

HISTORY 431
DISSENTERS AND DEVIANTS IN COLONIAL AMERICA

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Section 501
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Course Description

The way societies deal with people who refuse to conform to social norms reveals much about the ideology and ideals of those communities. In this class, we will examine the origins of religious dissent, witchcraft outbreaks, adultery and fornication charges, and other forms of dissent that helped shape colonial societies by testing (and thereby establishing) boundaries. We will find, surprisingly to many, that early modern societies were not as rigid as we generally believe. Boundaries did exist, but certain kinds of dissent and deviance were tolerated within these limits. In this class we will examine where those limits were and what they tell us about the people who lived in colonial America.

Format

The course will consist of class discussions and lectures, with the emphasis on class discussion. YOU WILL NEED TO COMPLETE THE ASSIGNED READINGS BEFORE EACH CLASS AND COME PREPARED TO DISCUSS THEM. Active engagement with the material and participation in class discussions is required. Participation is a significant proportion of your final grade.

Many of the readings are on course reserve at the library. You can access them on-line from campus or from home or check out paper copies for use in the library. Other readings can be found through the electronic databases on the library web site. There are generally 30 to 50 pages of reading each week, and considerably more than that some weeks. Build three to four hours of reading time into your weekly study schedule and do not wait until the last minute to start reading. Please bring the readings or notes taken from them to class to facilitate discussion.

Assignments

There will be three major assignments during the semester: a 3-5 page book review, a 5-7 page essay, and a 10-12 page research paper based on primary documents. All of the major assignments must be completed in order to pass the class. We will discuss each assignment in greater detail before it is due. Graduate students will complete an extra book review, the essay will be 7-8 pages, and the research paper will be 15-20 pages.

Assignments must be turned in on the day they are due. Late papers will not be accepted, nor will emailed papers or papers turned in on computer disks. If you have problems completing an assignment, come to see me before the situation becomes desperate. I am more likely to be sympathetic the week before an assignment is due than on the day it is due. Computer or printer crashes are not acceptable excuses for late papers. Keep a backup of drafts on a flash drive or as hard copy. All papers should be stapled together when handed in—please do not use report covers or folders.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any assignment. Purchasing papers over the internet, taking information and ideas from published or internet sources without proper attribution, copying articles from published or internet sources, and making only slight changes in the words of a source with or without attribution are all considered plagiarism. ANY STUDENT CAUGHT PLAGIARIZING MATERIAL WILL RECEIVE AN “F” FOR THE COURSE. Please refer to the statement on plagiarism attached to this syllabus. Make sure you read and understand it.

Grading

Research Paper	25%
Rough Draft	15%
Book Review	15%
Essay	20%
Attendance	10%
Participation	15%

Grades will be calculated on a straight scale (i.e. 90% and above is an A, 80% and above is a B, 70% and above is a C, 60% and above is a D, and 59% and below is failing). An “A” paper is well-written and well-structured, uses proper grammar and good style, shows good command of the issues, and makes an interesting argument. A “B” paper adequately addresses the topic, but generally has a weakness in argument, evidence or writing. A “C” paper is average—it shows some understanding of the issues but provide little discussion, few details and average organization. A “D” paper has a weak or non-existent argument, uses evidence poorly if at all, and has problems with grammar, style and clarity in writing. An “F” paper shows no attention to the topic; there is no argument, no evidence, no structure, and/or the writing is poor. In addition, no matter how good the paper may be in structure, writing, evidence, and argument, if it is plagiarized, it will receive an “F.” Make sure you understand what constitutes plagiarism.

Attendance

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. If you are not in class when roll is called, it will be counted as an absence. Make sure you get to class on time and plan to

stay for the entire period. Students who do not return to class after the break will forfeit half of that evening's attendance and participation points. The attendance portion of the final grade will be based on a straight scale. In other words, if you attend 90% of the classes, you will receive an "A" for attendance, 80-89% will receive a "B," and so forth.

Participation

Participation counts for 15% of your final grade, a significant proportion. You need to come to class prepared to discuss the readings. You must be actively engaged with the material—that is when learning occurs. When reading the materials, take notes—do not simply highlight. Write down questions, comments and any interesting ideas to bring up in class. I will note participation during each class and track it throughout the semester. The final participation grade will be based on the aggregate for the semester. In other words, it is not a numerical figure--you do not need to ask three questions or make three comments every day. You do need to be engaged with the material throughout the semester, asking questions, responding to the reading material, and responding to your classmates' comments and questions.

Required Books

Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed*

John Ruston Pagan, *Anne Orthwood's Bastard*

Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*

Michael Winship, *Times and Trials of Anne Hutchinson*

Recommended books:

Strunk and White, *Elements of Style*

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*

All books are available in the campus bookstore and are on reserve at the library.

Classroom Etiquette

You are expected to come to class on time and not to pack up until class is dismissed. You will also need to come to class prepared to participate in class discussions.

Turn off all cell phones, iPods and other electronic devices before class begins and place them in a bag or under your chair. You may not text-message, surf the internet or do other course work during class. Arriving late, packing up early, text messaging, viewing social networking web sites, and ringing phones disrupt the class and are disrespectful to your fellow students. Please be courteous to your fellow students and minimize such disruptions.

The open discussion of opinions and ideas is encouraged in this class. You are expected to treat each other with respect regardless of differences of opinion.

History Majors and Social Science Education/ History Majors

Each history major and SSE/history major will submit one piece of writing of his or her choosing from any 300- or 400-level history class to the following email address: history@jaguar1.usouthal.edu. The material will help the department assess your academic growth when you complete your major and will be used to evaluate the teaching effectiveness of the faculty. It will not affect your grade in this class.

Please Note:

Students needing special accommodations to complete the work for the course should speak to me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Special Student Services Office in the Student Center, Room 270. This office will determine the necessary accommodations to assist students. All information will be confidential.

I reserve the right to change the assignments and course schedule as needed during the semester.

READING SCHEDULE

August 20: Introduction
What is Dissent and Deviance?

Unit 1: Religious Dissent

August 27: Religious Dissent in Early New England
Read: Philip Gura, "The Contagion of Corrupt Opinions"

MEET IN LIBRARY ROOM 305 FOR LIBRARY ORIENTATION AT 6:00

September 3: The Antinomian Controversy
Read: Michael Winship, *Times and Trials of Anne Hutchinson*
Antinomian Controversy Documents
BOOK REVIEW DUE

September 10: Religious Dissent in Virginia and Pennsylvania
Read: Rodger Payne, "New Light in Hanover County"
Aaron Fogleman, "Jesus is Female"

Unit 2: Witchcraft

September 17: The Nature of Witchcraft in Colonial America
Read: David Hall, "A World of Wonders"
Jane Kamensky, "Words, Witches and Woman Trouble"
Carol Karlson, "The Economic Basis of Witchcraft"

September 24: Witchcraft at Salem

Read: Boyer and Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed*

October 1: Witches and Witchcraft Victims

Read: William Perkins, "On the Identification of a Witch"

Cotton Mather, "Bewitchment of the Goodwin Children"

ESSAYS DUE

Unit 3: Sexual Deviance

October 8: Interracial Liaisons

Read: Jennifer Spear, "Colonial Intimacies"

Daniel Mandell, "The Saga of Sarah Muckamugg"

Documents, "Sex and Race Relations"

October 15: Gender and Sexual Ambiguity

Read: Kathleen Brown, "Changed...into the Fashion of a Man"

Mary Beth Norton, "Searchers Again Assembled"

Richard Godbeer, "The Cry of Sodom"

GRADUATE STUDENT EXTRA BOOK REVIEW DUE

October 22: Premarital Sex and Illegitimacy

Read: John Ruston Pagan, *Anne Orthwood's Bastard*

Documents, "Keeping Order in a Puritan Community"

Unit 4: Riot and Revelry

October 29: Charivaris and Social Conformity

Read: Brendan McConville, "The Rise of Rough Music"

Steven Stewart, "Skimmington in the Middle and New
England Colonies"

Documents, excerpts from Essex Quarterly Court Records

ROUGH DRAFTS OF RESEARCH PAPERS DUE

November 5: Confidence Men and Women

Read: Steven Bullock, "A Mumper Among the Gentle"

Documents, "Manners and Etiquette," excerpts from Alexander
Hamilton's "Itinerario"

Unit 5: Sailors and Pirates

November 12: Sailors as Outsiders

Read: Marcus Rediker, *Devil and Deep Blue Sea*, Introduction,
Chs. 1-4

November 19: Pirates

Read: Marcus Rediker, *Devil and Deep Blue Sea*, Chs. 5-6,
Conclusion
Documents, “Pirates of the Caribbean,” “Trial of William
Kidd”

Research papers will be due on the final day of classes, December 2. However, students are encouraged to turn in the papers on the last day our class meets, November 19.

Readings can be found at:

Philip Gura, “‘The Contagion of Corrupt Opinions’ in Puritan Massachusetts: The Case of William Pynchon,” J-Stor

Antinomian Controversy Documents, course reserve

Rodger Payne, “New Light in Hanover County: Evangelical Dissent in Piedmont Virginia, 1740-1755,” J-Stor

Aaron Spencer Fogleman, “Jesus is Female: The Moravian Challenge in the German Communities of British North America,” History Cooperative

David Hall, “A World of Wonders,” course reserve

Jane Kamensky, “Words, Witches, and Woman Trouble: Witchcraft, Disorderly Speech, and Gender Boundaries in Puritan New England,” course reserve

Carol Karlsen, “The Economic Basis of Witchcraft,” course reserve

William Perkins, “On the Identification of a Witch,” course reserve

Cotton Mather, “Bewitchment of the Goodwin Children,” course reserve

Jennifer M. Spear, “Colonial Intimacies: Legislating Sex in French Louisiana,” History Cooperative

Daniel R. Mandell, “The Saga of Sarah Muckamugg: Indian and African American Intermarriage in Colonial New England,” course reserve

Documents, “Sex and Race Relations,” course reserve

Kathleen Brown, “ ‘Changed...into the Fashion of a Man’: The Politics of Sexual Difference in a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Settlement,” course reserve

Mary Beth Norton, “Searchers Again Assembled,” course reserve

Richard Godbeer, “ ‘The Cry of Sodom’: Discourse, Intercourse and Desire in Colonial New England,” J-Stor

Documents, “Keeping Order in a Puritan Community,” course reserve

Brendan McConville, “The Rise of Rough Music: Reflections on an Ancient New Custom in Eighteenth-Century New Jersey,” to be announced

Steven J. Stewart, “Skimmington in the Middle and New England Colonies,” course reserve

Documents, excerpts from the Essex Quarterly Court Records, course reserve

Steven C. Bullock, “A Mumper among the Gentle: Tom Bell, Colonial Confidence Man,” J-Stor

Document, “Manners and Etiquette in the Eighteenth Century,” course reserve

Document, excerpts from Alexander Hamilton’s “Itinerario,” course reserve

Document, “Pirates of the Caribbean,” course reserve

Document, “The Trial of William Kidd,” course reserve

RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES

The research paper will be an analysis of a document (such as a diary, journal, sermon, letters, or legal or official papers) written between the years of 1600 and 1750. The library has many books containing primary documents and several web sites have posted primary documents. A few of the more useful sites are listed on the web page for this course, which is accessed through the Instruction section of the library web page. You should begin researching the documents and make a choice fairly early in the semester. When you have decided on your document, or at least narrowed the possibilities, please bring it to me to make sure that it is appropriate.

Regardless of the kind of document you choose to work with, you will analyze it for what it tells you about the attitudes towards non-conformists in that society. These ideas generally will not be explicit in the document; you will need to read it closely, fitting the authors comments into what you have learned about these issues in class and from secondary sources (journal articles and books). You will therefore need to ask many questions about your author and about your document, and decide which issues or ideas you wish to explore further.

To begin, you should think about questions such as: who is the author? Where does s/he come from? What is the gender of the author? How does this affect his or her perceptions? What is the author's age? When was the narrative written (time period; early in the author's life or later)? What social and economic class does the author come from? Is s/he educated? What is his or her occupation? Is s/he a member of the "thinking classes" or a laborer, sailor, servant, or soldier?

Once you get basic biographical details, which you can generally find in the introduction to the narrative, in biographies of the author (depending upon his/her later fame), or through biographical dictionaries (such as the Dictionary of American Biography—these resources will be discussed during the library session)—you can begin to expand your research and place the document and author within a larger context. How did the author's background shape his or her perception? How did his/her experiences affect the narrative? How did the author's relationship to the principals in the narrative shape the document?

You will also have to decide, based on your research, whether the author is a reliable witness. What is his/her purpose for writing the narrative? Who is the intended audience? How does the author write about the issue (what kind of language is used—formal or informal)? What is the tone of the narrative—serious, playful, facetious, demeaning? Can you trust the information presented in whole or in part? Why or why not?

You will also need to think about the meaning of conformity, dissent and deviance for this paper. What do these terms mean in the context of the time, place and people you are studying? How do they apply to the people and issues in your narrative? You will

therefore need to think about the social norms for that society to understand how your subjects dissented from that norm.

The structure of your paper then, will include an introduction that lays out the issues and actors in your paper. You will need to discuss the society that these people were part of, focusing on the meaning of dissent within this society. You can then begin to lay out your analysis of the primary source, which will be the longest section of the paper. The conclusion wraps up the discussion.

The questions you ask of your narrative will be shaped by the narrative, the author, and your interests. Each narrative will contain enough information for several papers; you need to decide what aspects of lower-class or minority activities to focus on. This focus then becomes the basis for your thesis. Each paper must have a thesis—an argument, a point of view, a purpose. A simple narrative of events is not acceptable. Always ask yourself why your research is important. What does it tell you about attitudes toward non-conformists and how do you know this? What evidence can you glean from the document to support your conclusion? And, most importantly, why? Alternatively, ask yourself “Who cares?” If you can answer the question “who cares” with a statement about the relevance of your topic, you are on your way to developing a thesis statement.

This is not a paper that you will be able to do overnight—begin thinking about a document NOW. Go to the library, go to the web sites. Thumb through the documents that look interesting. Although we will talk about the process of doing the research during the library session, you do not have to wait until then to begin thinking about the paper. You can talk to your friends and classmates about topics, and you can come to me for help. **DO NOT PUT THIS OFF.**

The paper will be ten to twelve pages (longer for graduate students), typed, double-spaced, using a 12-point readable font and standard margins (at least 1 inch, but no more than 1.25 inches). Paragraphs should be indented five spaces with only **one** double-space between paragraphs. You must also use at least five secondary sources, at least three of which must be books or scholarly articles. In other words, you cannot rely solely on Internet resources for this paper.

Writing will be an important aspect of all assignments. Papers and essays will be graded on composition, grammar, spelling and syntax as well as on content. Pay attention to your writing—use complete, coherent sentences and paragraphs. Make sure that your sentences and paragraphs flow logically from point to point. Refrain from using non-standard English and inappropriate language.

You will be expected to cite your sources **properly** in all written assignments for this class. For the research paper, you must cite your sources in footnotes using the Chicago Style. I do not accept papers using citations in the MLA or social sciences style. Examples of the Chicago style can be found later in this syllabus. The class website developed by the librarians also has a link to the Chicago Manual of Style website where you can find examples. We will discuss citations more as the semester progresses.

The rough draft, which will receive a grade, should be AT LEAST seven or eight pages long—it should be a rough draft of the complete paper. It should present your thesis, and the evidence, both primary and secondary, that you will use to support your thesis. It will not be your final draft, but it should be a substantial paper, so that I can help you shape the final draft. The rough draft will include proper citations.

BOOK REVIEW GUIDELINES

The book review should be three to five pages long, typed, double-spaced, using a 12-point readable font and standard margins (at least 1 inch, but no more than 1.25 inches). Paragraphs should be indented five spaces with only **one** double-space between paragraphs. Make sure to include a title for your review based on your argument.

The review will be graded on composition, grammar, spelling and syntax as well as on content. Pay attention to your writing—use complete, coherent sentences and paragraphs. Make sure that your sentences and paragraphs flow logically from point to point. Refrain from using non-standard English and inappropriate language.

You will be expected to properly cite your sources in all written assignments for this class. All references must be in the Chicago Manual of Style format. I do not accept papers using citations in the MLA or social sciences style. Points will be deducted for improper citation forms. See the Citation page later in this syllabus for examples of this style.

WHAT IS A BOOK REVIEW?

A book review is a critical evaluation of a book or monograph. **A book review is not a book report.** A book review assesses the strengths and weaknesses of an author's argument, the evidence s/he presents, and the book's place in the literature of the subject. A review does not simply describe the book, nor does it criticize just to be critical. If there is a problem with the book, the issues should be noted and discussed, but criticisms should be balanced by a discussion of the positive aspects of the work. For examples of professional book reviews, look in the review section of any major history journal (i.e. *William and Mary Quarterly*, *American Historical Review*, *Journal of American History*).

How do I write a book review?

First, read the book completely, including the introduction and preface. An author will frequently lay out his/her argument and methodology in these first few pages. This will help you evaluate the argument as you read the book.

Second, take notes on the book. Do not expect to remember the details and examples that you will need to write the review. Note your impressions of the book and any section or chapter that seems particularly clear (or not). You may also want to note the structure of the book and whether this organization helps to understand the argument (or not).

Third, begin to write. Your first paragraph should include the title of the book and the author's name, and briefly describe the subject of the monograph. The second paragraph should state the author's argument and how s/he attempted to prove that argument; your thesis—the argument you want to make about the book—should follow. The following paragraphs will address each of your points completely and logically. You should start with the positive points—what the author did well or what particularly struck you as new or exciting information. Any criticisms should be at the end of the review. Your conclusion should briefly restate your overall opinion of the work and place it within the literature. In other words, if you have read other books on a similar subject, you should compare the reviewed work with these books. If not, simply summarize your opinion and whether you think the work was valuable and increased your understanding of the issues.

Warning: do not simply end by stating that you liked the book because it was enjoyable to read. Be objective—use statements such as “The book enables the reader to easily comprehend the complex issues of ...”. Come to a *conclusion* about the work.

Fourth, rewrite and revise your paper, more than once if necessary. Make sure that you have written what you meant to say and that it is clear and concise. Writing is not easy and a well-written paper cannot be composed overnight or the day before it is due.

ESSAYS

For the essay, you will be asked to discuss a topic that based on course readings. You will need to read the piece closely and develop a thesis about the issue, using evidence from the documents and secondary materials to back up your analysis.

In a sense, the essay is an abbreviated version of your research paper. You will use the same analytical skills in both papers, thinking about who the author was, why he wrote, and what his language tells you not just about the society being described, but also the broader concerns that underlie the surface issues.

The essay should be five to seven pages long, typed, double-spaced, using a 12-point readable font and standard margins (at least 1 inch, but no more than 1.25 inches). Paragraphs should be indented five spaces with only **one** double-space between paragraphs. All citations should be in the proper form, following the Chicago Manual of Style. The paper will also have a title based on the issues you discuss (“Essay on” is not an appropriate title).

The essay will be graded on composition, grammar, spelling and syntax as well as on content. Pay attention to your writing—use complete, coherent sentences and paragraphs. Make sure that your sentences and paragraphs flow logically from point to point. Refrain from using non-standard English and inappropriate language.

The first draft of the essay will be peer-reviewed. You will rewrite the paper after receiving your partner’s comments. If, in your rewritten version, you use an idea from the paper you reviewed, you must provide a citation. You must also build on the idea, using it to further your own arguments, not simply restate it.

STYLISTIC ISSUES:

Do not use contractions in formal writing (i.e. don't, can't).

Do not use first or second person (I or you)—use third person except when absolutely necessary.

Do not use abbreviations such as “etc.” Spell out most words; as for “etc.” the purpose of an essay is to elaborate on your ideas—“etc.” is a shortcut that means I am too lazy to fully think through this idea. Standard abbreviations (Dr., Mr.) are acceptable.

Do not use informal language, slang or colloquialisms.

Watch your verb tenses. In history papers, since you are discussing the past, you generally should use the past tense. The English language has a perfectly serviceable past tense—do not write solely in the present tense. Do not shift verb tenses—stay with either the past or the present. Be careful of the conditional tense—“would” and “could,” for example. Use straightforward statements with active verbs rather than passive or conditional verbs.

Use plurals correctly. In English, plural words usually have an “s” or “es” at the end. If you are talking about more than one, you must add the proper ending. Students frequently write sentences such as “The colonist in the Chesapeake held many slaves.” Since there were more than one colonist, the sentence should read “The colonists in the Chesapeake held many slaves.”

Do not use vague or unclear words such as “things.” “Many things happened in Massachusetts in 1692.” That is a true statement, but the purpose of an essay is to discuss, in detail, such “things.” Be specific, and use clear, concrete language.

Watch singular/ plural shift. “Each colony re-instituted their earlier forms of government.” “Each” is singular, “their” and “forms” are plural. The sentence should read “Each colony re-instituted its earlier form of government.”

In American English, punctuation usually falls within quotation marks. In other words, commas and periods in a quotation come before the final mark (”).

Footnote numbers usually come at the end of sentences or paragraphs, rather than in the middle of sentences. Even if you have a quotation in the middle of a sentence, the number comes at the end of the sentence. **Never put the footnote number at the beginning of the sentence or quote being cited.** Footnote numbers come after the period ending the sentence.¹

¹ Like this.

CITATIONS

All papers for this class will use footnotes formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS). MLA or social science formatting will not be accepted. This is an upper division history class—you should learn the citation style used by historians. Points will be deducted from papers using improper citation forms.

Most word processing programs include a footnote function. In Microsoft Word, you can place a footnote button on the formatting toolbar. When you need to insert a footnote, click the button and the footnote number appears in the text and at the bottom of the page. You then type in your information and return to the main text to continue. By using this function, footnotes stay with the text as you edit your work. You can also turn footnotes into endnotes very easily. If you do not know how to use this function, please ask. It will make adding proper citations to your paper much easier.

The research paper will also include a properly-formatted bibliography, which differs from the footnote format.

Below are examples of Chicago-style footnotes and bibliographical entries. If you have questions about appropriate forms, please ask. You can also access the Chicago website through the course web page for more examples.

FOOTNOTES OR END NOTES:

Books

First citation:

Richard Archer, *Fissures in the Rock: New England in the Seventeenth Century* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2001), page number(s).

After the first complete citation, you should use a short citation.

Archer, *Fissures*, page number(s).

Article in an edited volume

First citation:

Joan Thirsk, "Patterns of Agriculture in Seventeenth-Century England," in *Seventeenth Century New England* ed. David D. Hall and David Grayson Allen (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1984), 39-54. [If you have used a quote from the article, add Quote and the appropriate page number after the pages of the article, i.e. ...39-54. Quote, 45.]

Following citations:

Thirsk, "Patterns of Agriculture," page number(s).

Article in a scholarly journal

First citation:

David J. Silverman, “ ‘We Chuse to be Bounded’: Native American Animal Husbandry in Colonial New England,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 60:3 (2003), 511-548.

Following citations:

Silverman, “ ‘We Chuse to be Bounded’,” *WMQ*, page number(s).

Page numbers for quotes should be handled as noted under *Article in an Edited Volume*.

Internet

First citation:

Patricia U. Bonomi, “The Middle Colonies as the Birthplace of American Religious Pluralism,” National Humanities Center, www.uni52v.unity.edu:8080/tserve/eighteen/ekeyinfo/idcol.htm (accessed 23 November 2001).

Following citations:

Bonomi, “Middle Colonies” National Humanities Center website, 11/23/01.

You should not use “Ibid.” in your papers. Use the short forms shown above.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Archer, Richard. *Fissures in the Rock: New England in the Seventeenth Century*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2001.

Article in an edited volume

Thirsk, Joan. “Patterns of Agriculture in Seventeenth-Century England.” In *Seventeenth Century New England*, edited by David D. Hall and David Grayson Allen. Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1984.

Article in a scholarly journal

Silverman, David J. “ ‘We Chuse to be Bounded’: Native American Animal Husbandry in Colonial New England.” *William and Mary Quarterly* 60:3 (2003): 511-548.

Internet

Bonomi, Patricia U. “The Middle Colonies as the Birthplace of American Religious Pluralism.” National Humanities Center. www.uni52v.unity.edu:8080/tserve/eighteen/ekeyinfo/idcol.htm. Accessed 23 November 2001.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM

There is nothing wrong with using the words or thoughts of others or getting their help; indeed it is good to do so as long as you explicitly acknowledge your debt. Plagiarism is when you pass on the words or thoughts of others as though they were your own.

Plagiarism includes:

- Copying without quotation marks or paraphrasing without acknowledgement from someone else's writing
- Using someone else's facts or ideas without acknowledgement
- Handing in work for one course that you handed in for credit for another course without the permission of both instructors

When you use published words, data or thoughts, you must footnote your use. There are several footnote formats; in history we generally follow the Chicago Manual of Style. When you use the words or ideas of friends or classmates, you should thank them in an endnote (e.g., "I am grateful to so-and-so for the argument in the third paragraph." If friends just give you reactions, but not suggestions, you need not acknowledge that help in print although it is gracious to do so.)

You can strengthen your paper by using material written by others as long as you acknowledge your use and as long as you use that material as a building block for your own thinking rather than as a substitute for it.

The academic and scientific worlds depend on people using the work of others in their own work. Dishonesty destroys the possibility of working together as colleagues. Scholars and researchers do not advance knowledge by passing off others' work as their own. Students do not learn by copying what they should think out on their own.

Unintentional plagiarism is still plagiarism. Now that you have read this, you cannot plead ignorance. If you have any questions about the proper acknowledgement of help, be sure to ask the instructor.

Adapted from the Statement on Plagiarism, Department of History, SUNY Stony Brook, Undergraduate Bulletin, Fall 2001.