

**HIST 33300**  
**The New Nation, Slave and Free**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:45-1:45, Room 5131 D (x7472) NAC

**Introduction:**

This course will serve as an introduction to the history of the United States from the American Revolution until the Mexican-American War. Over the course of the semester we will examine how the new nation developed politically, economically, socially, and culturally. In doing so, the objectives of the course include enabling you to analyze and evaluate primary sources, to synthesize relevant literature, and to construct your own historical arguments (both written and oral). By the end of the semester we should all share a deep understanding of the Early Republic and, more importantly, the skills to think critically about history and the world in which we live.

**Assignments:**

Over the course of the semester you will complete two papers (4-6 pages), one oral presentation, and a final exam. Additionally, short quizzes (based on the reading for that day) will be given regularly and you will be expected to participate in our online community. Grades will be determined according to the following scale:

Quizzes and Participation, Including Online Contributions (25%)

Final Exam (25%)

First Paper, Second Paper, Oral Presentations (50% total)

**Required Texts:**

Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Harvard UP, 1999)

Gordon Wood, *The American Revolution* (Modern Library, 2003)

Sean Wilentz, *The Rise of American Democracy* (W.W. Norton 2005)

Article to be distributed throughout the semester.

**Schedule:**

**Aug 28: Introduction**

**Aug 30: Origins of the Revolution**

Wood, Chapters 1-2

**Sep 4: The Revolution**

Wood, Chapters 3-5

Declaration of Independence

Excerpt from Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*

**Sep 6: The Constitution**

Wood, Chapter 6-7

The Federalist Papers No.10

The Constitution

**Sep 11: Slavery in the Wake of Revolution**

**Sep 13: (No Class)**

**Sep 18: (No Class. Today is, apparently, a Friday)**

**Sep 20: The Very Early Republic**

Wilentz, Prologue and Chapter 1

**Sep 25: A Jeffersonian Revolution?**

Wilentz, Chapters 2-4

**Sep 27: The War of 1812**

Wilentz, Chapter 5

**Oct 2: The Chattel Principle**

Johnson, Introduction and Chapter 1

Excerpts from Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom*

**Oct 4: The World that Slavery Made**

Johnson, Chapters 2-3

**Oct 9: Slave Trading**

Johnson, Chapters 4-5

**Oct 11: Slavery and the Development of the Nation**

Johnson, Chapters 6-7 and Epilogue

**Oct 16: Market Revolution**

**Oct 18: Party Politics**

Wilentz, Chapter 6

**Oct 23: The Politics of Slavery and Morality**

Wilentz, Chapter 7-8

**Oct 25: An “American” Culture**

Set of Articles

**Oct 30: The Ascendancy of Jackson**

Wilentz, Chapter 9-10

**Nov 1: The Age of Jackson**

Wilentz, Chapters 12-13

**Nov 6: Racial Theories**

Jefferson on Slaves

William Lloyd Garrison Letter

Fitzhugh Essay

**Nov 8: Indian Removal**

Address to the Cherokee Nation

**Nov 13: The Limits and Possibilities of Democracy**

Wilentz, Chapter 14

Excerpts from de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*

**Nov 15: Cultural Perspectives**

Emerson on “Nature “

Excerpt from Thoreau’s *Walden*

**Nov 20: Economics**

Wilentz, Chapter 15

**Nov 22: (No Class. Happy Thanksgiving.)**

**Nov 27: Urban Growth**

Wilentz, Chapter 16

Herman Melville’s “Bartleby, the Scrivener”

**Nov 29: Antislavery, Abolitionism, and Resistance**

Wilentz, Chapters 17-18

The Confessions of Nat Turner

**Dec 4: Whiggery and Femininity**

Declaration of Sentiments, Seneca Falls

**Dec 6: The Mexican-American War and the Path toward Disunion**

Wilentz, Chapter 20

Polk's War Message

**Dec 11: Final Perspectives****FINAL EXAM: TBA****Department-Wide Expectations**

1. Students are expected to arrive prepared and on time. According to College rules, any student who misses four meetings without permission will fail the course.
2. Deadlines will be strictly enforced. Late papers will be penalized one grade (i.e., from B+ to B) for every day the paper is late.
3. Students must take a final examination for this class. Examinations are scheduled by the Registrar and are held from 12/14/2007-12/22/2007. Students may reschedule an exam ONLY if they have more than two examinations on the same day.
4. There will be no incompletes granted in this class. All work must be completed by the end of the semester.
5. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. For definitions and examples, see the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity (<http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/upload/academicintegrity.pdf>).