

**Florida Atlantic University**  
**Department of History**

AMH 4110: Colonial Encounters in America, 1500-1750  
3 Credit Hours  
Spring 2017

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Tuesday 4:00 - 6:50 p.m.  
Meeting Room: To Be Assigned

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Office Location: AL 156

### **Course Description**

Old Worlds collided and a New World began when European explorers and Native Americans came face to face. This is the story of how colonists settled and missionaries advanced, how some Indians welcomed them and others pushed back, and how fortunes grew and empires went to war. We also examine why pirates pillaged, witches were hanged, slaves revolted, and prophets began new religions. Using a variety of original records, this course traces the rise of the British, French, and Spanish empires and powerful Native American counterparts. Topics may include: exploration and settlement; Native American cultures and trade; the Caribbean; slavery and immigration; commerce and piracy; everyday life and the material world; religion and politics.

### **Goals for Student Learning**

Rather than assume that we already understand the American past, our guiding principle as historians will be that we *cannot* understand the past unless we approach it on its own terms. Instead of imposing our preconceptions of “colony” and “empire,” throughout this course we will ask ourselves what those political terms meant to an array of people—primarily migrants—and how those meanings and functions changed over time. In short, we will *historicize* 17th- and 18th-century American colonies and empires by looking for evidence of how they developed and changed in response to new circumstances. We will also historicize other key ideas and systems that may seem familiar but in fact developed historically, including ideas about ethnicity and race, as well as political economies such as household organization, slavery and freedom, and commercial development. By the end of the course, students will come to think of early

America's politics, ideologies, economies, and demography as interconnected historical processes that defy simple, static summarization.

Engaging with the course material in this way will provide students with opportunities to develop as historical thinkers. The overarching goal of this course is for students to use their growing knowledge of colonial American history to develop the best practices of historical thinking.

What is historical thinking?

1. To reconstruct the experiences and belief systems of people of the past by **putting ourselves into their shoes**, imagining ourselves in their strange world, and interpreting the surviving fragments of evidence
2. To understand the past as a place in which **things constantly changed** because of how real people made decisions in response to the historical contexts around them
3. To situate those people and their actions **within a variety of contexts** that informed their decisions, such as ideologies, religious beliefs, cultural assumptions, economic structures, demographic patterns, or material conditions
4. To **debate competing interpretations** of historical evidence in an effort to arrive at deeper understanding

Historians are empiricists; it is impossible to use these historical ways of thinking without having ready access to a basic knowledge of colonial America. In this course we will build up our knowledge base of names, dates, and other concrete information. Historians use “facts” to assess change over time by establishing chronologies and sequences, to see connections to relevant contexts, to flesh a substantive understanding of those contexts, and to evaluate the validity of other historians’ arguments about the past. In this course we will not learn information simply for the sake of knowing it—we are using it as a means toward thinking about the past as historians would. For this reason, students should think of “ready access” to information as both a personal knowledge of essential knowledge that we will learn in the course (e.g., that King Philip’s War occurred in New England and began in June 1675) and an ability to locate and use reference sources when appropriate (e.g. to verify the timing and sequence of battles that occurred during the King Philip’s War).

## Instructional Methods

In each week, our class meeting will be in a weaving together of **student discussions with lectures**. Although the **reading assignments** alone are not sufficient to reach our goals, they are essential prerequisites for practicing historical thinking in the classroom. Students will also apply principles of the historical discipline in short **analytical papers** submitted to Canvas at 4 p.m. the day before class as well as through **in-class writing assignments**.

The reading assignments generally consist of "**primary sources**," which means anything written by the people whom we are studying. Primary sources are the grist for historians' arguments. Our work as historians is empirical: our arguments must grow from the evidence contained in primary sources. Yet to understand these texts we must know something about the world of the past, based on the work of other historians. Because a primary text is a product of its historical contexts, a scholar writes and talks about it with reference to those demographic, political, social, cultural, and economic trends that surrounded it in its moment of creation. Students will practice doing this when reading, writing, and talking about the primary sources assigned in this course. Primary sources present the best opportunity for students to practice and demonstrate original historical thinking.

In the case of Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's book *Good Wives*, we will read **an entire monograph**. A monograph is a book that makes an argument about a single topic. A scholarly work such as this is the bread and butter of the historical profession; this is a common way that historians communicate new ideas and interpretations to one another. Usually the ideas are provisional—readers must be skeptical of the text and decide whether the author presents adequate evidence to defend the thesis. Each scholarly work presents just one point of view. Often a work is in conversation with other works, perhaps confirming and expanding their arguments, offering minor adjustments, or challenging them entirely. In this course, students should approach this reading assignment as a model for historical writing.

## Required Texts

Course books are available on reserve at the Library and for purchase at the bookstore. As an alternative, students may purchase books at online retailers such as <http://www.alibris.com> or <http://www.amazon.com>.

Readings will come from:

1. Paul G.E. Clemens, *The Colonial Era: A Documentary Reader* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2008) [ISBN 9781405156622](https://www.isbn-international.org/product/9781405156622)
2. Alan Taylor, *Colonial America: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford, 2012) [ISBN 9780199766231](https://www.isbn-international.org/product/9780199766231)

3. The Canvas course website at <https://canvas.fau.edu/>. Log in with the username and password associated with your e-mail account. **You must print out Canvas readings and bring them to class.**

## Student Commitments and Course Requirements

Students must make several commitments if they wish to succeed in this course by developing as historical thinkers.

1. **Attendance** is, of course, expected at every meeting of the class, and missing class will hurt your participation grade significantly. Students should contact the instructor ahead of time if they need to arrange an excused absence.

2. Each student **must read the assigned primary sources** with a curiosity that allows them to be surprised by the strangeness of the past rather than looking for evidence for preconceived notions that may be inaccurate.

Students must also approach reading assignments as **opportunities to practice critical thinking**, rather than simply as “material” that must be “covered.” A foolproof way to meet this commitment is to read with pencil in hand, taking brief notes on a separate sheet of paper, and marking important points in the text or perplexing problems. This will prepare students to arrive in class ready to discuss how we can interpret and understand those texts with reference to our growing knowledge of colonial America’s cultural, social, economic, and political developments.

*Note*

If a primary source appears on Canvas, you must print it out and bring it to class.

3. Students are responsible for **short analytical papers** on a rotating basis, according to his or her membership in the Red Group or the Blue Group. The course schedule assigns which group is responsible for providing a paper on any given day.

By 4 p.m. the day before our class, each member of the designated group is expected to upload to Canvas a short analytical paper on those primary sources (length: 250-400 words).

These analyses should apply knowledge of previous lectures and discussions, approach the source with a critical eye toward the circumstances of its production, and make an interpretive point by analyzing a pattern or theme. Bring a printed copy of your short reflection to class for personal reference during our discussion, making it a snap to get full participation points for the day.

4. Students are expected participate in **class discussions of historical problems** regularly, thoughtfully, and consistently. These typically occur at the beginning of class. Successful participation is more than simply speaking one's mind; participants should listen to their classmates' comments, consider them, and respond to them thoughtfully. Because historians

bring multiple points of view to the past, students should respect the opinions of others while simultaneously raising questions for them that aid our effort for deeper understanding.

5. Finally, each student will write a **midterm exam** and **final exam** in which they will have opportunities to exhibit historical thinking. The formats will be explained at least two weeks before the exams.

In order to successfully pass this course, a student must complete the midterm and final examinations, must turn in a majority of the written assignments of sufficient quality, and must receive a passing grade for participation and for short analytical papers.

## Course Policies

1. **Academic Integrity:** Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see the Code of Academic Integrity in the University Regulations:  
[http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001\\_Code\\_of\\_Academic\\_Integrity.pdf](http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf)

Some Academic Integrity policies specifically for this class:

- **Yes, you may study in groups outside of class**, whether in preparation for tests or to help each other understand a reading assignment. You are allowed to share material, ideas, and information in those cases; however, for any related *written* work that is to be submitted on an individual basis, I expect the words and ideas of your submission to be your own in its entirety.
- Feel free to refer to and rely on other course materials (i.e. assigned readings, lecture notes, and notes on discussions) to complete your written work, but **to avoid plagiarism adopt the following standard academic practices:**

“Any time that you **string together words** taken from a source either by direct quotation or close paraphrasing, you **must identify the source** (author, title, and page number).”

If you are using the **exact same words**, “**use quotation marks** for those words that are directly taken from that source. This includes all printed material or anything copied-and-pasted from an electronic resource.”

“When you are more broadly **paraphrasing, or using the idea of another person**, you should **identify** that person (e.g.: ‘As Jones says,’) along with the work and appropriate page number.” (Source: Dr. K. Jansen, History 317 Syllabus, Spring 2012)

- Referring to notes, a book, another student's paper, or the internet **during an exam** is considered cheating.
2. **Missing Work:** If you do not turn in assignment, it earns zero points. This is the single greatest cause of students failing this class.
  3. **Late Work:** A student may turn in a late paper with a penalty of **-10%** if received before the class meeting in which it will be discussed (for example, resulting in a C instead of a B) and an additional **-10%** per 24-hour period after that class ends.

Late Work is allowed without penalty only in two situations: a student has made prior arrangement with the instructor at least 24 hours in advance, or he/she can provide written proof of personal illness or a major emergency involving immediate family.

4. **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS)—in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 203 (954-236-1222); or in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8585)—and follow all SAS procedures. For more information, go to <http://fau.edu/sas/>
5. **Electronic Devices:** Personal electronic devices and **phones must be out of sight and placed in "silent" mode.** A student found to be in violation of this policy will lose Participation points for that day—up to all of the possible credit, resulting in 0 points—depending on how many times the student has already violated the policy.
6. **Laptops:** Students may use laptops for note-taking. However, if a student is observed using the laptop for any other purpose, including browsing the internet for any reason, that student will no longer hold the privilege.

*Remember:* If you would like to be sure you have received and correctly understood any information referred to in lecture, you should seek clarification from the instructor and/or consult the textbook. You should think of lectures as highlighting and illustrating key interpretive themes, and you should think of the textbook as the go-to reference for the details all of the material everything covered in this course.

7. **Recordings:** No student may record our class without prior permission.
8. The instructor reserves the right to change the plan of study and classroom policies if deemed to be pedagogically necessary.

## Assessment of Student Progress Toward Course Goals

Each student's success in the course will be assessed according to his or her mastery of course material and demonstrations of historical thinking in the classroom and outside of it.

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| 5 (of 6 possible) Short Analytical Papers (40 pts. / ea.) | 200 pts.   |
| Daily Participation for 13 of 14 meetings (16 pts. / ea.) | 208        |
| In-Class Assignments                                      | 140        |
| Midterm Exam  | 200        |
| Final Exam  | 252        |
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| Total possible  | 1,000 pts. |

In calculating the overall course grade, the point totals will be converted to letter grades by the following table:

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|----------------------------|----|----------------------------|----|
| 930 points and above ..... | A  | 770 – 799 pts. ....        | C+ |
| 900 – 929 pts.             | A- | 730 – 769 pts.             | C  |
| 870 – 899 pts. ....        | B+ | 700 – 729 pts. ....        | C- |
| 830 – 869 pts.             | B  | 650 – 699 pts.             | D  |
| 800 – 829 pts. ....        | B- | 649 points and below ..... | F  |

An **analytical paper** will earn 40 points if it applies all relevant knowledge of previous lectures and discussions (10 pts.), approaches the source with a critical eye toward all of the circumstances of its production (including the identity and agenda of its author) (10 pts.), makes an interpretive point by analyzing a pattern or theme (10 pts.), and uses all of the assigned source(s) (5 pts.) and is written in comprehensible style (5 pts.).

*Policy on late papers and word counts:* The penalty for late papers received between 4 p.m. and the start of the class meeting in which they will be discussed is **-10%**. Late papers received after the relevant class meeting are penalized another **-10%** per 24-hour period. Papers shorter than 250 words in length are penalized **-20%**.

In the classroom, a **daily participation** grade will be based mainly on a clear demonstration that a student is working toward the course goals described above, rather than merely speaking up in class. 16-pt. and 15-pt. participation means contributing to **class discussion** thoughtfully and enthusiastically, with respect for other students, and with clear evidence of having considered the readings at length. 14-pt. and 13-pt. participation consists of superficial contributions. In 12-pt. participation, a student is present and somewhat attentive but demonstrates no effort to contribute to discussion. 11-pt. participation and lower involves texting, using an electronic device, actively disturbing others, arriving late, or leaving in the middle of class. Absences earn zero points. Almost every week, **formal in-class assignments**, including **group work**, **mini-papers**, and **reading note checkups** contribute to the “in-class assignments” portion of the grade.

**Absences receive zero points.** The grading structure already incorporates **one free absence** without penalty. It is wise to save this for unforeseen events such as personal travel for family emergencies. Every absence thereafter for any reason will receive zero points, thus lowering your overall grade. The only exceptions are a student’s own medical emergency and officially sanctioned travel such as for intercollegiate sports. For one of these exceptions to be recognized, official documentation is always required.

## Course Schedule

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| Tue. 1/10 | Orientation— <b>Introduction to the Course</b>  |
|           | Lecture— <b>Why Strike Out? Columbus’s Mission</b>  |
|           | Discussion— <b>The Indians Meet Columbus</b><br>Document   <i>Diario</i> of Christopher Columbus  |
|           | Lecture— <b>Spain’s Expansion, the Riches of America, and English Hopes</b><br>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i> , 16-28 |

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| Tue. 1/17 | Discussion— <b>Hopes and Fears When Encountering the Powhatan Indians</b><br>Reading Due   Captain John Smith Describes Virginia Indian Society (Canvas)<br>Writing Due   Paper #1—Red Group |
|           | Lecture— <b>Servant Labor and the Economic Boom in Virginia</b><br>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i> , 51-65  |
|           | Discussion— <b>A Frontier Uprising and the Unstable World of Virginia</b><br>Documents   Frontier Settlers’ Demands<br>  The Governor’s Response   |
|           | Lecture— <b>Puritans’ Troubles in England</b>  |

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| Tue. 1/24 | Discussion— <b>Puritans’ High Hopes for New England</b><br>Reading Due   Reasons to Settle in New England, ca. 1628 (Canvas)<br>Writing Due   Paper #1—Blue Group |
|           | Lecture— <b>Hard-Scrabble New England Life</b><br>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i> , 66-72  |
|           | Discussion— <b>How Did New Englanders Enshrine Their Values?</b><br>Document   Articles of Agreement Among the First Settlers (pp. 75-77 in Clemens)              |
|           | Lecture— <b>Contested Authority: Ministers, Witches, and Prophets</b>   |

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| Tue. 1/31 | <p>Discussion—<b>A Prophet on Trial</b></p> <p>Reading Due   The Trial of Anne Hutchinson</p> <p>Writing Due   Paper #2—Red Group</p>        |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>War and Terror in New England</b></p> <p>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 73-76</p>                       |
|           | <p>Discussion—<b>Why Did New England’s Indians Go To War?</b></p> <p>Document   King Philip’s Grievances</p>                                 |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>Early French America: Indian Souls and Animal Pelts</b></p> <p>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 35-44</p> |

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| Tue. 2/7 | <p>Discussion—<b>French Strangers in Indian Country</b></p> <p>Reading Due   French Missionary Descriptions of Their Time Among the Indians (Canvas)</p> <p>Writing Due   Paper #2—Blue Group</p> |
|          | <p>Lecture—<b>Guns, Skins, and Indian Slavery in South Carolina and Florida</b></p> <p>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 81-89</p>  |
|          | <p>Discussion—<b>Florida’s Place Between Empires</b></p> <p>Document   The Borderlands Role of Florida</p>  |
|          | <p>Lecture—<b>New Netherland and the Dutch Commercial Empire</b></p> <p>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 91-92</p>   |

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| Tue. 2/14 | <p>Discussion—<b>Pluralism and Diversity in a Dutch American Town</b></p> <p>Reading Due   Letters of Dutch Ministers in New Amsterdam (Canvas)</p> <p>Writing Due   Paper #3—Red Group</p> |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>Conquest and Opportunity in New York and Pennsylvania</b></p> <p>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 92-96</p>  |
|           | <p>Discussion— <b>Pennsylvania Promise</b></p> <p>Document   William Penn’s Promotional Description of Native Americans (p. 71 in Clemens)</p>  |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>Piracy and Agriculture in the Caribbean</b></p> <p>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 77-81</p>  |

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| Tue. 2/21 | <p>Discussion—<b>Caribbean Life</b></p> <p>Reading Due   Firsthand Account of Life in the Caribbean (Canvas)</p> <p>Writing Due   Paper #3—Blue Group</p> |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>The Slave Trade and the Ubiquity of Slavery Throughout America</b></p> <p>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 102-103</p> |
|           | <p>Discussion—<b>How to Read Between the Lines of the Law</b></p> <p>Document   The Virginia Slave Code of 1705</p>                                       |
|           | <p>Exam Review</p>  |

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| Tue. 2/28 | <b>Midterm Exam</b> |
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| Tue. 3/7 | Spring Break—No Class Meeting |
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| Tue. 3/14 | <p>Discussion—<b>Relations Between Masters and Slaves</b></p> <p>Reading Due   Jamaica Act “For the Better Ordering of Slaves,” 1684<br/>  The Virginia Slave Code of 1705 (from previous class; on Canvas)</p> <p>Writing Due   Paper #4—Red Group</p> |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>African Americans: Everyday Life, Resistance, and Insurrection</b></p> <p>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 86</p>  |
|           | <p>Orientation—<b>How to use Fugitive Slave Advertisements to Find Biographies</b></p> <p>Document   Thomas Jefferson’s Advertisements to Recapture a Fugitive Slave</p>  |

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| Tue. 3/21 | <p>Discussion—<b>Unearthing African American Biographies</b></p> <p>Reading Due   Advertisements for the Recapture of Fugitive Slaves (Canvas)</p> <p>Writing Due   Paper #4—Blue Group</p> |
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|  | <p>Lecture—<b>Revolutionary Uprisings and the Consolidation of British America</b><br/>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 96-100</p> |
|  | <p>Lecture—<b>Empires at War: France, Spain, England, and Their Native Allies</b><br/>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 44-50</p>   |

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| Tue. 3/28 | <p>Discussion—<b>How to Expand an Empire</b><br/>Reading Due   English Memo Assessing the French Empire (pp. 124-126 in Clemens)<br/>Writing Due   Paper #5—Red Group</p> |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>Overseas Trade, the Inter-Colonial System, and the Lure of Piracy</b><br/>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 103-104</p>                 |
|           | <p>Discussion—<b>Doing Business in Colonial America</b><br/>Document   How a Merchant Conducted Business (pp. 120-123 in Clemens)</p>                                     |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>The New World of Buying: The Arrival of Consumer Goods</b></p>  |
|           | <p>Discussion—<b>How to View People’s Lives Through the Things They Owned</b><br/>Document   Probate Inventory—List of Goods in a Person’s House</p>                      |

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| Tue. 4/4 | <p>Discussion—<b>Rummaging Through Colonial Households</b><br/>Reading Due   The Contents of People’s Houses (pp. 149-154 in Clemens)<br/>Writing Due   Paper #5—Blue Group</p> |
|          | <p>Lecture—<b>Immigration, Ethnicity, and Diversity in British America</b><br/>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 100-101</p>                                |
|          | <p>Discussion—<b>The Weird Bestsellers of Colonial America</b><br/>Document   What Colonists Liked to Read (pp. 188-193 in Clemens)</p>   |
|          | <p>Lecture—<b>Religious Life and the Great Awakening</b><br/>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 104-105</p>  |

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| Tue. 4/11 | <p>Discussion—<b>Emotional Experiences in Religious Awakening</b></p> <p>Reading Due   Hannah Heaton’s Conversion Experience (Canvas)</p> <p>Writing Due   Paper #6—Red Group</p>   |
|           | <p>Discussion—<b>Religious Uprising’s Threat to Society</b></p> <p>Documents   Benjamin Franklin’s Opinion of George Whitefield (pp. 179-181 in Clemens)</p> <p>  James Davenport’s Bonfire of Books (pp. 181-182 in Clemens)</p> <p>  James Davenport Provokes the Wrath of the Established Clergy</p> |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>A Spiritual Challenge to Worldly Authority</b></p> <p>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 106-107</p>   |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>Family and Patriarchal Political Structure in Colonial America</b></p>  |

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| Tue. 4/18 | <p>Discussion—<b>How One Man Lived Out His Patriarchal Role</b></p> <p>Reading Due   The Life and Experience of a Wealthy Tobacco Grower (pp. 170-175 in Clemens)</p> <p>Writing Due   Paper #6—Blue Group</p> |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>Imperial Wars and How to Fight Them</b></p> <p>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 44-50, 108-112</p>  |
|           | <p>Discussion—<b>The Fog of War</b></p> <p>Documents   A Soldier’s Experience of Battle (pp. 200-202 in Clemens)</p> <p>  Massacre at Fort William Henry</p>   |
|           | <p>Lecture—<b>The Results of the Great Contest for North America</b></p> <p>Background Reading   Taylor, <i>Colonial America</i>, 112-115</p>  |

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| Date<br>TBD | <b>Final Exam</b> |
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