



The American Revolution continues to shape the way Americans think about government, rights, violence, and war, and the way the rest of the world thinks about the United States. This will become increasingly apparent as we approach the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event in 2025/2026. This course charts the creation of the American Republic from the French and Indian War to the formation of a new national government under the Constitution. We focus primarily on the Revolution itself: its causes, its larger Atlantic context, the way Patriots, the British and Hessians, Loyalists, and Native Americans fought it; and its consequences for the many peoples of America and the new United States.

Students debate what happened at the Boston Massacre of 1770 and consider why New Jersey joined the Revolution and why some New Jerseysans risked their lives to oppose independence. We debate the battle at the 1787 Philadelphia Constitutional Convention about whether creating an executive for the new government

recreated a monarchy. We will consider several modern movie portrayals of the Revolution, in particular *Mary Silliman's War* and *The Patriot*.

As this is a history course, you'll be reading an overview book (*Independence Lost*) and a monograph (*Never Caught*), -- see below. You will also have chapters, articles, and documents posted in the Canvas modules.. These help meet the course goals of complicating and expanding your knowledge of the American Revolution. We will class time for discussion as well as lectures, and you will have several weekend threaded discussions.

## **Books and Reading Materials (Note the availability of e-books, usually for Kindle).**

Erica Dunbar, *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge*. ISBN: 978-1501126390. Amazon.com price \$14.59. (Kindle edition, \$12.99). **Check the Rutgers B&N Bookstore for books or rentals.** The author is a Rutgers professor. Here she tells the fascinating story of Ona Judge, once enslaved by George Washington. Judge escaped from her enslaver and lived as a free woman in New England.

Kathleen DuVal, *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution*. ISBN: 978-0812981209. Amazon.com price \$18.00 (Kindle edition, \$14.99). **Check the Rutgers B&N Bookstore for books and rentals.** DuVal tells the little-known story of the Revolution along the Gulf Coast, where the British and Spanish forces, their settler allies, and various Native American people fought for control of the region. The book explores this revolution through the perspective of eight participants, and tells the story of the battle of Pensacola – one of the major battles of the American Revolution and largely forgotten today (at least outside the Florida).

**.Meet the Professor.** I am a colonial historian, who trained as a mathematician (BS) at the University of Maryland, and then got my PhD in history at the University of Wisconsin (so proof that your undergrad degree does not decide your life choices).



At Rutgers, I have taught this course, Constitutional History, Famous Trial, and both halves of the American history survey, Making of America. I have also taught research seminars for undergraduates on Rutgers history while I was writing my book, *Rutgers since 1945*. I am currently collaborating with a colleague, Johanna Schoen, a historian of medicine and women, on a book about the pandemic at Rutgers. I love teaching and try to integrate it with academic advising (hope to see many of you individually during the semester.) Fun fact: I'm a hiker (the picture comes from Kings Canyon National Park, California – google the Hart Tree Trail if you want to know about one of the great sequoia hikes in the world—but sadly in an area threatened by California

wildfires. I have two older children—both work for Sony doing video animation for PlayStation (if you have used a PlayStation game in the last decade or so, my daughter probably worked on the animation).