



HISTORY 1110
**HISTORY OF THE
UNITED STATES
TO 1877**

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SOCIAL SCIENCE DEPT.
NEW YORK COLLEGE OF
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Section 6752: Mon. & Wed., 4:00 - 5:15 p.m.
Classroom: Namm 1022
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Office Hours: Wed. 9:00 - 9:45 AM or by
appointment
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Course Website:
<http://history1110sec6752.wordpress.com/>



Joseph Brant by Gilbert Stuart, London, 1786

I. Required Texts:

- Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People*, Volume I: To 1877, Sixth Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010.
- Frederick Douglass and David W. Blight, ed. *Narrative of the Life Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself, with Related Documents*, Second Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003.

II. Description

Beginning with a brief overview of the peoples of pre-contact North America and early encounters between Europeans and indigenous peoples and the “Columbian Exchange,” we will then examine the development of colonial society and culture, the growth of the institution of slavery, and the growing tensions between Britain and its colonies. We will move on to investigate the American Revolution, the creation of the Constitution, and the competing visions of the Federalists and Jeffersonians. The course then covers the tremendous economic growth of the young nation after the War of 1812, the rise of popular democracy in the 1820s through the 1840s, antebellum religious revivals and reform movements, and the increasing sectional tensions between North and South. We will culminate with thorough look at the Civil War and the Reconstruction period. In addition, we will read the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and use it explore how the practice of enslaving human beings could exist in a society that placed a high premium on individual liberty and freedom.

III. Course Goals

- At the end of this course, students will be familiar with the major themes in early American history outlined in the description above.
- Students will practice and refine their ability to analyze primary documents and secondary historical literature.
- Students will practice and refine their ability to compose original historical arguments in writing.

IV. Objectives, or What You Should Be Able To Do by the End of the Course

- Given a topic drawn from the description above, students will be able to effectively write about the causes, nature of, and consequences flowing from, historical change in the United States from the pre-contact era through Reconstruction.
- Given a relevant document, students will be able to identify and articulate the context from which that document is drawn, and elucidate its meaning and significance.
- Students will become historically aware of issues central to the origins and development of American patterns of thought, social and political organization, and culture.
- In general, students will improve their ability to think critically and express their ideas through written and oral communication.

V. What Is Expected of You?

- You are expected to know this syllabus and understand what it says. If you are unclear about anything that appears in this document, please ask me.
- You must attend regularly and be on time for class. Please notice that class participation represents 15 percent of your grade. You can't participate if you are not here. As you will see, the class sessions will not work without your informed participation. For a course that meets twice a week, City Tech allows three unexcused absences. If you are absent a fourth time, I will deduct ten points from your class participation grade, with an additional ten points deducted for each additional absence.
- You are expected to take notes in class, which will be of assistance as you prepare to write your paper and study for exams.
- Take notes on your readings. Purchase a spiral-bound or composition notebook for this course, and use it for these notes. When taking notes on the assigned readings, remember to try to take down only the most important elements of what you read. Learn to take notes in an outline format. When reading primary documents, summarize what you are reading in your own words. These notes will be useful when studying for the final exam.
- Bring the assigned books to every class; we will use them in every session.
- The required readings must be done before the class meeting. As in all history courses, there is a fair amount to be done. Try to break the assignments up over the course of the week rather than trying to do it all at once. Readings for Wednesday classes tend to be shorter since you have less time to do them.
- If you are posting a comment on the course website, you must do so before class on Monday. We will use your comments in the ensuing class decision.

VI. How Class Sessions Will Work

Each Monday class session will begin with a lecture by the instructor in which several key questions will be posed (including some that you have posted to the course website before class). A discussion of the textbook reading will be followed by a student-led conversation about the themes of that class. Most Wednesday classes will begin with a short reading quiz (unless otherwise noted in the syllabus) covering the whole chapter read that we read that week. The quiz will be comprised of multiple-choice questions, some true/false questions, and perhaps one or two

short answer questions. The quiz will take up the first ten minutes of class. You cannot make up the quiz because of absence or lateness unless you have a very good and documented reason (i.e., a medical emergency).

VII. Grading

Weekly Reading Quiz Average (lowest score dropped): 20%

Course Website Comments: 10%

Midterm: 15%

Paper Assignment: 20%

Class participation: 15%

Final: 20%

All elements of the course must be completed satisfactorily in order to pass the course.

VIII. Academic Honesty

All work you turn in for this class must be your own. Any deviation from this standard will result in a zero for the paper assignment, which make passing the course very difficult.

Plagiarism. According to the MLA style guide, plagiarism “is to give the impression you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from someone else.” [Joseph Gibaldi and Walter Achtert, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 3rd edition (New York: Modern Language Association of American, 1988), p. 21.] If you borrow an idea, a sentence, or more from a source, you must let the reader know what that source is. It's only fair to the original author.

If you do not know what plagiarism is, ask me, consult a work such as the MLA guide, or check out a website like this one: <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

The City Tech policy on academic integrity is as follows:

Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion.

Historians typically use the *Chicago Manual of Style* system to cite sources. You can find a primer on this style here: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

I am extremely sensitive to the issue of plagiarism and will automatically fail your paper if I find any signs of it. I'd prefer that you be overly cautious in footnoting rather than having to fail you. If you intentionally plagiarize, I may report you to the Dean of Students who may choose to begin proceedings to have you expelled from the college.

IX. Course Website Questions

Each Thursday, I will post a question or prompt about the following Monday's readings. Over the course of the semester, each student is required to post in the comment field on the course website a minimum of six times (this includes the three questions that everyone is required to answer on

Aug. 29, Oct. 5, and Oct. 31). The comments for a particular question will close right before the class meets on Monday. You will not be able to add to that comment thread after we've discussed the question in class. Posting more than six times is recommended but not required. But keep in mind that the website is a valuable space to test out your ideas and articulate your thoughts before you sit down to write a formal paper. IMPORTANT: Make sure you sign in to comment using your full name, otherwise I cannot give you credit!

Here are a few other important guidelines regarding website comments:

- *Expressing Your Thoughts in Your Own Words:* You will not receive credit for cutting and pasting something of the web and presenting it as your own thought (I may even seek disciplinary measures if anyone does this—plagiarism is a serious academic offense). In addition, you will not receive credit if you simply repeat what someone else has already posted. You certainly can react to what someone else has written, but you cannot merely agree or say the same thing worded differently. It is thus a good idea to post early before someone else comes up with a similar idea, as you will be graded on the originality of your contribution to the conversation.
- *Grading Criteria:* Your website comments are 10% of your total grade. They will be graded on the quality and originality of thought, the way that they engage the question, and the strength of the argument and evidence that they present. Grammar and spelling will not affect the grading of the website comments, but please do not use abbreviations.
- *Keep it Civil:* I hope that you will have some lively online discussions, and you should feel free to disagree with your classmates. But please do not attack anyone personally! Remember to be respectful of other people's ideas and feelings even if you disagree with them.
- *Tone:* Comments may be less formal than a paper (for example, spelling doesn't count here), but more formal than a text message or casual e-mail. Please don't use texting abbreviations or symbols.
- *Length:* Your posts should be a full paragraph of at least three or four sentences. You certainly may write more than that if you have more to say.
- *Relevance:* Comments that have little or no relevance to the question will not count toward your grade.
- *Images, Video Clips, and Links to External Documents:* In your comments, you may provide links to historical documents, images, or even video clips, but you need to have a good reason to do so. For example, if you post a clip from a Hollywood movie, you need to explain how and why that clip relates to the question that I asked. If the clip or link is not directly related to the question, your post will not count toward your grade. Media should be historically relevant. (Keep in mind that the era covered by the course did not have sound or moving picture recording, and photography only emerged in the final decades. Nonetheless, there were certainly plenty of other forms of art to reference. Representations of earlier eras in modern media should be handled very critically.)

The course website is located here: <http://history1110sec6752.wordpress.com/>

X. Essay Assignment

Your paper will be evaluated for both content (evidence and argument) and style of presentation. I am primarily looking for lucid arguments backed by specific evidence. I will read and comment on drafts, if provided to me in sufficient time. (Don't drop a paper on me three days before it is due!) I will provide a general evaluation, but not a detailed edit. Because I will read drafts, I do not permit rewrites. If you feel unsure about your ability to write a historical essay, get a draft done and submit it early.

Format and Style:

Papers are to be typewritten, in a twelve-point font, and have one-inch margins.

- Papers must bear a standard title page, and be stapled in the upper left hand corner (Your paper should have a meaningful title; don't just call it "History Essay").
- Please do not use plastic paper covers.
- Other than the title page, each page must be numbered.
- Footnotes and a bibliography are required. Check Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) or a similar guide for information on correct citation styles.
- Spelling counts. Use spell-check on Word (but keep in mind that it is sometimes wrong!). It is ideal to get someone to proofread the paper for you—you can miss mistakes after reading your drafts several times over.
- Keep It Simple: Make sure to avoid using words that you don't fully understand just because they are long and sound impressive. Most of the time, it is a good idea to keep sentences concise as the meaning of a sentence becomes confused or lost if it goes on too long (know what a "run-on sentence" is). And avoid using the passive voice if possible.

Papers lacking any of these elements will be marked down.

The Frederick Douglass Essay is due on December 5 and should be roughly five-to-seven pages in length.

This paper will be based on your reading of the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. I will give you a handout detailing this assignment within the first few weeks of the course. A topic paragraph is due on Wednesday, November 16.

XI. Me

My office is Namm 600.

Office Hours: 9:00 AM to 9:45 a.m. Wednesdays or by appointment. Please make an effort to see me in office hours, but if this is not possible, we can schedule an appointment.

Email: bo'malley@gc.cuny.edu

Since I am on campus just two days of the week, I will rely heavily on e-mail to stay in touch with you. I am teaching three courses at City Tech this semester, so I expect a high volume of correspondence. To help me manage this, please follow a few guidelines:

1. ALWAYS write your NAME and SECTION in the subject line (for example: Alice Johnson – 6752).
2. Please keep the correspondence formal and polite, avoiding texting abbreviations, slang, or inappropriate familiarity. You should treat your correspondence with me the same as you would with a potential employer. THINK BEFORE YOU WRITE ME. I encourage you to write me if you have a question about the course material, but please do not write me to ask for information readily available in this syllabus or other course documents.
3. Please sign your name at the bottom of every message. Many of you have e-mail addresses that do not have any reference to your names.
4. I would encourage you to obtain the e-mail addresses of classmates so that you can help each other to stay informed.

XI. Course Schedule

Monday, August 29: Course Introduction and Syllabus Review

Required Course Website Question: Name one issue, theme, or event in American history (up through the Civil War) that you hope to learn more about in this course. Explain why you find this issue/theme/event important, troublesome, or hard to understand.

Wednesday, August 31: First Contact: Native Peoples and Spanish Colonization

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 1: The Collision of Cultures, pp. 1-19.
NO READING QUIZ TODAY.

Monday, September 1: Labor Day – NO CLASS

Wednesday, September 3: The English, French, and Dutch in the New World

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 1: The Collision of Cultures, pp. 19-26.
Reading Quiz on Chapter 1

Monday, September 5: Early Chesapeake, New England, and Restoration Colonies

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 2: Transplantations and Borderlands, pp. 27-46.

Wednesday, September 7: Borderlands, Middle Grounds, and the Emerging Empire

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 2: Transplantations and Borderlands, pp. 46-58.
Reading Quiz on Chapter 2

Monday, September 12: The Societies and Economies of the Colonies

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 3: Society and Culture in Provincial America, pp. 59-75.

Wednesday, September 14: Social, Religious, and Intellectual Life in the Colonies

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 3: Society and Culture in Provincial America, pp. 75-89.
Reading Quiz on Chapter 3

Monday, September 19: Struggle for the Continent and the New British Imperialism

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 4: The Empire in Transition, pp. 90-101.

Wednesday, September 21: Stirring of Revolt and the Outbreak of War

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 4: The Empire in Transition, pp. 101-113.
Reading Quiz on Chapter 4

Monday, September 26: The American Revolution: The War and Its Impact

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 5: The American Revolution, pp. 114-131.

Wednesday, September 28: NO CLASS – Rosh Hashanah

Monday, October 3: The American Revolution: Creating State and National Governments

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 5: The American Revolution, pp. 131-140.
Reading Quiz on Chapter 5 (NOTE: THIS IS THE ONLY MONDAY READING QUIZ)

Wednesday, October 5: The Constitution and the New Republic

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 6: The Constitution and the New Republic, pp. 141-151.

Required Course Website Question: Pick a section of an article of the Constitution or one amendment from the Bill of Rights and explain in a few sentences, explain what you think the authors intended by it and say what it means to you.

Constitution: http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html

Bill of Rights: http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html

NO READING QUIZ TODAY

Monday, October 10: NO CLASS – Columbus Day

Wednesday, October 13: The Turbulent Politics of the 1790s

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 6: The Constitution and the New Republic, pp. 151-161.

Reading Quiz on Chapter 6

Monday, October 17: Jefferson’s Presidency and Mr. Madison’s War

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 7: The Jeffersonian Era, pp. 174-193. (Note: We’re reading the second half of the chapter first.)

Wednesday, October 19: Cultural Nationalism and Emerging Industrialism

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 7: The Jeffersonian Era, pp. 162-174. (Note: Go back and read the first part of the chapter for today.)

NO READING QUIZ TODAY – WE WILL HAVE A BRIEF REVIEW FOR THE EXAM.

Monday, October 24: Midterm Exam

Wednesday, October 26: Varieties of American Nationalism

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 8: Varieties of American Nationalism, pp. 194-212.

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, Chapters I-III (pp. 41-55 in assigned edition)

NO READING QUIZ TODAY

Monday, October 31: Jacksonian America: The Rise of Mass Politics and Indian Removal

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 9: Jacksonian America, pp. 213-225.

Required Course Website Question: Read the text of the Indian Removal Act below. What message does Congress send to the Indians with the language of the Act?

Indian Removal Act of 1830: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/removal.htm>

Wednesday, November 2: The Bank War and the Rise of the Second Party System

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 9: Jacksonian America, pp. 225-236.

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, Chapters IV-VIII (pp. 55-75 in assigned edition)

Reading Quiz on Chapters 8 and 9

Monday, November 7: Growth of a Nation: Population, Transportation, Communication, and Commerce

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 10: America’s Economic Revolution, pp. 237-254.

Wednesday, November 9: Society of the 1830s and 1840s

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 10: America’s Economic Revolution, pp. 254-265.

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, Chapters IX-X (pp. 75-106 in assigned edition)

Reading Quiz on Chapter 10

Monday, November 14: The Old South: The Cotton Economy and White Society

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 11: Cotton, Slavery, and the Old South, pp. 266-275.

Wednesday, November 16: The Old South: The “Peculiar Institution” and the Culture of Slavery

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 11: Cotton, Slavery, and the Old South, pp. 275-286.

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, Chapter XI & Appendix (pp. 106-125)

Topic Paragraph for Paper Due

NO READING QUIZ TODAY

Monday, November 21: Antebellum Culture

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 12: Antebellum Culture and Reform, pp. 287-302.

Wednesday, November 23: The Crusade Against Slavery

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 12: Antebellum Culture and Reform, pp. 302-309.

Reading Quiz on Chapter 12

Monday, November 28: Westward Migration and the Mexican War

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 13: The Impending Crisis, pp. 310-325.

Wednesday, November 30: Sectionalism and the Crises of the 1850s

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 13: The Impending Crisis, pp. 325-336.

Reading Quiz on Chapter 13

Monday, December 5: Civil War: Secession and Mobilization

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 14: The Civil War, pp. 337-350.

Paper Due

Wednesday, December 7: Civil War: Fighting the War

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 14: The Civil War, pp. 350-368.

Reading Quiz on Chapter 14

Monday, December 12: Reconstruction and the Old South

Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 15: Reconstruction and the Old South, pp. 369-400.

FINAL EXAM: TBA (between Dec. 15-21)