



**"The past is not dead. In fact, it's not even past." ~ William Faulkner**



**History 103 - 0**

# **American History to 1877**

**Summer 2015: June 1–July 10**

**Dr. Mark Boulton**

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History 103 provides a survey of American history from the pre-Columbian era to the end of the Civil War. The course aims to give you a greater appreciation of how the United States developed its particular institutions, ideas, social bonds, and customs by examining the founding of the nation and its often painful early gestation. Areas of inquiry include early European exploration of the Americas, the impact of permanent European settlements on Native Americans and to how the subsequent society, culture, and ideas that evolved in North America created a new and distinctive civilization. The course will then examine the events that led to the American Revolution and will analyze the social and political character of the post-Revolution United States. Finally, we will explore the causes (hint: it was slavery) and tumultuous consequences of America's Civil War era. Throughout the class, particular emphasis will be given to how such factors as race, gender, and ethnicity affected individual experiences and also dictated who was included in the new-found freedoms Americans enjoyed after gaining independence.

Beyond content knowledge, the class also aims to provide you with a greater ability to make informed decisions about current social, political, economic, ethical, and environmental issues. Much is written in today's media about how the nation was founded, what values the founders embodied, and how America developed a unique and distinct character. By the end of this course you will be able to analyze critically contemporary statements made about the past and will have a more solid understanding of what being an American means, both in a historical context and today. In addition, through the various assignments, you will learn skills that can be applied to your everyday life. These include improved written communication skills, the ability process complex and sometimes contradictory information, and the ability to argue a case clearly and with supporting evidence.

**\*\*\*This class fulfills part of the TIER II Historical Perspectives general education requirement at Westminster College.**

## **Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students should possess the ability to:

- Identify the origins and development of key events, ideas, customs, and political institutions of American society up to 1877.
- Explain how race, class, and gender have shaped a diverse and uneven American experience.
- Critically analyze contemporary statements made about the past.
- Engage in informed discussions that connect historical understanding of the American past to current social, political, economic, and ethical issues.
- Demonstrate skills that can be applied to everyday life such as: improved written and communication skills, the ability to process complex and sometimes contradictory information, and the ability to argue a case clearly and with supporting evidence.

### Course Organization and Format:

The course is taught entirely online. All course information is posted on the Moodle course website. All students must have regular and reliable access to the Internet. You must check both the website and your email regularly to keep up with the announcements and to make sure that you are keeping up with the assigned activities.

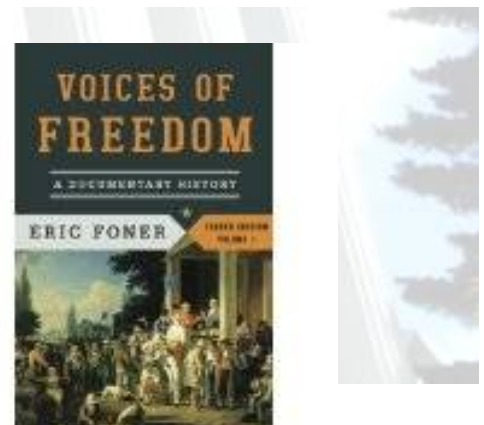
Remember, that the lack of time spent in class does NOT mean less work. You may find that the time spent reading will be considerable. You are expected to manage your time so that you complete assigned reading and assignments within the designated timeframes. Because this course is compressed, you cannot afford to fall behind in these assignments. The expertise you develop in self-discipline and online learning will carry over into other areas of your personal and professional life.

### Required Course Texts (please make sure that you get the correct editions – there are several variations out there):

**Eric Foner: *Give Me Liberty!: An American History (Vol. 1) (Seagull Fourth Edition)***



**Eric Foner: *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History (Vol. 1) (Fourth Edition)***



### Requirements for Successful Completion of the Course:

1. **EXAMS:** To help you become a more informed citizen in the global community you will have the opportunity to study historical events and to demonstrate your acquired knowledge through **three examinations** in this course (two midterms and a final). **Each exam is worth 15%, the three exams are worth 45% of your final grade.**

**\*\*\*Exams will cover ONLY the readings from the Eric Foner book *Give me Liberty!* There will be an exam at the end of every two-week module on a Thursday. See the COURSE SCHEDULE below.**

**\*\*\*Exams are not comprehensive:** Exam 1 will cover ONLY the readings from *Give Me Liberty!* from Module 1 (weeks 1 and 2); Exam 2 will cover ONLY the readings from *Give Me Liberty!* from Module 2 (weeks 3 and 4); Exam 3 ONLY the readings from *Give Me Liberty!* from Module 3 (weeks 5 and 6).

2. **DOCUMENTS DISCUSSION:** To push your understanding of how Americans thought and lived in the past, you will have the chance to analyze a series of primary source documents from the book *Voices of Freedom*. Every Friday, you will post and respond to discussion questions based on that week's readings from the *Voices of Freedom* book only. **Discussion is worth 15% of your grade.**
3. **ESSAYS:** In order to fulfill the course goals of helping you to construct informed arguments and to assist you with your writing skills, you will write **two two-page essays**. All papers will be graded not just for content; they must follow closely the writing and style guides posted on Moodle with a strong thesis, supporting evidence, and a high degree of technical accuracy. **The two papers combined are each worth 15% of your final grade, 30% total.**

**\*\*\*The essays will be based ONLY on the documents from the Eric Foner book *Voices of Freedom*—no outside readings or websites are allowed.**

**\*\*\*You have to choose TWO essays out of a possible four options (choose the ones that best fit your interests and schedule): See the list of options on the COURSE SCHEDULE below.**

**\*\*\*Essays are due by 8 p.m. on Sunday evening – no late essays are allowed.**

**\*\*\*All essays must be uploaded to Moodle.**

4. **FILM REVIEW:** In order to examine contemporary popular culture depictions of early American history, you will have the chance to write one two-page film review of an historical movie. You may choose any film from the list provided on Moodle. Instructions on the assignment will also be provided on Moodle. Each film deals with a historical subject we will be addressing in class. **The film review is worth 10% of your grade.**

#### **Summary:**

- ~ Two two-page essays: Worth 15% each, 30% total
  - Optional essays due every week – choose the two that best fit your schedule and interests
- ~ Three exams: Each exam is worth 15%, 45% total
  - Module 1: June 11; Module 2: June 25; Module 3: July 9
- ~ Film review: Worth 10%
  - Due any time before the end of the semester but no later than July 10
- ~ Weekly discussion on the documents: Worth 15%
  - Every Friday, weeks 1-5.

**Your Grade Tracker:**

<b>Exam 1</b> <b>15%</b>	<b>Exam 2</b> <b>15%</b>	<b>Exam 3</b> <b>15%</b>	<b>Essay 1</b> <b>15%</b>	<b>Essay 2</b> <b>15%</b>	<b>Film Review</b> <b>10%</b>	<b>Discussion</b> <b>15%</b>

**Course Grading Scale:**

A (93-96), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82) C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72) D+ (67-69), D (63-66), D- (60-62), F (59 or lower).

**\*\*\*There will be no extra credit or curves in this course.**

**Academic integrity:**

Unfortunately, cheating has become a far more frequent problem on campuses in recent years. I trust you all, but in order to be fair to students that take the time and effort to produce their own work, no amount of plagiarism or any other form of cheating will be tolerated in this course. Remember that this syllabus is your contract for this course. By agreeing to undertake this course you are agreeing not to cheat in any way. Specific instructions on what constitutes cheating will be given out in class.

**Illness and Disability:**

If you suffer from any kind of illness or disability that requires special accommodations, please inform the instructor at the *beginning of the course* and inform the Learning Opportunities Center.

**Late Work:**

In order to be fair to other students in the class, no assignments will be accepted after the scheduled submission date. Remember that COMPUTERS FAIL with alarming regularity, so save regularly and make frequent hard copies as you type.

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:**

<b>MODULE 1: Weeks 1-2</b>		<b>The European Conquest of North America</b>		
<b>Dates</b>	<b>TOPICS</b>	<b>GUIDING QUESTIONS From <i>Give me Liberty!</i></b>	<b>READINGS</b>	
<b>WEEK 1 Monday June 1- Thursday, June 4: Read <i>Give Me Liberty!</i></b>	<b>Discovering a 'New World'  The Rise of English North America</b>	<u>For Chapter 1:</u>  <i>What were the major patterns of Native America life in North America before Europeans arrived?</i>  <i>How did Indian and European ideas of freedom differ on the eve of contact?</i>	Eric Foner: <i>Give Me Liberty!: An American History</i> (Vol. 1)	



		<p><i>What impelled European explorers to look west across the Atlantic?</i></p> <p><i>What happened when the peoples of the Americas came in contact with Europeans?</i></p> <p><i>What were the chief features of the Spanish empire in America?</i></p> <p><u>For Chapter 2:</u></p> <p><i>What were the chief features of the English colonies in America?</i></p> <p><i>What obstacles did the English settlers in the Chesapeake overcome?</i></p> <p><i>How did Virginia and Maryland develop in their early years?</i></p> <p><i>What made the English settlement in New England distinctive?</i></p> <p><i>What were the main sources of discord in Early New England?</i></p> <p><i>How did the English Civil War affect the colonies in America?</i></p>	<p>Chapter 1, pp. 1-31 only</p> <p>Chapter 2, pp. 45-87</p>
<p><b>Friday, June 5: Online Document Discussion</b></p>	<p>Eric Foner: <i>Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History</i> (Vol. 1): <u>Read Document numbers: 2, 3, 4, and 5</u></p>		
<p><b>Sunday, June 7: Optional Essay 1 due</b></p>	<p>Using ONLY <u>this week's</u> documents from <i>Voices of Freedom</i>, answer the following question: <b><i>How did the differences in European and Native American cultures lead to problems between the two groups?</i></b></p> <p>***Follow the writing guide on Moodle <u>closely</u></p>		
<p><b>Dates</b></p>	<p><b>TOPICS</b></p>	<p><b>GUIDING QUESTIONS From <i>Give me Liberty!</i></b></p>	<p><b>READINGS</b></p>
<p><b>WEEK 2: Monday June 8- Thursday, June 11:</b></p>	<p><b>The Maturing of the Colonies and the Origins</b></p>	<p><u>For Chapter 3:</u></p> <p><i>How did the English empire in America expand in the mid seventeenth</i></p>	<p>Eric Foner: <i>Give Me Liberty!: An American</i></p>


<p><b>Read <i>Give Me Liberty!</i></b></p>	<p><b>of Slavery</b></p> <p><b>Divergence and Disharmony within the British Empire</b></p>	<p>century?</p> <p><i>How was slavery established in the western Atlantic world?</i></p> <p><i>What social and political crises rocked the colonies in the late seventeenth century?</i></p> <p><i>How did class and gender roles change in eighteenth century America?</i></p> <p><u>For Chapter 4:</u></p> <p><i>How did slavery differ regionally in eighteenth century North America?</i></p> <p><i>What factors led to distinct African American cultures in the eighteenth century?</i></p> <p><i>What were the meanings of British liberty in the eighteenth century?</i></p> <p><i>How did the Great Awakening challenge the religious and social structure of British North America?</i></p> <p><i>What was the impact of the Seven Years' War on imperial and Indian-white relations?</i></p>	<p><i>History (Vol. 1)</i></p> <p>Chapters 3 and 4</p>
<p><b><u>EXAM ONE: Thursday</u></b> <b>June 11</b></p>	<p>Covers all readings in <i>Give me Liberty</i> from Weeks 1 and 2</p>		
<p><b>Friday, June 12:</b> <b>Online Document Discussion</b></p>	<p>Eric Foner: <i>Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History</i> (Vol. 1) Read Document numbers: <b>14, 16, 19, 20, 21</b></p>		
<p><b>Sunday, June 14:</b> <b>Optional Essay 2 due</b></p>	<p>Using ONLY <u>this week's</u> documents from <i>Voices of Freedom</i>, answer the following question: <b><i>In what ways was North America a land of opportunity for some settlers, and in what ways was freedom still a distant dream for others?</i></b></p> <p>***Follow the writing guide on Moodle <u>closely</u></p>		

<b>MODULE 2: Weeks 3-4</b>	<b>Creating a New Nation</b>		
<b>Dates</b>	<b>TOPICS</b>	<b>GUIDING QUESTIONS: From <i>Give me Liberty!</i></b>	<b>READINGS</b>
<b>WEEK 3:</b> <b>Monday June 15-</b> <b>Thursday, June 18:</b> <b>Read <i>Give Me Liberty!</i></b>	<b>The American Revolution, the Articles of Confederation, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights</b>	<p><u>For Chapter 5:</u></p> <p><i>What were the roots and significance of the Stamp Act controversy?</i></p> <p><i>What key events sharpened the divisions between Britain and the colonists in the late 1760s and early 1770s?</i></p> <p><i>What key events marked the move toward American independence?</i></p> <p><i>How were American forces able to prevail in the Revolutionary War?</i></p> <p><u>For Chapter 6:</u></p> <p><i>How did equality become a stronger component of American freedom after the Revolution?</i></p> <p><i>How did the expansion of religious liberty after the Revolution affect the American ideal of freedom?</i></p> <p><i>How did the definition of economic freedom change after the Revolution, and who benefitted from the changes?</i></p> <p><i>How did the Revolution diminish the freedoms of both Loyalists and Native Americans?</i></p> <p><i>What was the impact of the Revolution of Slavery?</i></p> <p><i>How did the Revolution affect the status of women?</i></p> <p><u>For Chapter 7:</u></p>	<p>Eric Foner: <i>Give Me Liberty!: An American History</i> (Vol. 1)</p> <p>Chapters 5, 6, and 7</p>

		<p><i>What were the achievements and problems of the Confederation government?</i></p> <p><i>What major disagreements and compromises molded the final content of the Constitution?</i></p> <p><i>How did Anti-Federalist concerns raised during the ratification process lead to the creation of the Bill of Rights?</i></p> <p><i>How did the definition of citizenship in the new republic exclude Native Americans and African Americans?</i></p>	
<p><b>Friday, June 19: Online Document Discussion</b></p>	<p>Eric Foner: <i>Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History</i> (Vol. 1): <u>Read Document numbers: <b>33, 36, 37, 38, 43</b></u></p>		
<p><b>Sunday, June 21: Optional Essay 3 due</b></p>	<p>Using ONLY <u>this week's</u> documents from <i>Voices of Freedom</i>, answer the following question: <b><i>How far did Americans go in creating a 'land of the free' in the years following the Revolution?</i></b></p> <p>***Follow the writing guide on Moodle <u>closely</u></p>		
<p><b>WEEK 4: Monday June 22- Thursday, June 25: Read <i>Give Me Liberty!</i></b></p>	<p><b>Economic and Personal Freedom in Early America</b></p>	<p><u>For Chapter 9:</u></p> <p><i>What were the main elements of the market revolution?</i></p> <p><i>How did the market revolution spark social change?</i></p> <p><i>How did the meanings of American freedom change during this period?</i></p> <p><i>How did the market revolution affect the lives of workers, women, and African Americans?</i></p> <p><u>For Chapter 10:</u></p> <p><i>What were the social bases for the flourishing democracy of the early mid-nineteenth century?</i></p> <p><i>What efforts were made in this</i></p>	<p>Eric Foner: <i>Give Me Liberty!: An American History</i> (Vol. 1)</p> <p>Chapters 9 and 10</p>



		<p><i>period to strengthen the economic integration of the nation, and what major crises hindered these efforts?</i></p> <p><i>What were the major areas of conflict between nationalism and sectionalism?</i></p> <p><i>In what ways did Andrew Jackson embody the contradictions of democratic nationalism?</i></p> <p><i>How did the Bank War influence the economy and political party competition?</i></p>	
<b><u>EXAM TWO: Thursday</u></b> <b>June 25</b>	<u>Covers all readings in <i>Give me Liberty</i> from Weeks 3 and 4</u>		
<b>Friday, June 26:</b> <b>Online Document Discussion</b>	Eric Foner: <i>Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History</i> (Vol. 1): <u>Read Document numbers: 53, 54, 55, 63, 64</u>		
<b>Sunday, June 28:</b> <b>Final optional Essay 4 due</b>	Using ONLY <u>this week's</u> documents from <i>Voices of Freedom</i> , answer the following question: <b><i>While the nation enjoyed unprecedented economic prosperity during the first half of the nineteenth century, did everyone benefit equally?</i></b>  ***Follow the writing guide on Moodle <u>closely</u>		
<b>MODULE 3:</b> <b>Weeks 5-6</b>	<b>The Civil War Era</b>		
<b>Dates</b>	<b>TOPICS</b>	<b>GUIDING QUESTIONS</b> <b>From <i>Give me Liberty!</i></b>	<b>READINGS</b>
<b>WEEK 5:</b> <b>Monday June 29-</b> <b>Thursday, July 2:</b> <b>Read <i>Give Me Liberty!</i></b>	<b>Slavery: A National Problem, a Sectional Issue</b>  <b>Westward</b>	<p><u>For Chapter 11:</u></p> <p><i>How did slavery shape the social and economic relations in the Old South?</i></p> <p><i>What were the legal and material constraints of slaves' lives and work?</i></p> <p><i>How did family, gender, religion, and values combine to create distinct</i></p>	<p>Eric Foner: <i>Give Me Liberty!: An American History</i> (Vol. 1)</p> <p>Chapter 11, and Chapter 13, pp.</p>

	<p><b>Expansion and “Manifest Destiny”</b></p>	<p><i>slave culture in the Old South?</i></p> <p><i>What were the major forms of resistance to slavery?</i></p> <p><u>For Pages 466-480:</u></p> <p><i>What were the major factors contributing to U.S. territorial expansion in the 1840s?</i></p>	<p>466-480 only</p>
<p><b>ENJOY YOUR INDEPENDENCE DAY!!!</b></p>			
<p><b>No optional essay</b></p>	<p><b>Work on your film review</b></p>		
<p><b>Week 6 Monday, July 6- Thursday, July 9: Read <i>Give Me Liberty!</i></b></p>	<p><b>Sectional Strife and the Slide toward War</b></p> <p><b>The Civil War and the Rebirth of American Freedom</b></p>	<p><u>For pages 480-507:</u></p> <p><i>Why did the expansion of slavery become the most divisive political issue in the 1840s and 1850s?</i></p> <p><i>What combination of issues fuelled the creation of the Republican Party in the 1850s?</i></p> <p><i>What enables Lincoln to emerge as president from the divisive party politics of the 1850s?</i></p> <p><i>What were the final steps on the road to secession?</i></p> <p><u>For Chapter 14:</u></p> <p><i>Why is the Civil War considered the first modern war?</i></p> <p><i>How did a war to preserve the Union become a war to end slavery?</i></p> <p><i>What were the military and political turning points of the war?</i></p>	<p>Eric Foner: <i>Give Me Liberty!: An American History</i> (Vol. 1)</p> <p>Chapter 13, pp 480-507 only, and Chapter 14</p>
<p><b><u>EXAM TWO: Thursday July 9</u></b></p>	<p><u>Covers all readings in <i>Give me Liberty</i> from Weeks 3 and 4</u></p>		
<p><b><u>FRIDAY JULY 10</u></b></p>	<p><u><i>Final Day to Submit Movie Review</i></u></p>		







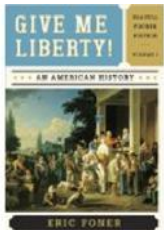
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## History 103

# HOW TO READ THE TEXTS

## American History to 1877



## ***GIVE ME LIBERTY!***

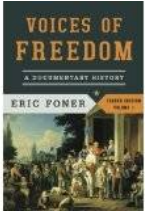
Online courses necessitate the use of textbook readings to give students the necessary content to master a subject. Although some courses may rely on PowerPoint, this method does not promote deep learning or understanding. For that reason, your information for History 103 will come from Eric Foner's book *Give me Liberty!* Foner is one of America's leading historians and this book is the most accessible textbook on the market. It is written around the theme of American freedom which makes it an ideal choice for this course.

By their nature, textbooks contain a wealth of information – usually too much. Therefore, to guide your reading, there are broad reading questions posted on your syllabus (and taken directly from the book) that you need to look at before reading every chapter. ***They will help you make sense of the material AND will form the basis of your exam questions.***

This may sound like an obvious point, but it is an essential one for this course: reading is not just the act of running your eyes over the words on a page—it is about *understanding*. Too often we find that we've just read over a page or two, and then find that our minds have drifted and we can't tell you a thing about what we've just read: I still do it myself, but we must try to avoid this. Make sure that you *engage with the material*. Take time over it, think about it, and *underline* all of the key points that will help you answer the guiding questions.



The exams are open book, but you will need to have a solid understanding of the material *before* you start each test; you will have little time to look up specifics during the exam and will need knowledge of the broader historical trends and events to make sense of it all.



## ***VOICES OF FREEDOM***

The second book for the course is a documentary reader *Voices of Liberty*. This is a *primary source* book, which means it is written by the *actual participants* in the historical events—often hundreds of years ago. Primary sources are excellent learning tools because they allow us to see what people are thinking and doing *at the time*, without having an author or a teacher analyzing the past for us. This means that you will be able to form *your own opinions and questions* on the material.

**\*\*\*These documents are short and might not make much sense on their own, so read the chapters in *Give me Liberty* first, and make sure that you read the short introductions to each document.\*\*\***

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## **History 103**

# **SHORT ESSAY GUIDELINES**

## **American History to 1877**

*Your 2-page essays are exercises in technical writing. You will be evaluated as much for technical accuracy as for your thoughts and ideas, so FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS CLOSELY*

**For all of your 2-page essays, please follow the following instructions:**

~Use ONLY the assigned readings from Voices of Freedom for that week to answer the essay questions. **ABSOLUTELY NO WEBSITES.** Include as many of the relevant documents as possible to support your argument, do not just concentrate on one or two.

~**FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES** on the attached essay rubric– these are the criteria upon which your work will be evaluated.

~Your essay should be 2 pages in length, no more, no less. This forces you to refine both your thoughts and your writing.

~Use 12-point Times New Roman font, Double Spaced, 1 inch margins all around

~Put just your name, class number, and the essay question you are answering at the top of the paper in no more than two lines (save as much space as possible for your essay)

CRITERIA	A Excellent	B Above Average	C Average	D Below Average	F Poor
<p><b>1. CONTAINS A STRONG ACCURATE THESIS THAT ANSWERS THE QUESTION <u>DIRECTLY</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Give a straight answer to a straight question</u>: avoid broad sweeping statements like “Throughout time” or “Man has always”</li> <li>- Gives specifics about the paper’s argument</li> <li>- Ground your thesis in the SOURCES – not just in your opinion</li> <li>- Clearly lay out the direction the paper is going</li> </ul>					
<p><b>2. PROVIDES HISTORICALLY ACCURATE CONTEXT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is free of factual errors</li> <li>- Gives plenty of dates and when introducing people, makes sure you explain who they are</li> <li>- Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the main historical events being analyzed</li> </ul>					
<p><b>3. IS WELL WRITTEN AND FREE OF STYLISTIC ERRORS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proofreading is essential for this</li> <li>- Avoid passive voice!!! – be clear as to who is doing what</li> <li>- Paper must not be too wordy – be clear in your points – do not just write until you have filled the required page length</li> </ul>					

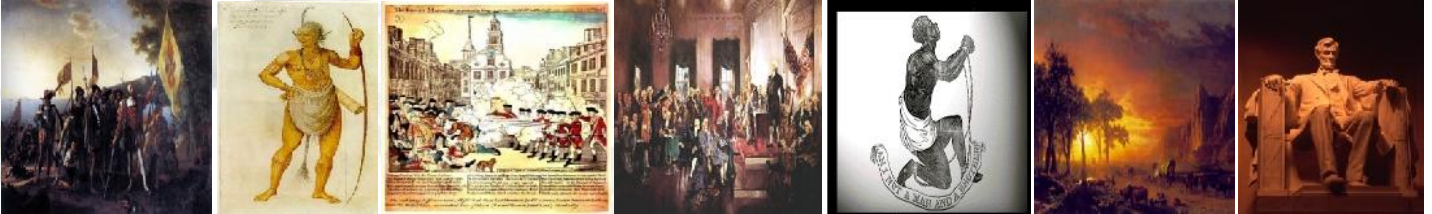
<p><b>4. GIVES SPECIFIC EXAMPLES FROM THE READINGS TO SUPPORT CONCLUSIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- History papers are not thought pieces – we were not there, so we need EVIDENCE from primary and secondary sources</li> <li>- Do not just write your opinion: Always <u>back up your points with specific examples</u></li> <li>- As a general rule, two pieces of supporting evidence per paragraph should suffice</li> <li>- Tell the reader from where you got your information</li> </ul>					
<p><b>5. UTILIZES A WIDE ARRAY OF THE DOCUMENTS THAT BEST ANSWER THE QUESTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is a reason that you are assigned more than one source for most papers – the sources contain information vital to answering the question fully. So do not skip over some sources because they are long, or might not fit your argument</li> <li>- Do not over rely on one source because that can preclude other equally valid opinions</li> </ul>					
<p><b>6. HAS GOOD ORGANIZATION THROUGHOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Essay has a strong overall flow and does not just jump randomly from point to point</li> <li>- Drafting and outlines are essential to getting this right</li> <li>- Paragraphs should be generally</li> </ul>					



<p>not less than three sentences, no more than 2/3 of a page</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use topic sentences at the start of a paragraph to help the paper flow</li> <li>- Keep quotes SHORT – generally no more than one line</li> <li>- NO BLOCK QUOTES</li> </ul>					
<p><b>7. EACH PARAGRAPH CONTAINS ANALYSIS AND INFORMATION THAT SUPPORTS THE THESIS AND ANSWERS THE QUESTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Topic sentences are essential</li> <li>- Set up what you are going to write about in every paragraph</li> <li>- All points within that paragraph should relate to your topic sentence</li> <li>- Make sure that you topic sentences relate to your opening thesis – do not just write an ‘information paragraph’ without showing its relevance to answering the question</li> </ul>					
<p><b>8. HAS PROPER CITATIONS FOR ALL SOURCES USED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use parenthetical citations e.g. : (Wilson, 5)</li> <li>- For the Foner book – give the name of the author of the document and a page number</li> <li>- For these short papers, there is no need for a works cited page – I will know it comes from Foner</li> </ul>					



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## **History 103**

# **FILM REVIEW GUIDELINES**

## **American History to 1877**

Hollywood has a long tradition of using and abusing history for dramatic reasons. In order to examine popular culture depictions of early American history, you will have the chance to write a two-page film review of a historical movie of your choosing. This exercise encourages you to be more critical of the ways in which history can be misrepresented--in addition to giving you the chance to watch some pretty good films.

\*\*\*For your review, watch the movie AND read one reputable online film review from a national newspaper or academic website (not a blog or fanboy site). If you just Google your movie title and "New York Times film review" you should find one easily. Incorporate the review into your analysis - but make sure that you provide proper citations for any opinions or information you get from the review.

Then write a two-page (minimum) review of your movie that contains the following elements:

**Adapted from:** [www.pascack.k12.nj.us/cms/lib5/NJ01000238/.../PIPER\\_Sheet.doc](http://www.pascack.k12.nj.us/cms/lib5/NJ01000238/.../PIPER_Sheet.doc)

- 1. In your introduction, give the name and year of the film being analyzed. Give the main point of the film in your introduction. i.e. don't just say what the film is about - analyze why you think the film was made.**
- 2. What is the point of view of the film? Was it favorable or critical of a particular group or individual?**

3. **What inferences were made in the film? Were there parts of the film that the filmmakers must have made up because they couldn't have known this from the available evidence?**
4. **What techniques are used in the film to persuade the audience to the filmmaker's point of view? Note camera angle, specific dramatic scenes, music, character, portrayal, etc.?**
5. **Based on the course readings, what relevant information do I know? Does it contradict or support the story presented in the film?**
6. **Overall, how strong are the historical arguments in this film? Is it historically accurate?**

**Select one of the films from the list below or email me if you have alternative suggestions. Any or all of them should be available through Netflix, Amazon-on-demand, or Google Play.**

*New World* (2005) - John Smith, Native Americans

*Pocahontas* (1995) - a sanitized view of John Smith and Pocahontas

*The Crucible* (1996) - Salem witch trials; Puritans

*The Patriot* (2000) - Revolutionary War

*Last of the Mohicans* (1992) - French & Indian War

*The Alamo* (2004) - 1836 battle of Texas Revolution

*Amazing Grace* (2006) - anti-slavery movement in England

*12 Years a Slave* (2013) - the brutality of slavery

*Django Unchained* (2012) - an innovative look at slavery

*Gone With the Wind* (1939) - Antebellum and Civil War South

*Gangs of New York* (2002) - Civil War era cities and immigrants

*Amistad* (1997) - the 1839 slave ship uprising and trial

*Glory* (1989) - Civil War; African-American regiment 54th Massachusetts

*Gods & Generals* (2003) - rise and fall of Stonewall Jackson

*Gettysburg* (1993) - decisive battle of the Civil War

*Dances With Wolves* (1990) - Civil War era relations with Native Americans

*Lincoln* (2012) - Excellent depiction of the 16<sup>th</sup> president and the passing of the thirteenth amendment