# History 2312

# **U.S. History: Beginnings to 1865**



(click image to enlarge)

You just show up here illegally and expect us to tell you about corn? J B Handelsman (1922-2007)

| Fall 2025 |

Tuesdays, 12:30-2:30 pm, plus 1 tutorial hour

Instructor: Assoc. Prof. Laurel Clark Shire

Email: Ishire@uwo.ca

Office Hours: TBA in Lawson 3255

This is a draft course outline and it is likely to change before class begins in Sept. 2025

# **Course Description**

This survey of American history from 1600 to the 1860s will focus on the most important trends and developments in the emergence of the American nation, including settlement, the egalitarian impulse, national expansion, and sectional conflict. As we explore some of the themes and events in North American history

from the colonial, revolutionary, and antebellum eras, we will be especially interested in how economic and social change, imperial and territorial expansion, and slavery together influenced early U.S. history. Our class discussions each week in lecture and tutorial will provide you with a wider context for the course readings and will focus on learning how to read critically and interpret primary historical sources.

All course material will be posted to OWL Brightspace: <a href="https://westernu.brightspace.com/">https://westernu.brightspace.com/</a>. If students need assistance with OWL Brightspace, they can seek support on the OWL Brightspace Help page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk online or by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800 for technical support. Current versions of all popular browsers (e.g., Safari, Chrome, Edge, Firefox) are supported with OWL Brightspace; what is most important is that you update your browser frequently to ensure it is current. All JavaScript and cookies should be enabled.

Antirequisite(s): History 2301E, History 2710F/G

**Learning Objectives:** By the end of this course successful students will be able to

- describe the development and change over time of social hierarchy in the North American colonies and the early United States in the early Republic and antebellum eras (gender, age, race, and class)
- describe major events and changes in North America from 1600 to 1865, especially those related to slavery, territorial expansion, social reform, and the rise of modern capitalism
- explain the interconnections and significance of the above events to individuals, groups, and to historical study
- identify, analyze, and interpret primary historical sources
- identify the argument as well as the relevant information in secondary scholarly articles and books
- write a properly cited short essay with a strong argument and persuasive evidence

### **Methods of Evaluation**

Attendance & Participation in class:	20%
Tutorial Writing Exercises (every other week):	60%
Final Exam:	20%
Extra Credit:	up to 4
If you attend a public lecture in History or American	opportunities
Studies (tba in class) you can earn up to 4 extra points on	
your participation average	

Attendance & Participation (20%): You are required to attend class. In this class, there is no replacement for your presence. What you will learn, together in class, is the culmination of all the work you do outside of class. If you skip class, don't expect to pass. Religious holidays, games (for athletes) and documented illness are excusable absences. If you are ill, do not come to class. If you have a cold, please wear a mask (as will I). If you must miss class, please e-mail me to let me know, and provide documentation to your academic advising office in your faculty in order to be excused. When you are absent, you are still expected to read, write and do homework. It is up to you to provide explanations and supporting documentation to Academic Advising in order to be excused, I will not remind you to provide them. Unexplained absences (or excessive tardiness) will negatively affect your participation grade. There are 12 lectures and 12 tutorials in this course, so each is worth 0.8333% of your final grade. Attendance is 25% of that mark, participation in lecture and tutorial discussions is the other 75%. Quality, not quantity, of participation matters, as does active listening (don't repeat what the person who just spoke said, but feel free to respond to it and build on it). Asking questions is a great way to participate. If you are anxious or shy, please discuss options for participation with Prof. Shire and your tutorial leader, we will be happy to accommodate you with some prior planning. Come to class prepared and ready to participate in discussion or activities, including pop quizzes, free writes, group work, or analyzing primary sources. All such in-class activities will be included in your participation mark. I strongly recommend that you take notes by hand, as research clearly shows that is most effective than typing them. If you have an accommodation to use a digital aid for note-taking, please inform the professor before the first class. You MUST bring all readings and homework with you to class on the due dates - failing to bring them to class will lower your grade.

**Weekly reading**: each week students should expect to read (smart skim) 60-100 pages; in some weeks some of those pages will be replaced by time spent watching an historical documentary or account. You spent 3 hours per week in class with me

and your tutorial leader, and you should expect to spend about 5 hours outside of class reading, watching, thinking, and writing for this course (perhaps more if you have learning challenges with reading and writing). We will teach you in the first few weeks of class how to read history like a historian so that you retain information, focus on the main arguments, and don't fall asleep! You should plan to complete the reading/watching each week BEFORE LECTURE ON TUESDAY.

**Tutorial Writing Exercises (60%)**: every other week you will have a short writing assignment to complete during your 50-minute tutorial. These will help keep you on track with course reading/watching assignments. Their purpose is to help you integrate new information into your narrative of US history each week, so that you will better retain and recall that information on the final exam. You can miss **ONE** of these writing assignments without penalty *if you are ill or have an emergency (other intutorial writing assignments will be re-weighted)*. After that, your grade will be reduced by 10% for each one that you miss. Make-up opportunities will not be provided.

**Final Exam (20%)**: You will take a final exam in this course. The exam will be openbook and open-note, but you will not have access to the internet or any electronic device (so you'll have to bring print copies of anything you want during the exam). The exam will ask you to analyze and put in historical context a series of primary sources. You will not be given an exam study guide, but the weekly lectures and biweekly tutorial writing exercises will make it clear what kinds of information you might be asked to provide in the final assessment. Make-up tests, midterms, and exams can only be approved by Academic Advising. Please see <a href="https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\_module\_information/policies.html">https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\_module\_information/policies.html</a> for department procedures and requirements involving make-up tests and exams.

#### **Course Materials**

Almost all of the readings for this course are available on OWL Brightspace as PDFs - the only exception is the novel by Larsen, *The White*, which you should purchase or get from a library. Most of the videos assigned are available through Kanopy, a database online via Weldon Library. If you'd like to buy these books and read them on paper, feel free to do so through your favourite online bookseller or e-book vendor.

#### **BUY or BORROW THIS BOOK:**

Deborah Larsen, The White (New York: Vintage Books), 2002. \$21.72

OPTIONAL - pdfs will be online, but if you prefer to read paper then buy or borrow these books:

James Loewen, Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong (New York: The New Press ) 2018 edition.

### **WATCH:**

"Traces of the Trade," Directed by Alla Kovgan, Katrina Browne, Jude Ray (California Newsreel Productions, 2008) 86 minutes, free on Kanopy

Part 2, "Independence," John Adams (HBO, 2008) – you can find this on Crave, Amazon Prime, and YouTube for a small fee. You can also watch an annotated version with an 18<sup>th</sup> century historian here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Zm9vo4pEsw

Kevin Willmott, Confederate States of America (2004)

OPTIONAL: I don't use a textbook, for all the reasons Loewen argues in his book. However, if you have never taken a US history course and you feel you would like a survey textbook to read alongside lectures and other readings in this course, this is a good one that is also fairly new and up to date:

Jill Lepore, These Truths: A History of the United States (New York: W. W. Norton), 2018

# Course Schedule and Readings Schedule of Weekly Readings and Assignments

## READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS BELOW ARE DUE ON THAT DATE, BEFORE CLASS

I reserve the right to add assignments or readings or to require less reading in any given week.

\*denotes a reading available on OWL Brightspace

\*\*\*The past is a violent, racist, sexist place. In the reading for this course you will encounter disturbing stories of violence, including sexual and genocidal forms of violence, as well as racist and sexist language. I do not censor that language when it appears in primary sources or documents because it is there to remind us of the unvarnished history we must confront. But I DO NOT approve of the use of such language today and will not tolerate the use of racial epithets or other slurs in class.

Be prepared to encounter these things in history, stop reading/watching whenever you need to, and take care of yourself.

# Welcome and Introductions (hour 1) Expectations and goals how to read for this course (smart skimming) First Encounters (hour 2) Together in class we will learn to smart skim with these chapters: "Foreword" (16 pp) from Kathleen Duval, Native Nations: A Millennium in North America (NY: Penguin Random House, 2024), 9 Sept XV-XXX For discussion in your tutorials this week, smart skim: • Introduction, "Something Has Gone Very Wrong" (1-10) Ch. 3 "The Truth About the First Thanksgiving" (70-92) from James L. Loewen, "Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 2018 edition - [LMTTM]. Where would you put the section numbers in each? What is the overall thesis and subarguments? What kinds of evidence is offered? **Colonial Social Order and Pilgrim Myths** Read: \*K. Brown, "The Anglo-Algonquian Gender Frontier" (26-43) from Nancy Shoemaker, Editor, Negotiators of Change: Historical Perspectives on Native American Women (New York: Routledge, 2005). \*"First Fortunes" (45-60) - from Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer 16 Sept Frank, Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery, (New York: Ballantine Books), 2006 \*Part I Intro (1-6), and Chapter 3 "Ossomocomuck and Roanoke Island" (75-123) from Native Nations: A Millennium in North America by Kathleen Duval (Random House, 2024). \*In tutorial writing exercise this week

# Racial Slavery and the Myth of Southern Exceptionalism Read: \*Ch. 3 "A Connecticut Slave" (61-76) from Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer Frank, Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery, (New York: Ballantine Books), 2006 Primary sources: \*"excerpts from the Venture Smith narrative"; C. W. Janson excerpts from <u>The Stranger in America</u>"" Watch: "Traces of the Trade" (Directed by Alla Kovgan, Katrina Browne, 23 Sept Jude Ray), California Newsreel Productions, 86 minutes, free on Kanopy via Weldon Library databases Reading Guide Questions: Name three ways that Venture Smith's life was typical or atypical of the lives of slaves brought to North America in the 18th century. How does his narrative illustrate some of the aspects of the early slave trade or the lives of slaves that you learned in lecture or read about Complicity and Lies My Teacher Told Me? Write down your examples and bring them to tutorial so that we can talk about them. In tutorial: 7 Qs re VS narrative No Class: attend an event on campus for the National Day of Truth 30 Sept and Reconciliation for extra credit in your participation grade

# What did those Europeans really believe? Race, Religion and **Capitalism in the Early Atlantic** 1600s: \*Introduction (pages 1-12), K. Gerbner, Christian Slavery: Conversion and Race in the Protestant Atlantic World (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018) available online via Weldon Library's e-book central <a href="https://ocul-">https://ocul-</a> uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL UWO/r0c2m8/alma9 91044437710005163 7 October 1700s: \*excerpts from Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography PDF on OWL 1800s: \* Curtis D. Johnson, "Sectarian Nation: Religious Diversity in Early America" OAH Magazine of History, 2008, Vol. 22, pp 14-18. https://oculuwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL UWO/t54l2v/cdi pr oquest journals 213732772 \*In tutorial writing exercise this week **Captivity Narratives: Race and Gender at the Crossroads of Slavery** and Settler Colonialism Deborah Larsen, The White - this novel is a kind of historical fiction - it is based on the true story of Mary Jemison (go read the Wikipedia page). Jemison's story was written down by a white man who 14 October interviewed her at the end of her life and published as a captivity narrative. Deborah Larsen, an American poet, rewrote her story as a novel in 2002. The original narrative is available here: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/6960/6960-h/6960-h.htm **Independence! and the Early Republic** Read these Primary sources: \*The Declaration of Independence 21 October \*3 Petitions from Enslaved men in New England \* The Farmington Resolution \*Chalmers "Plain Truth" \*Adams family letters

	WATCH: Part 2, "Independence," <i>John Adams</i> (HBO, 2008) - you can find this on Crave, Amazon Prime, and YouTube for a small fee. You can also watch an annotated version with an 18 <sup>th</sup> century historian here: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Zm9vo4pEsw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Zm9vo4pEsw</a> *In tutorial writing exercise this week
28 October	The Rise of Capitalism & "Jacksonian Democracy"  Read: *Introduction "What do we mean by a Market Revolution in America?"  pp. 1-10 and "Interlude: Panic! 1837" (pp. 92-97) from The Market  Revolution in America: Liberty, Ambition, and the Eclipse of the  Common Good (Cambridge University Press; 2009) by John L. Larsen  available as an e-book via Western libraries <a href="https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/r0c2m8/alma-991045024335505163">https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/r0c2m8/alma-991045024335505163</a> Ch. 7 "The Land of Opportunity" of Lies My Teacher Told Me  Primary source: *Dilemmas from the Market Revolution: Journeymen Shoemakers and Mill workers
5 November	Fall Reading Week Nov 3-9
11 November	Deportation, Expulsion, and Extermination: Settler Colonialism and "Indian Removal"  ***This week's readings include disturbing stories of racist violence, genocide, and racially coded language such as "Indian" and other slurs because such language was used in the time period we are studyingbe prepared, stop reading if you need to, and do not use racial slurs in class (refer to people by the name they used for themselves, such as Cherokee, or as Indigenous). I do not censor racist words because it is important to understand just how racist the past was, not because I approve of their use today, I do not.  READ:  *Claudio Saunt, Intro (xi-xix) and Chapter 1 (3-26) from Unworthy Republic: The Dispossession of Native Americans and the Road to Indian Territory (New York: W. W. Norton, 2020) (digitization requested 6/11) - on laptop

\*Patrick Wolfe (2006) "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8 (4): 387-409. Available online via Western Libraries <a href="https://ocul-">https://ocul-</a>

uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL UWO/t54l2v/cdi proquest miscellaneous 61662755

Primary sources: \*"Seminole Oral History" and "The Great Nation of Futurity"

### For tutorial:

\*Ch. 4, "Red Eyes" of Lies My Teacher Told Me

### \*In tutorial writing exercise this week

### **The Antebellum South**

\*\*\*This week's readings contain explicitly racist language, including the n-word, because such language was used in the time period we are studying...be prepared, stop reading if you need to, and do not use that word in class (you can refer to it as "the n-word," or refer more broadly to racist epithets). I do not censor these words because it is important to understand just how racist the past was, not because I approve of their use today, I do not. For more information about the history of the n-word and its meaning today watch Liz Pryor's Ted Talk or read her article, posted on Brightspace.

#### Read:

#### 18 November

\*Ch. 5 (135-171) "Gone with the Wind: The Invisibility of Racism in American History Textbooks," from Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me* 

\*Adrienne Davis, "Don't Let Nobody Bother Yo' Principle: The Sexual Economy of Slavery" OR Sublettes, "The Capitalized Womb"

### Primary sources:

\*George Fitzhugh and Frederick Douglass documents on OWL
\*Read/watch/engage with "You Be the Judge: *Missouri* v. *Celia*"
<a href="https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/slavery/experience/legal/feature2.html">https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/slavery/experience/legal/feature2.html</a>

For discussion: How was slavery related to the economy and to geographic expansion and Indigenous dispossession? How was racial

	slavery gendered and reliant upon the sexual and reproductive labour of enslaved women?
25 November	*Mary Hershberger. 1999. "Mobilizing Women, Anticipating Abolition: The Struggle against Indian Removal in the 1830s." The Journal of American History 86 (1): 15-40 available via Western Libraries <a href="https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/t54l2v/cdi_ist_ex_primary_ark_67375_HXZ_NF3Z48VK_K">https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/t54l2v/cdi_ist_ex_primary_ark_67375_HXZ_NF3Z48VK_K</a> *Dorsey, "Prologue" and "Gender and Reformers in the New Republic" from Reforming Men and Women digitization request 6/11  Ch. 6, "John Brown and Abraham Lincoln: The Invisibility of Antiracism in American History Textbooks" (172-203) from Loewen, LMTTM.
	Primary source:  *The Declaration of Sentiments (1848)  *In tutorial writing exercise this week
2 December	Manifest Destiny and the Divide over the Expansion of Slavery Read:  *Rothman, "Slavery and National Expansion"  * Ch. 11 "Progress is Our Most Important Product," LMTTM (280-300)  *Elizabeth Varon, Chapter 5 "Oh For a Man Who Is a Man: Debating Slavery's Expansion," from Disunion!: The Coming of the American Civil War, 1789-1859 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 165-198  Primary source: John O'Sullivan (aka Cora Montgomery https://news.utexas.edu/2001/02/01/woman-who-coined-phrase- manifest-destiny-described-in-new-tsha-book/), "Annexation," The United States Magazine and Democratic Review, Volume 17 (New York: 1845), 5-6, 9-10. https://www.americanyawp.com/reader/manifest-
9 December	destiny/john-osullivan-declares-americas-manifest-destiny-1845/ <b>The Civil War</b> Read:

\*Prologue "The Confederate Project" (1-10) and Chapter 1 "Who Are the People?" (11-37) from Stephanie McCurry. 2010. Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press available cia Western Libraries <a href="https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL\_UWO/r0c2m8/alma991044350489205163">https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL\_UWO/r0c2m8/alma991044350489205163</a>

\*Grace Elizabeth Hale. 2013. "The Lost Cause and the Meaning of History." *OAH Magazine of History* 27 (1): 13-17. Available online via Western Libraries <a href="https://ocul-">https://ocul-</a>

<u>uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL UWO/t54l2v/cdi crossref primary 10 1093 oahmag oas047</u>

Primary Sources: Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address
<a href="https://www.nps.gov/linc/learn/historyculture/lincoln-second-inaugural.htm">https://www.nps.gov/linc/learn/historyculture/lincoln-second-inaugural.htm</a>, South Carolina Declaration of Secession
<a href="https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\_century/csa\_scarsec.asp">https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\_century/csa\_missec.asp</a>
<a href="https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\_century/csa\_missec.asp">https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\_century/csa\_missec.asp</a>

Watch: "CSA: The Confederate States of America," 88 minutes, dir. Kevin Wilmott, (2004). This is a "mockumentary." Be sure you watch to the end. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exnwTWfFRM8

\*In tutorial writing exercise this week

**TBA** 

\*\*FINAL EXAM\*\* 3 hours

### **Additional Statements**

**Communication policies:** email is always the best way to reach me: <a href="lshire@uwo.ca">lshire@uwo.ca</a>. I typically respond within 24-48 hours during regular working hours. I hold weekly office hours in person in Lawson Hall (my office is currently on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Lawson Hall in the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, where I also serve as the Graduate Chair – enter through 3219 to find 3255). Office hours are when you can come and ask questions about course content, policies, expectations, ask about careers in History, American Studies or Women's Studies, request extensions or other forms of accommodation, or chat about other academic matters. If you prefer to

email, that's fine. If you prefer to meet on Zoom, send me an email and we can set up a meeting.

**Classroom behavior:** Come to class on time and leave on time and do let me know if you will be late or need to leave early on a particular day. Silence or turn off your phones, and don't look at them during class. Please do not use class time to use social media, e-mail, surf the web or do anything else that distracts you. If you do these things during class you will get a ZERO (0) for participation that day. Feel free to snack as long as it is not disruptive to discussion and you clean up after yourself.

**Use of electronic devices:** Students will not be permitted to use electronic devices during tests and exams. Research studies show that taking notes by hand is better for retention and integration, so I recommend that you take notes with a pen and paper or using a stylus on a tablet. If you must take notes on a device, please do not use the internet during class (lecture and tutorial). If you are off task and distracting others with your screen, you will lose attendance and participation points for that class. Students may not use audio or video recording devices in class without written permission of their instructors.

**Use of generative artificial intelligence (AI):** The use of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, is permitted in this course for activities such as brainstorming and refining your ideas, drafting an outline to organize your thoughts, or checking grammar and style. Please note that anything an AI tool creates must be checked for accuracy and that those tools cannot generate ideas on their own – you must still supply the argument and evidence, and if you do not, anything you turn in created by AI will not earn you a passing grade. Any use of such tools should be clearly acknowledged and explained in a footnote, endnote, Bibliography, or Works Cited. If in doubt, please ask me for clarification.

#### Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\_support/survivor\_support/gethelp.html To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at:

https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\_module\_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.