Development of the United States  512:103  Spring 2010

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Office Hours: MW 5-7, or e-mail me for appointment.

Assigned Texts

James Davison et al., U.S. A Narrative History, volume 1  isbn #: 978-0-07-338546-4

The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (any edition)

Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life (any edition)

Course Web Page: sakai.rutgers.edu

Class Meetings

WHAT IS HISTORY?

THE MODERN WORLD SYSTEM

THE COLUMBIAN EXCHANGE

THE PLANTATION SYSTEM

TROUBLED ENGLISHMEN AND THEIR CONSTITUTION

PILGRIMS AND PURITANS

POPULATION GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, or

The History of Premarital Pregnancy in New England

THE QUAKER EXPERIMENT

THE HABIT OF INDEPENDENCE

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Discussion of The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin

Examination
THE CONFEDERATION, THE CONSTITUTION, AND THE BILL OF RIGHTS

FEDERALISTS VERSUS REPUBLICANS

THE SPIRIT OF ENTERPRISE: PIONEERS AND INVENTORS

THE AGE OF JACKSON

Spring Break

ANTEBELLUM REFORM: THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL DIFFERENTIATION

ANTEBELLUM REFORM: CIVIL RIGHTS AND COMMUNES

DISCUSSION OF DOUGLASS, AUTOBIOGRAPHY (Quizz Day!)

Examination

PATTERNS OF ETHNIC CONFLICT AND NATIVISM

THE SECTIONAL CRISIS I

THE SECTIONAL CRISIS II

THE CIVIL WAR I

THE CIVIL WAR II

RECONSTRUCTION?

LOOKING FORWARD AND BACKWARD FROM 1877

FINAL EXAMINATION

Evaluation of Students

Grades will be based upon three examinations given in class (25% each, includes final), and a seven page essay in which you compare your biography with the autobiographies of Benjamin Franklin and Frederick Douglass.

You are expected to attend all classes and to read and to review the texts and the web pages as suggested in this syllabus.
The three examinations given in class will have a common format: there will be an essay question and 5 identification questions.

**Examples of essay questions:**

i) What were the causes of the American Revolution? Why did the Patriots win the war for independence?

ii) Andrew Jackson is sometimes called the first modern president. Discuss the goals that Andrew Jackson pursued during his presidency and the opposition to his program. Why do we find Jackson "modern" and how useful is this characterization?

**Examples of identification questions:**

Identify and explain the significance of each of the following:

i) Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions

ii) Elizabeth Cady Stanton

iii) "The Constitution is a covenant with death, an agreement with Hell."

iv) rice

v) Joseph Smith

vi) The Wilmot Proviso

vii) The Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

viii) John Marshall

ix) Jim Crow

A week before the examinations, you will be provided with the universe of possible essay and identification questions. The test items will be selected from this list.

**Final Examination**

The final examination essay will be comprehensive, that is, it will test all of the materials of the course, with special emphasis on social and economic development between 1789 and 1877. The IDs will be from material covered since the second exam.

**Goals of the Course:** In this course you need to construct a narrative for yourself, drawn primarily from the text, web pages, and lectures. Conscientious use of the lecture notes on
the class webpage will aid you in this task, but the web notes and lectures cannot be a substitute for the factual account provided by the textbook. We assume that you have read the assigned chapters in the textbook as scheduled. The lectures will review some of the materials; they may provide additional interpretations or perspective, but they cannot serve as a substitute for mastery of the textbook.

By participating in this course, you should acquire the basic vocabulary of American history and be able to explain the major events in American history with some sophistication. Thus, if a friend or relative asked "What is an 'Indian Giver'?" or "What caused the American Revolution?" or "What do you think about Andrew Jackson?" or "When was the Erie Canal built?" or "Why did the North win the Civil War?" or "Who was Jim Crow?"—you should be able to provide them with a robust answer. Finally, in constructing your narrative of American history, you should acquire knowledge and ways of thinking that provide perspective on major social issues. What role has the state played in the economy? What is the basis of American nationality? What are the sources of equality and inequality? Why can't we all just get along with one another?