

American History to 1865
Carr Building, Room 215
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10:00 am – 10:50 am

Professor Ashley Rose Young
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Office hours by appointment

Class Description: This course covers a broad range of topics starting with European exploration of the Atlantic World and ending with the Civil War and Reconstruction in the United States. It will highlight diverse groups of people including: politicians, children, slave families and their descendants, and immigrants. The class will approach the history of these people through a variety of historical materials such as: political documents, artwork, songs, photographs, and culinary traditions. This course is interdisciplinary at its core and requires a strong commitment on the part of the student to complete readings, engage in class discussion, and conduct primary research. Through these research projects, class discussions, and lectures, students will learn the historian's craft and the way in which historians approach evidence to explore America's complex, contradictory, and oft inspiring history.

This course will deepen students' understanding of some of the major factors at play across centuries of American history, while emphasizing the shifting nature of economy, politics, culture, and society through major events such as the American War of Independence and the Civil War. This course will pay special attention to the changing ways in which people consume: how they consume, what they consume, why they consume, and the consequences of their consumption. Consumption is not restricted to the process of eating food, but rather, is a process that speaks to the ways in which people digest politics, theater, and media in addition to material goods.

The central question: How does the exploration of consumption – in both the American historical context and the larger historiography of early American history – shift and shape our understanding of American history and the meaning of American citizenship and culture through the Civil War?

Throughout the course students will encounter themes that speak to the development of race consciousness and the culture of "whiteness." Students will learn to see how exclusion based on race is embedded in numerous aspects of American life across centuries of United States history. Students will also explore the rich theme of gender in American history, combing documents for subtle and overt traces of concepts such as "republican motherhood," "paternalism," and "manliness." Students will uncover the ways in which gender, race, and ethnicity are irrevocably intertwined, shaping the ways in which individuals have imagined, experienced, and remembered their lives. Students will also delve into economic, environmental, and cultural history, tracing the ways in which different modes of history can inform one's understanding on a broad spectrum of topics ranging from consumer habits to concepts of citizenship.

Class Goals:

- Acquire skills to read and analyze historical documents
- Learn to draw important information from first hand accounts, which offer and “on the ground” sense of what American life felt like, and which form the building blocks of historical inquiry
- Gain a foundational understanding of the people, places, and events that shaped modern American history. Students will think historically about why all these names and dates matter, having them at hand to weave into broader, interpretative arguments about the past.
- Engage in respectful discussion and construct thoughtful, evidence-based arguments based on course readings and lectures.
- Conduct primary research with visual materials found in the Perkins Library special collection and write a well organized, analytical essay

Reading:

The textbook for this course is available for purchase at the Regulator Bookstore on 9th Street. The textbook is also on reserve at Perkins library. Because there is simply not enough time for me to cover everything in lecture, this textbook will help you to organize the material, fill in gaps, and make connections. In the process, it will also help you do better on the exams.

- Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty: An American History*, third edition, vol. 1.

All other readings are available on Sakai and can be accessed under Course Documents (organized by lecture). The readings are to be completed before lecture meets.

Grading Distribution

Attendance and Class Participation	20%
Visual Culture Paper (<i>due class 6.3</i>)	20%
Midterm (<i>taken during class 8.2</i>)	25%
Final Exam	35%

“I have great expectations of you, but none higher than you may attain.”-Thomas Jefferson

1) Attendance and Class Participation (20%)

If a student expects to miss class, he or she must notify me via email.

Students are expected and encouraged to participate in class discussion. These discussions will draw upon evidence from weekly readings and larger themes, issues, and trends discussed in lecture.

I grade class participation on the following point system:

5 points (excellent, regular participation, always prepared, made perceptive points)

4 points (very good, regular participation, nearly always prepared, made good points)

3 points (regular participation—once weekly—nearly always prepared)

2 points (very little, but some, contribution to class discussions)

1 point (good class attendance but no—or almost no—participation in class discussions)

2) Visual Culture Paper (20%)

Often historians rely on written sources, but visual sources such as paintings, photographs, newspaper advertisements and broadsheets can provide historical insights that written materials cannot.

I will give you a prompt for the writing assignment two to three weeks prior to the assignment's due date. The paper will be roughly 3-5 pages in length. I expect you to use your most concise prose and conduct sophisticated analysis of the visual materials pulled from the Perkins Library Special Collection.

Format: Double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins.

Submission: Turn in your papers via dropbox on Sakai.

Citation: All work must be cited properly using Chicago Style citation footnotes and bibliography.

For citation information please refer to either of the following:

- *The Chicago Manual of Style*
- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*

For guidance on writing style please refer to:

- William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*
- Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*

Academic Integrity is of the utmost importance in this class. **Plagiarism is not tolerated.**

Please see the university's plagiarism policy here: <http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism/>

3) Midterm (25%)

Drawing from lectures, readings, and discussion sections, the midterm will include several short identifications *as well as a longer essay that requires you to identify and analyze themes from the first half of the course.*

The midterm will cover class lectures and readings from class 1.1-8.1

The midterm is an in-class exam (40 minutes in length) given during class period 8.2

4) Final (35%)

The final will draw from lectures, sections, and readings in both halves of the semester. It will include a series of short identifications as well as a longer essay that requires you to identify and analyze themes from the full span of the course.

The final is 3 hours in length

Accommodations:

If you have physical, psychological or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your course needs may be met. You may also wish to

consult the Coordinator of Services to Students with Disabilities, for suggestions and help with your particular needs at this University. All communication with me is confidential.

One Final Note: I strongly encourage students to visit me in my office for informal discussion of the class readings, clarification of course themes, and general interests in American history. Please feel free to email me to set up a time to meet.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Imperial Endeavors -- Conquest, Contact, and New World Culture

1.1 What are Primary Source Documents and How Do We Read Them?

Class Reading:

- Class syllabus
- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 1: A New World (pg. 8-19, 24-44)

1.2 Demarcating the Atlantic World

In what ways did European countries make claims on American territory?

How did these “ceremonies of possession” differ and how did they reflect the different European cultures they derived from?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - John Smith, 1616 Letter to Queen Anne of Great Britain
- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 2: Beginnings of English America (pg. 55-69)

1.3 Consequences of Contact

How did European and American life change as a result of the Columbian Exchange?

What were the environmental consequences of contact?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - John Worlidge, Description of Chocolate Preparation (1675)
 - Selection of recipes from early modern European cookbooks which include New World Foods
- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 2: Beginnings of English America (pg. 69-89)

Week 2: Axes of Belonging

2.1 A Culture of Exclusion: African Creoles in the Atlantic World

Were the experiences of African Creoles exceptional?

In what ways did African Creoles have more freedom than enslaved Africans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 3: Creating Anglo-America (pg. 101-108)
 - Chapter 4: Slavery, Freedom, and the Struggle for Empire (pg. 137-146)

2.2 Slavery, Women and Subordination in Colonial Regimes

What is gender?

What is race?

How are gender and race “products” of history?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*

- Chapter 4: Slavery, Freedom, and the Struggle for Empire (pg. 150-160)

2.3 Building Black Communities

Did African cultures survive the middle passage?

How does one characterize the culture of slave communities?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 4: Slavery, Freedom, and the Struggle for Empire (pg. 147-150)

Week 3: Community Networks, Atlantic Systems, and Global Trade

3.1 Atlantic Systems: Changing Tastes, European Markets and Colonial Plantations

How were European and American economy and society tied together?

In what ways did consumer preferences develop in tandem on both sides of the Atlantic?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 3: Creating Anglo-America (pg. 95-101, 108-112)

3.2 Webs of Connection: Production, Distribution and Consumption from Metropole to Backcountry

In whose hands does economic power lie?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 3: Creating Anglo-America (pg. 113-130)

3.3 Oceanic Economy: Contraband Trade, Privateering and Pirates

How powerful was contraband trade and who was buying illegal goods?

Did pirates have a culture and society unique to their economic and geographic conditions?

Class Reading:

- Gabriel Kuhn's, *Life Under the Jolly Roger* (2009)
 - "Fashion, Food, Fun, Lingo: Circumscribing the Pirate Subculture" (pg. 52-56)
 - "Villains of all Nations?: Piracy and (Trans)Nationality" (57-60)
 - "Anne Bonny, Mary Read and Co-opted Myth: Piracy and Gender" (71-73)
 - "Safe Havens, Onshore Settlements, Pirate Utopias: Pirates and the Land" (136-146)

Week 4: Borderlands and the Frontier:

How do we Conceptualize "the Frontier" in Colonial History?

4.1 Settler Dependence – "When Trade Was King"

How did early settlers imagine the American landscape?

Was the American landscape truly and untouched, "virgin land" with seemingly unlimited abundance?

Class Reading:

- William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England*
 - Chapter 3: "Seasons of Want and Plenty" (pg. 34-53)

4.2 Empire, Property and Power

What is the value of property socially, economically and culturally?

Who has rights to property?

Class Reading:

- None

4.3 Changes in the Land

How did the American landscape change as a result of agricultural, hunting and fishing practices?

How do these changes reflect early settlers' attitudes about nature and the progress of colonialism?

Class Reading:

- Erick Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800*
 - Part II: "Empires of Land"
 - Coda: "The Ohio Valley on the Eve of the Revolution" (pg. 176-186)

Week 5: Religious Revival, Political Consciousness, and Confrontation

5.1 The Second Great Awakening and the Political Power of the Church

Was the Great Awakening the birthplace of colonial resistance?

In what ways did the teachings of the church influence colonial political thought?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 4: Slavery, Freedom, and the Struggle for Empire (pg. 160-165)
 - Chapter 5: The American Revolution (pg. 185-194)

5.2 Reluctant Revolutionaries and Mobilization

What were the benefits of being a British colonial subject?

Why might colonists wish to retain their connections with Great Britain?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 6: The Revolution Within (pg. 226-247)

5.3 Militarization and the Transformation of Daily Life

What social pressures did colonists feel in joining the war effort? What was at stake for those who chose not to participate in favor of the revolutionaries' cause?

Class Reading:

- View: HBO's *John Adams* Part I: "Join or Die"
- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 5: The American Revolution (pg. 195-212)

Week 6: America in The Age of Revolutions

6.1 The War of Independence

What were radicals and Loyalists fighting over?

How did women perceive their involvement in the War of Independence?

Class Reading:

- View: HBO's *John Adams* Part II: "Independence"
- Primary Sources:
 - Abigail Adams, Letters from the Home Front
 - An Adolescent's Wartime Diary
 - Image: "First Blow for Liberty"
 - Sarah Osborn, "Remembering the Revolution"
 - Esther DeBerdt Reed, "Sentiments of an American Woman"
- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 6: The Revolution Within (pg. 221-225, 248-251)

6.2 Nation Building, the Democratizing Process and Efforts to Unify **These** United States

In what ways did Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton disagree about the future of the United States?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Alexander Hamilton, "To Edward Carrington" (May 1792)
 - Alexander Hamilton, "An American No. 1"
 - Thomas Jefferson, "The Anas" – excerpts
 - Thomas Jefferson, *First Inaugural Address*
 - James Madison, *Federalist* #10 (1787)
- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 7: Founding A Nation (all)

6.3 Revolution in France and Haiti, Migration and the Fragility of Freedom

Was the newly formed United States still part of the Atlantic World?

How does one draw connections between the American Revolution, the French Revolution and the Haitian Revolution?

Class Reading:

- None

Visual Cultural Paper Due

Week 7: Political Exclusion, Deadly Economy, and UnFreedom

7.1 (Un)belonging: The Struggle for American Citizenship and Cultural Belonging in Louisiana

In what ways does Lyle Saxon idealize New Orleans life and culture in *Fabulous New Orleans*?

Who is included and excluded from Lyle Saxon's narrative? Why might this be the case?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Lyle Saxon, *Fabulous New Orleans* (1928) -- excerpts
- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 8: Securing the Republic (pg. 295-310)

7.2 Reading Bodies, Marking Race, Buying Lives in the Antebellum South

In what ways was the slave auction house a place of production, distribution and consumption?

Are enslaved persons commodities?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*

- Chapter 8: Securing the Republic (pg. 311-324)

7.3 “The Sacred World of Black Slaves”

How does one define black culture in America?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 11: The Peculiar Institution (pg. 414-437)

Week 8: Forms of Resistance

8.1 The House of Bondage: Violence, Gender and Resistance in the Plantation Household

What constitutes resistance?

What did resistance mean in a slave society?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 11: The Peculiar Institution (pg. 438-447)

8.2 MIDTERM

Class Reading:

- **None**

8.3 Conceptualizing “Whiteness” in the Workplace

Who or what is “white?”

When and why does “whiteness” matter and to whom?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 10: Democracy in America (all)

Week 9. From Market Revolution to Industrial Revolution

9.1 Capitalism, Republicanism and Jacksonian America

Who was included in Jackson’s vision of American Democracy?

Was Jacksonian Democracy a progressive or nostalgic movement?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 9: The Market Revolution (pg. 331-340)

9.2 Creating “The Anti-Citizen”: Competition Over Jobs and Public Spaces in the Antebellum Era

Who were “anti-citizens” and how did American “citizens” perceive them?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 9: The Market Revolution (pg. 340-351)

9.3 Free Whites, Free Blacks, and Slaves in the Industrial Revolution

In what ways did the livelihood of freemen complicate notions of slavery in regions with a substantial population of free blacks?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 9: The Market Revolution (pg. 351-366)

Week 10. Competing Cultures: American Life in the Mid-Nineteenth Century

10.1 The Great Melting Pot: American Immigrant Culture and Assimilation

What processes of assimilation were employed to integrate immigrants into American society?
In what ways did immigrants retain connections to their home countries?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Lydia Maria Child, *The American Frugal Housewife* (1832)
 - Introduction
 - An American Lady, *The American Home Cook Book with Several Hundred Excellent Recipes* (1854)
 - Introduction

10.2 Middle Class Sentiments

What is “middle class” culture?

- Primary Sources:
 - Articles from the *Ladies' Garland and Family Wreath Embracing Tales, Sketches, Incidents, History Poetry, Music etc* (October 1847)

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 12: The Age of Reform (pg. 454-470)

10.3 Women's Voices: Abolitionists and Women's Rights

What were women fighting for and how did they enter their concerns into the current political debates of the nineteenth century?

- Primary Sources:
 - Nancy F. Cott et al, *Root of Bitterness: Documents of Social History of American Women*
 - Sarah Grimké on the Condition of Women in the United States (123-127)
 - Petition for a Ten-Hour Workday (156-160)
 - A Moral Reformer Makes Her Rounds (198-203)
 - A Daughter of Temperance Exhorts Her Sex (208-212)
 - An Appeal to the Women of the Nominally Free States (246-251)

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 12: The Age of Reform (pg. 471-485)

Week 11. An Unbounded World: Westward Expansion

11.1 Defining and Imagining Nature: Expressions of American Sublime in Art and Literature

In what ways do notions of American exceptionalism stem from America's colonial past?

In what ways did American audiences incorporate and consume notions of the sublime into their daily lives?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:

- Elizabeth Alexander, *American Sublime*
- Thomas Jefferson
 - “Notes on the State of Virginia” -- excerpts
 - “Instruction to Captain Lewis”
 - “Sixth Inaugural Address” -- excerpts
 - “News of Captain Lewis”
 - “Bones for the National Institute”
- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 13: A House Divided (pg. 493-505)

11.2 The Darker Side of Manifest Destiny: Indian Removal, Environmental Degradation and Relentless Expansion

What was the cost of Manifest Destiny? Who won and who lost?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Nancy F. Cott et al, *Root of Bitterness: Documents of Social History of American Women*
 - Cherokee Women Address Their Nation (177-178)
 - James Curry's Mother (239-242)
 - Narratives of Escaped Slaves (252-257)
 - Slave Writes her Former Mistress (260-261)
 - Iron Teeth Remembers the Cheyenne Removal (224-229)

11.3 The Legacy of the Norwest Ordinance: Life and Economy in the Western Territories

What defined life in the Western territories?

Did the West have a distinct culture from other regions in the United States?

Class Reading:

- None

Week 12. The Origins of Sectionalism

12.1 “The Western Star”: Henry Clay, The Compromise of 1820 and The Compromise of 1850

What was the role of slavery in westward expansion?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 13: A House Divided (pg. 506-511)

12.2 Popular Sovereignty and the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854

What is popular sovereignty and how does it fit into a democratic political system?

Class Reading:

- None

12.3 To Restore Republicanism: The Collapse of the Second Party System and the Rise of the Republican Party and the “Know Nothings”

What did the Republican Party stand for?

Who were the Know Nothings?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - The Know Nothing Platform
- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 13: A House Divided (pg. 513-528)

Week 13. The Civil War

13.1 The Secession Crisis

What were the seeds of strife that divided America? Were these conflicts economic, political, social, cultural or a combination thereof?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 13: A House Divided (pg. 528-531)
 - Chapter 14: A New Birth of Freedom: The Civil War (pg. 539-555)

13.2 Behind the Lines

What role did self-emancipating slaves play in Union military strategy?

In what ways did self-emancipating slaves advance blacks claims to full citizenship?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 14: A New Birth of Freedom: The Civil War (pg.556-571)

13.3 The War Within: Women and the War Effort

In what ways did both white and black women perceive the Civil War? What were the conflicting notions of America and American life that these women sought to retain and obtain?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Union Women in Wartime
 - Gertrude Clanton Thomas's Civil War Diary
 - A Freedwoman before the Southern Claims Commission
 - The Race Problem—An Autobiography
 - Condition of Women in Rural Alabama
- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 14: A New Birth of Freedom: The Civil War (pg. 572-580)

Week 14. Aftermath

14.1 Emancipation

How did newly freed individuals build a life of freedom?

In what ways did freedom shape, shift and redefine the household and its economy?

Class Reading:

- View Documentary: "Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867"
- Primary Sources:
 - Cornelia's Life on a Tennessee Farm
 - Rose Williams' Forced Marriage in Texas
 - Fannie Moore's Memories of a South Carolina Childhood
 - Two Letters from Enslaved Women
 - Narratives of Escaped Slaves

- Slave Writes her Former Mistress

14.2 Reframing Life, Liberty and Labor

How did individuals negotiate “free labor” in the years following the Civil War?

Where did labor conflicts arise and why?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - *The Picayune Creole Cook Book* (1901)
 - Introduction
- Mary Farmer-Kaiser, “The ‘Agony of Strife’ of Civil War Louisiana” in *Louisiana Women: Their Lives and Times*
- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 15: “What is Freedom”: Reconstruction (pg. 587-598)

14.3 The Road Forward?

What was the significance of economic independence to African Americans?

What liberties were African Americans able to secure during Reconstruction that emancipation alone did not guarantee?

Class Reading:

- *Give Me Liberty: An American History*
 - Chapter 15: “What is Freedom”: Reconstruction (pg. 600-622)