The University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of History
Semester II, 1990-91

History 465: The American Economy to the Civil War Era
Professor Lindstrom

Required Texts:
W. Elliot Brownlee, Dynamics of Ascent (Second Edition)
Thomas Doerflinger, A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise
and articles on reserve at the State Historical Society or Kinkos

Course Calendar

Jan. 23: Introduction to American Economic History
Jan. 25: Capitalism and Commerce

Jan. 28: The Virginia Colony
Jan. 30: The Tobacco Colonies in the 17th Century

Feb. 1: Massachusetts Bay in the 17th Century
Read: Brownlee, Dynamics of Ascent, pp. 3-58; and John McCusker
5-70.

Feb. 4: Agriculture in the 18th Century
Feb. 6: Colonial Technology and Manufacturing
Feb. 8: Colonial Commerce
Read: McCusker and Menard, The Economy of British North America,
pp. 295-308; and Stephen Innes, "Fulfilling John Smith’s Vision.
Work and Labor in Early America," in Innes, Work and Labor in
Early America, pp. 3-47; and Lorena S. Walsh, "Urban Amenities
and Rural Sufficiency: Living Standards and Consumer Behavior
in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1643-1777," Journal of Economic History

Feb. 11: Colonial Currency
Feb. 13: Unfree Labor in America: Servants and Slaves
Feb. 15: The Dynamics of Demography
Read: Doerflinger, A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise, pp. 1-164;
Brownlee, Dynamics of Ascent, pp. 57-88.

Feb. 18: Colonial Income and Wealth
Feb. 20: British Mercantilism and the Road to Revolution
Feb. 22: The Revolutionary War
Read: Alice Hanson Jones, Wealth of a Nation to Be, pp. 295-341;
Doerflinger, A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise, pp. 167-280; and
Brownlee, Dynamics of Ascent, pp. 89-119.
Feb. 25: The 1780s: The Costs and Benefits of Freedom
27: Exam

Mar. 1: The Constitution and the Federalist Era
Read: Doeringer, A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise, pp. 283-344.

Mar. 4: Land, Law and Economic Development
6: The Golden Age of Commerce, 1790-1815
8: The Transformation of the Countryside

Mar. 11: Modern Economic Growth
13: The Transportation Revolution: I
15: The Transportation Revolution: II

Mar. 18: The First Industrial Surge
20: The Textile Industry
22: The Changing World of Work

Apr. 3: Banking in the Antebellum Era
5: Jackson and the Bank War
Read: Brownlee, Dynamics Of Ascent, pp. 204-40.

Apr. 8: Government and the Antebellum Economy
10: Exam
12: Northern Agriculture I

Apr. 15: Northern Agriculture II
17: Slavery and the Southern Economy
19: Slavery and Southern Society

Apr. 22: The Coming of the Railroad
24: The Second Industrial Surge
26: The Iron Industry


Apr. 29: Population and Immigration
May 1: The Urban Boom
3: Origins of the Civil War


May 6: The Economic Impact of the Civil War I
8: The Economic Impact of the Civil War II
10: Growth and Inequality