

**History 151**  
**United States History to 1877**  
Fall Semester 2012

J. L. Larson  
phone: 494-4127

Office: Univ. 225  
e-mail: [larsonjl@purdue.edu](mailto:larsonjl@purdue.edu)

**Objectives:** This introductory course is intended to explore how the world we live in has come to be. It is my first working hypothesis that certain basic human motivations stimulate people and communities to organize their lives in particular ways, to take calculated actions, to construct institutions and cultural concepts, to define others as “like” or “unlike” themselves, and to tell stories about this whole process, stories we call “history.” It is my second working hypothesis that the way we have taught history for the last 100 years *does not* work very well

I have come to think of these basic motivations in terms of four broad themes: race, money, sex, and salvation. Accordingly, I have arranged our material around these four themes within three big chronological units: 1) the colonial era; 2) the American Revolution; 3) the republican experience through the Civil War. In the first and third periods we will look for evidence of how these motivations interacted in particular times and places, and how the results of those interactions were different from—or similar to—the world we live in today. The revolutionary era we will treat as a time of intentional destruction and re-creation.

In the end, it is my first objective to try to *expose* the way these fundamental motivations interact to construct and define our world. It is my second objective to suggest ways to *understand* these interactions in order to recognize how they may be shaping us in the present. It is not the names, dates, or battles of the past that interest me; *I want to look at how the world worked then and how our sense of history affects how the world works now*. It is my hope you may begin to find that history can be a resource for knowing your world.

**Strategies:** To accomplish these objectives I have selected a textbook and some additional readings, designed lectures, organized discussion sessions, and developed a series of writing assignments. Executed in good faith, these assignments, readings, and class sessions ought to introduce you to new information about the past and, more importantly, new ways of thinking about the past—and the present. However, these strategies are inherently interactive and require a significant commitment from you to read, write, study, puzzle, ask questions, and engage in discussion. For the process to be important to your education you ought not take my word for these things but should see and understand them yourself.

**Readings:** **Experience History, vol. 1**, by Davidson (paper or e-book)  
*My Brother Sam is Dead*, by Collier and Collier  
Additional selections posted on the course “Blackboard”

**Films:** I have selected feature-length films to illustrate the beginning and ending of our period. Each of these films is rich in visual detail to help you begin to orient to the time and place we are going to. The films will be shown twice in the evening so you can choose which viewing fits your schedule.

**Quizzes:** You will write short (1 page) quiz papers in class on Fridays when we have discussions. These will draw from the documents assigned for the discussion that day and/or textbook readings from the week. Weekly papers are worth **10 points** each and must be **turned in at class time for full credit.** (There are 10 quiz days; you must write 6 such papers.)

**Paper:** You will write one short paper (3-4 pages) after reading *My Brother Sam is Dead*. This paper is worth **40 points** and will be due in class October 12.

**Exams:** There are 2 unit exams and a final. These are in-class essay tests taken during the class hour. Unit exams count **50 points**, the **final 75**. The exams will test you over the reading assignments as well as lectures. Some points will come from short answer questions drawn from reading only.

**Grades:** Your final grade will be based on your percentage of earned points out of a total of **275** according to the following scale:

93-100%	= A	73-76	= C
90-92	= A-	70-72	= C-
87-89	= B+	67-69	= D+
83-86	= B	63-66	= D
80-82	= B-	60-62	= D-
77-79	= C+	< 60%	= F

**Attendance and courtesy:** You are expected to attend all class sessions, and you will find it difficult to do very well in this course if you do not. However, I do not take attendance and I give no points just for being in class. In return for not treating you like middle-schoolers, I expect you to be quiet and attentive in class and respect the rights of others to a constructive learning environment. Turn off cell phones and all handheld devices. I do not allow laptops in class; you will do better by taking notes. You can find lecture materials on the Blackboard after they are delivered—and you can check Facebook on your own time. **I will ask you to leave** if you are disturbing me or others in the room.

**Emergency Announcement:** *In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Here are ways to get information about changes in this course:*

*email [larsonjl@purdue.edu](mailto:larsonjl@purdue.edu)  
my office phone 494.4127  
my cell phone 765.412.9166.*

## History 151 Calendar of Assignments

<b>Week 1</b>	
Aug 20	Introduction and orientation
Aug 22	Perspectives on Discovery and Conquest
Aug 24	Discussion: what do you care?
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chaps 1 &amp; 2</b>
Aug 27	View film <i>Black Robe</i> , <b>either Aug 27 or Aug 28, 7-9 pm</b>
Aug 29	Discussion: <i>Black Robe</i>
Aug 31	Race 1-“Savages”
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chaps 3-5; Blackboard Docs “Constructing Race”</b>
Sep 03	Labor Day—no classes
Sep 05	Race 2-“Slaves”
Sep 07	Discuss the way “race” works in 17 <sup>th</sup> century
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chaps 3-5; Blackboard docs “Money”</b>
Sep 10	Money 1
Sep 12	Money 2
Sep 14	Discuss money and mercantilism
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chaps 3-5; Blackboard docs “Sex”</b>
Sep 17	Sex 1
Sep 19	Sex 2
Sep 21	Discuss sex, family, and social structure
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chaps 3-5; Blackboard docs “Salvation”</b>
Sep 24	Salvation 1
Sep 26	Salvation 2
Sep 28	Discuss salvation and the Awakening
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE, chap 6</b>
Oct 01	<b>Exam I</b>
Oct 03	The “black box” of revolution
Oct 05	Republicanism 1
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chap 7; Collier/Collier, <i>My Brother Sam</i></b>
Oct 08	Fall Break—no classes
Oct 10	Republicanism 2
Oct 12	Discuss <i>My Brother Sam</i> (papers due)

<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chap 8; Blackboard docs “Founding”</b>
Oct 15	Founding 1
Oct 17	Founding 2
Oct 19	Discuss “founding documents”
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chap 9</b>
Oct 22	Federalists and Jeffersonians
Oct 24	Liberty Is . . .
Oct 26	<b>Exam II</b>
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chap 10-14; Blackboard docs, “Race Again”</b>
Oct 29	Race 3
Oct 31	Race 4
Nov 02	Discuss race and slavery in the new nation
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chaps 10-14; Blackboard docs “More Money”</b>
Nov 05	Money 3
Nov 07	Money 4
Nov 09	Discuss money and the market revolution
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chaps 10-14; Blackboard docs, “Oh Behave”</b>
Nov 12	Sex 3
Nov 14	Sex 4
Nov 16	Discuss gender, freedom, and Graham crackers
<b>Week 14</b>	<b>No additional reading this week</b>
Nov 19	Salvation 3
Nov 21	Thanksgiving Break—no classes
Nov 23	Thanksgiving Break—no classes
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chap 12, 15; Blackboard docs, “Perfection”</b>
Nov 26	Salvation 4
Nov 28	Salvation 5
Nov 30	Discuss reform and abolitionism
<b>Week 16</b>	<b>Read: EXPERIENCE chaps 16-17</b>
Dec 03	View <i>Glory</i> in evening <b>either Dec 03 or Dec 04, 7-9 pm</b>
Dec 05	Discuss <i>Glory</i>
Dec 07	The Union Preserved
	<b>FINALS</b>