999.

*Bender, *A Nation Among Nations*, chapter 2.

–Week 7 (October 29):

*Marshall, P. J. *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India, and America c.1750-1783*. NY, 2005.

Rapport, Mike. *The Unruly City: Paris, London and New York in the Age of Revolution*. NY, 2017.

–Week 8 (November 5):

*Smith-Rosenberg, Carol. *This Violent Empire: The Birth of an American National Identity*. Chapel Hill, 2010.

Polasky, Janet. *Revolutions Without Borders: The Call to Liberty in the Atlantic World*. New Haven, 2015.

–Week 9 (November 12):

*Johnson, Paul. *The Birth of the Modern: World Society 1815-1830*. NY, 1991.

*Cannadine, David. *Victorious Century: The United Kingdom, 1800-1906*. NY, 2017, pages 1-149.

–Week 10 (November 19):

*Steven Hahn, *A Nation Without Borders: The United States and Its World in An Age of Civil Wars, 1830-1910* (NY, 2016).

*Cannadine, *Victorious Century*, pages 150-335.

–Week 11 (November 26):

*Beckert, Sven. *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*. NY, 2014.

Baptist, Edward E. *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*. NY, 2014.

Week 12 (December 3)

*Gura, Philip. *Man's Better Angels: Romantic Reformers and the Coming of the Civil War*. Cambridge, 2017.

Foner, Eric. *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War*. NY, 1970; 1995.

*Bender, *A Nation Among Nations*, chapter 3.

Week 13 (December 10):

*Fuller, Randall. *The Book That Changed America: How Darwin's Theory of Evolution Ignited A Nation*. NY, 2017.

Walls, Laura Dassow. *Thoreau: A Life*. Chicago, 2017.

*December 17: Writing assignment due 9:00 A.M. (email attachment Word docx).

Draft a syllabus for a course entitled *America and the World, ca. 1500-1865*. The class has twenty-eight meetings. You must include a descriptive title for each lecture; assign six books for the whole semester (selection not limited to books on this syllabus), and indicate when readings are to be completed. Include at least two writing assignments, which you describe in detail; and include the mid-term and final exams (the actual exam questions). Write out in full one of the lectures (2500 words) and provide an annotated outline of another lecture.

Or: Answer one of two exam questions (2000-2500 words) that I will send you in an email message at 9:00 A.M. on the morning of Monday, December 17. You have twenty-four hours to return your answer to me as an email attachment in Word (docx).

