At a moment when historians of early America are pondering the field’s so-called “geographic turn,” this course considers the significance of space and geography to the history and historiography of colonial North America. Major questions include: Why is geography such an important—perhaps the most important—organizing principle in early American historiography? How important should it be? How did cartographic knowledge shape colonial power, and vice versa? How did Indians, Africans, and Europeans give meaning to the various “new worlds” in which they found themselves? How did the convergence of different peoples in key locations give rise both to hybrid cultures and devastating violence? How did the diverse peoples of colonial America seek to order not only the physical landscape, but also domestic spaces and human bodies? This course focuses on negotiations for space and power in British North America, alongside comparative perspectives from other colonial contexts. In addition to reading works by major scholars of colonial America, we will also apply that scholarship to interpreting primary sources ourselves, with particular attention to Reed’s extraordinary collection of early modern antiquarian maps.

By the end of the semester you should be able to

- Describe and assess various geographical frameworks that scholars have used to interpret colonial American history (e.g. Atlantic world, continental histories);
- Explain how geographic knowledge and cartographic expertise shaped relationships between Europeans and Native Americans and among European imperial powers in North America;
- Describe the significance of regional variation within colonial America, especially with reference to modes of colonization, labor regimes, and social relations;
- Explain how the various peoples of early modern North America (including Indians, Africans, and Europeans of many different backgrounds) made sense of the places and the peoples they encountered in a “new world”;
- Identify broad transformations and continuities in colonial experience, with an emphasis on how negotiations for space and power among Indians, Africans, and Europeans changed over time;
- Analyze maps as historical sources, and interpret them critically alongside other kinds of evidence, including visual culture, written documents, and material objects.


**Expectations and assignments**

**Honor principle**
Reed’s honor principle governs our conduct in this course in two ways:

- **Respect for others.** If you don’t agree with what someone else has to say, you are welcome (and encouraged) to express your point of view, but you must do so respectfully, and you must support your claims with textual evidence.

- **Intellectual honesty.** I expect all work you do for this course to be your own. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, don’t hesitate to ask. In your written work, please follow the Chicago Manual of Style for footnotes, not in-text citations. There is an abbreviated guide to Chicago style here: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

**Conference attendance and participation**
You are expected to come to conference on time and prepared to participate in discussion of the assigned readings. Participation includes both expressing your own ideas and questions and listening carefully to those of others. Missing more than three conferences will put you at risk of failing the course.

**Written assignments**
You will receive detailed descriptions of all written assignments ahead of their due dates. Failure to complete all written assignments will put you at risk of failing the course.

- **Reading responses.** Beginning in the third week, you will be assigned on a bi-weekly basis to post to the course email list a brief response (no more than 200 words) to the readings. These responses are due by 11 a.m. the day of the conference at which the readings will be discussed. On days when you are not assigned to comment on readings, you should be sure to review your classmates’ comments in preparation for conference. You are expected to complete five responses by the end of the semester.

- **Colonial research odyssey.** This assignment will require you to locate and annotate primary sources in colonial American history available either physically or digitally at Reed. 2-3 page research memo plus annotated bibliography of primary sources; due Friday, September 18, by 5 p.m. in Vollum 124.

- **Map paper.** This paper will give you a chance to exercise the historian’s skills of close reading and contextualization of a primary source. 5-7 pages; due Friday, October 16, by 5 p.m. in Vollum 124.

- **Preparatory assignments for final paper.** You should email me a brief proposal for your final paper on Friday, November 6, by 8 p.m. In addition, a primary source report of 4-5 pages is due via email on Saturday, November 21, by 5 p.m.
Final paper. The paper will require you to make a historical argument about a primary source (or set of primary sources) of your own choosing. 12-15 pages; due Monday, December 14, by 5 p.m. in Vollum 124.

Policy on late work
I strongly advise that you complete all written work on time, as I have sequenced the reading and writing assignments for this course carefully. I will consider requests for extensions, but they must come in writing (i.e. via email) at least 24 hours in advance of the deadline. Your email should include an explanation of your request and a proposed alternative deadline. I reserve the right to refuse any request for an extension, as well as to refuse to accept any work that comes in after the deadline. Please be aware that in most cases, I will write minimal comments on late papers and will take the extra time into account in determining the paper’s grade. I will grant no extensions on the research odyssey or the primary source report, as these assignments will be circulated to other students and will be discussed in class.

Reading
The required books are on order at the bookstore and on reserve at the library:


Most of the additional readings are available electronically, either through online journals, public websites, or the course e-reserves; the appropriate site or link is marked below. A few readings are available only in hard copy in the library reserves. I strongly advise making photocopies or printouts of reserve and online readings so that you can bring hard copies of the readings to conference. A digital version of the syllabus, with links to the online readings, is available via Moodle (log on to moodle.reed.edu and go to History 361).
WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1: What is a map?

M 8/31 The power of place
c) Bring a map to class—ideally, a map you’ve used or one you’ve made (print it off the internet, make a sketch of it, etc.). Interpret this directive as broadly as you like.

W 9/2 Maps and history
In class: preliminary discussion of research odyssey and how to find sources.

Week 2: What (and where) was colonial America?

M 9/7 NO CLASS – LABOR DAY

W 9/9 Locating colonial America

Week 3: Mapping and projecting, I

M 9/14 England engages the world
a) Kupperman, The Jamestown Project, 12-72.
b) John Gillis, “Islomania,” excerpt from “Islands as Mental Stepping-Stones in the Age of Discovery,” and “Islands in the Making of Atlantic Civilization,” in Islands of the Mind: How the Human Imagination Created the Atlantic World (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 1-4, 54-64, 83-100. [e-reserves]
RESPONSE: Group A.

W 9/16 Power and possession
c) Read a colonial charter from the Avalon Project:
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/statech.asp
RESPONSE: Group B.

F 9/18 RESEARCH ODYSSEY DUE by 5 p.m. in Vollum 124.

Week 4: Mapping and projecting, II

M 9/21 “A welter of colonial projects”
 a) Kupperman, The Jamestown Project, 73-209.
b) Review at least two other students’ research odysseys on Moodle.
RESPONSE: Group C.
In class: retrospective discussion of research odyssey and lessons learned.

W 9/23 Cartography and colonialism
RESPONSE: Group D.
In class: maps of early exploration and settlement (meet in Special Collections).

Week 5: Settling

M 9/28 Settling Virginia
 a) Kupperman, The Jamestown Project, 210-327.
RESPONSE: Group A.

**W 9/30 Settling New England**

RESPONSE: Group B.

**Week 6: Removals and reconsiderations**

**M 10/5 Unsettling New England**

a) Matthew H. Edney and Susan Cimburek, “Telling the Traumatic Truth: William Hubbard’s Narrative of King Philip’s War and His ‘Map of New-England,’” *William and Mary Quarterly* 61.2 (2004): 317-348. [e-reserves] Note: you can also access the text of this article at [http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/wm/61.2/edney.html](http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/wm/61.2/edney.html), but you will not be able to see the images.

RESPONSE: Group C.

**W 10/7 Native cartographies**

http://www.jstor.org/stable/1919153


RESPONSE: Group D.

**Week 7: Slavery and “race”**

**M 10/12 The Black Atlantic**

a) Stephanie Smallwood, introduction, “The Gold Coast and the Atlantic Market in People,” and “Turning African Captives into Atlantic Commodities,” *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007), 1-64. [e-reserves]

http://www.jstor.org/stable/2947401

RESPONSE: Group A.

**W 10/14 Mapping bodies**

http://www.jstor.org/stable/2953318

RESPONSE: Group B.

F 10/16 MAP PAPER DUE by 5:00 p.m. in Vollum 124.

10/17-10/25 FALL BREAK

Week 8: Urban plotting

M 10/26 City life (and death)
RESPONSE: Group C.
In class: discussion of final paper assignment.

W 10/28 Space and conspiracy
RESPONSE: Group D.

Week 9: Living in a material world

M 11/2 Space and refinement
RESPONSE: Group B.

W 11/4 The material worlds of slaves
RESPONSE: Group A.

F 11/6 FINAL PAPER PROPOSAL DUE by 8:00 p.m. via email.
Week 10: War and empire

M 11/9 A new map of North America
RESPONSE: Group D.
In class: maps of mid-eighteenth century (meet in Special Collections).

W 11/11 Imperial reckonings
RESPONSE: Group C.

Week 11: Mapping a nation

M 11/16 Drawing lines and taking sides
   http://www.jstor.org/stable/3124858
c) Calloway, The World Turned Upside Down, 146-183.
RESPONSE: Group B.

W 11/18 Drawing lines and making states
   http://www.jstor.org/stable/3330331
d) Land Ordinance of 1785: http://www.in.gov/history/2478.htm
e) Northwest Ordinance (1787): http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/nworder.asp
RESPONSE: Group A.

S 11/21 PRIMARY SOURCE REPORT DUE by 5:00 p.m. via email.

Week 12: Writing workshop

M 11/23 Writing workshop
a) Primary source reports (as assigned).

W 11/25 NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK (make-up 12/9)
Week 13: Thinking continentally

M 11/30 Continents and continuities
d) OPTIONAL: responses to Greene in the same issue as above. RESPONSE: Group D.

W 12/2 Geography lessons
b) Excerpts from Jedidiah Morse, *Geography Made Easy* (1818). Available via Google Books (search for “Jedidiah Morse Geography Made Easy” in Google). Read cover page, preface, “America” and “North America” (53-68); “Interior Countries,” “Northwest Coast,” and “The Northern Archipelago” (73-77); “Independent America, or, the United States” (88-114). Review table of contents and read or skim other sections that interest you.
c) “Mapping the Republic: Conflicting Concepts of the Territory and Character of the U.S.A., 1790-1900,” online exhibit by the Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education, University of Southern Maine. Review the exhibit at http://usm.maine.edu/maps/exhibit11/, but focus on the maps by Morse and others at http://usm.maine.edu/maps/exhibit11/11-04.html
RESPONSE: Group C.
In class: maps of the Northwest and early United States (meet in Special Collections).

Week 14: Final questions

M 12/7 Is the Pacific Northwest in colonial America?
RESPONSE: optional/make-up.

**W 12/9 Can we be honest?**


**Week 15: Exam week**

**M 12/14 FINAL PAPER DUE by 5:00 p.m. in Vollum 124.**