

History 451
Fall, 2005
TuTh, 2115 Humanities
Sections: 301 - Th 1:20-2:10, 7121 H.C. White
 302 - Th 2:25-3:15, 2131 Humanities
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<http://history.wisc.edu/cohen/index.html>

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AMERICAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY TO THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

Otto von Bismarck once remarked that God has a special providence for drunkards, fools, and the United States. This course may help you determine if his point is valid. The following book is required reading and can be purchased at the University Bookstore:

Mark Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*

A packet of required materials entitled:

As the Spirit Listeth: A Reader for History 451

is available at the Humanities Copy Center, 1650 Humanities Building. All additional assignments come from this packet. The College Library has placed the books and packet on three-hour reserve.

Writing-Intensive Course

History 451 is a writing-intensive course designed to promote your expository skill as well as enhance your knowledge of colonial America. You will pen something almost every week, although most assignments will be quite brief.

Automatic Honors

History 451 confers Honors Credits automatically.

Written Assignments

The major written assignments consist of two (approximately) 5-page papers and a final examination. Papers must be typed and double-spaced; they are due at the beginning of class on the Tuesdays indicated. Please note that you have two options for each paper, due on different dates; you may choose your option but may not turn in two options for one paper. Minor assignments are due in the Thursday sections; they too must be typed, double-spaced. Pages 4-5 below list the paper topics, minor assignments, and due dates. I have placed examples of "A" papers on my webpage. You are responsible for knowing the material in the "style sheet" for written assignments, also located on my webpage.

Rewrite Policy

You may rewrite any assignment except the final exam. To begin, you must first talk with me about such details as the new due date and the kinds of changes to be made. You must inform me of your decision to rewrite by the end of the next class session after I return the original version. You will ordinarily receive one week to rewrite, but I am flexible about negotiating extensions for good cause. The old draft (plus any separate sheet of comments) *must* accompany the new version. Rewriting cannot lower your grade (nor can changing your mind about handing in a revised paper), but it does not by itself guarantee a higher one; you must *substantially rework the essay*, following my comments and initiating your own improvements too. I have placed an example of an original paper and its rewritten version on my webpage.

Date

Lectures and Assignments

Oct. 11 Liberty of Conscience in Rhode Island, Maryland and Pennsylvania

First Paper Due - Option 2

13 Piety and Magic

Reading: Thomas Curry, *The First Freedoms*, 1-28; J. William Frost, *A Perfect Freedom*, 10-28; “An Act Concerning Religion”; Roger Williams, “Letter to Governor John Endicott”; William Penn, “The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience,” 79-104

18 Transatlantic Revivalism

20 Revivalism: Godliness and Contention

Reading: Mark Noll, *America’s God*, 31-50; David Lovejoy, *Religious Enthusiasm in the New World*, 195-214; Jon Butler, *Becoming America*, 185-224; Gilbert Tennent, “The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry”; Charles Chauncy, *Enthusiasm Described and Caution’d Against*”

Minor assignment: #4

25 Evangelical Expansion in the South

27 New Divinities

Reading: Donald Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, 39-80; Dee Andrews, *The Methodists and Revolutionary America*, 221-44; Susan Juster, *Doomsayers*, 96-133; *Shawnee Run Baptist Church Minutes ...*, 2-9, 63-98 (original pagination)

Minor assignment: #5

Nov. 1 Religion and Revolution

3 The American Revolutionary Settlement: State Establishments

Reading: Mark Noll, *America’s God*, 53-157; Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*

Minor assignment: #6

8 The American Revolutionary Settlement: The National Order

10 Revivalism and Unitarianism in New England

Reading: Frank Lambert, *Founding Fathers ...* 207-35; Philip Hamburger, *Separation of Church and State*, 89-108; Edwin Gaustad, *Neither King nor Prelate*, 141-74

15 Democratic Revivalism

Second Paper Due - Option 1

Nov. 17 Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Revivalism in the North

Reading: Mark Noll, *America’s God*, 161-224; Nathan Hatch,

Date Lectures and Assignments

Democratization of American Christianity, 67-122; Jarena Lee, "Life and Religious Experience of Jarena Lee"

Nov. 22 Religion and Social Reform

Second Paper Due - Option 2

24 Thanksgiving Break - Thank a Semi-Separatist

29 Sectarianism and Romanticism

Dec. 1 Religious Communitarianism

Reading: Kenneth Winn, *Exiles in a Land of Liberty*, 152-81; Map of Proposed State of Deseret; Sarah Gordon, *The Mormon Question*, 19-54; *The Book of Mormon*, 1Ne. 13:1-42; *Doctrine and Covenants*, sect. 132; Brigham Young, "Human and Divine Government"

Minor Assignment: #7

6 Immigrant Faiths: Catholics, Lutherans, and Jews

8 Afro-American Religions

Reading: Jay Dolan, *In Search of American Catholicism*, 47-70; Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 265-67; Lyman Beecher, *Plea for the West*, 47-85; "Pastoral Letter of 1837"

Minor assignment: #8

13 Cross and Chain: The Churches and Slavery

15 The Apogee of Protestant America

Reading: Mark Noll, *America's God*, 367-445; Angelina Grimké, *Appeal to the Christian Women of the South*, 1-16; Thornton Stringfellow, "The Scriptural View of Slavery"

22 **Final Examination - 12:25, room TBA**

Paper Topics

In writing these essays, you should draw on the lectures, discussions and class readings (*especially the relevant primary sources*), making specific statements firmly rooted in the evidence, using quotations whenever applicable, and evaluating the arguments of all "authorities" (including me). You may of course draw on materials from outside the course but are not required to. You may choose another topic if the suggested ones bore, fatigue or disorient you, but you must consult with me **before** so proceeding.

PAPER 1:

Option 1 - **Due October 4.** Compare the religious experience of Catherine Tekakwitha with those of John Eliot's Algonquian converts.

Option 2 - **Due October 11.** Evaluate the power, prestige and authority of the Church of England in colonial British North America vis-à-vis that of other churches.

PAPER 2:

Option 1 - **Due November 11.** Analyze how the American Revolutionary Settlement of Religion defined the relationship between church and state.

Option 2 - **Due November 18.** Taking into account such phenomena as clerical authority, religious enthusiasm, the membership of African Americans, and/or the role of women, discuss the degree to which evangelicalism between c. 1740-1820 did (or did not) challenge social and ecclesiastical conventions.

Final Examination

Assess religion's congruence with American republicanism in the period from the Revolution to the Civil War and explain both the consonances and dissonances resulting from their relationship.

Minor Assignments

- #1 *Devising a Critique* - **due Sept. 8:** Download the "Style Sheet" from my web page and, in one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (the 51st word and its successors face a terrible fate), evaluate the reasons adduced in "Some common errors to avoid" for limiting the use of passive verbs (error 2).
- #2 *Comparing interpretations* - **due Sept. 15:** In one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (see above for implicit threat), summarize Greer's argument.
- #3 *Analyzing a source* - **due September 22:** Calculate the average number of times per year Virginian parishes celebrated communion and the average number of communicants per church. Then, in one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (need I say more?), present your results.
- #4 *Comparing Interpretations* - **due October 20:** In one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (or else), explain why Lovejoy sees revivalism as subversive whereas Butler does not.
- #5 *Interpreting data* - **due October 27:** In one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (to experience how much brevity is the soul of wit), diagnose the status of African Americans in the Shawnee Run Baptist Church in the first years of the nineteenth century. *Make two copies* of your summary, one *with* your name (for me) and the other *without* (for another student).
- #6 *Editing* - **due November 3:** Put your name on the anonymous analysis you receive and, in the margins, evaluate both its writing and its content. Pay specific attention to how well the individual analyzed the position of African Americans in the congregation.
- #7 *Developing a controlled speculation* - **due December 1:** Examine the map of the proposed state of Deseret and, both using your imagination and explaining the reasons for your speculation, suggest in a sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (you should know how to be brief by now) how federal officials in Washington might have reacted to seeing such a document.
- #8 *Comparing different per-* **due December 8:** In one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 49 words (perversity, not brevity, is the soul of wit) compare de Tocqueville's assessment of Catholics as citizens of the United States with Beecher's and explain the grounds of their disagreement.

A PROCLAMATION

REGARDING LATE PAPERS

Whereas it may come to pass that one or more individuals, whether through dilatoriness, dereliction, irresponsibility, or chutzpah, may seek respite and surcease from escritorial demands through procrastination, delay, and downright evasion;

And whereas this unhappy happenstance contributes mightily to malfeasance on the part of parties of the second part (i.e., students, the instructed, you) and irascibility on the part of us (i.e., me);

Be it therefore known, understood, apprehended, and comprehended:

That all assignments must reach us on or by the exact hour announced in class, and that failure to comply with this wholesome and most generous regulation shall result in the assignment forfeiting one half of a letter grade each day for which it is tardy (i.e., an "A" shall become an "AB"), "one day" being defined as a 24-hour period commencing at the announced hour on which the assignment is due; and that the aforementioned reduction in grade shall continue for each succeeding day of delay until either the assignment shall be remitted or its value shrunk unto nothingness. And let all acknowledge that the responsibility for our receiving papers deposited *surreptitio* (i.e., in my mailbox or under my door), whether timely or belated, resides with the aforementioned second-part parties (i.e., you again), hence onus for the miscarriage of such items falls upon the writer's head (i.e., until I clutch your scribbles to my breast, I assume you have not turned them in, all protestations to the contrary notwithstanding).

Be it nevertheless affirmed:

That the greater part of justice residing in mercy, it may behoove us, acting entirely through our gracious prerogative, to award an extension in meritorious cases, such sufferances being granted only upon consultation with us, in which case a negotiated due date shall be proclaimed; it being perfectly well understood that failure to observe this new deadline shall result in the immediate and irreversible failure of the assignment (i.e., an "F"), its value being accounted as a null set and less than that of a vile mote. And be it further noted that routine disruptions to routine (i.e., lack of sleep occasioned by pink badgers dancing on the ceiling) do not conduce to mercy, but that severe dislocations brought on by Acts of God (exceedingly traumatic events to the body and/or soul, such as having the earth swallow one up on the way to delivering the assignment) perpetrated either on oneself or on one's loving kindred, do.

And we wish to trumpet forth:

That our purpose in declaiming said proclamation, is not essentially to terminate the wanton flouting of our didactic intentions, but to encourage our beloved students to consult with us, and apprehend us of their difficulties aforehand (i.e., talk to me, baby), so that the cruel axe of the executioner fall not upon their Grade Point Average and smite it with a vengeance.

To which proclamation, we do affix our seal:

