QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY AT KINGSTON
Department of Economics

ECONOMICS 331
Economic History of North America to 1865

Fall 2010
Frank D. Lewis
Tuesday at 4:00 pm; Thursday at 2:30 pm.
Dunning 303
Location - Kingston Hall, Room 200
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http://www.qed.econ.queensu.ca/faculty/lewis/econ331/

Office Hours: Tuesday: 2:00 pm - 3:00pm
Thursday: 11:00 am - noon
or by appointment

Grade Distribution: Mid-term Test - 20%
Essay - 30%
Final Exam - 50%


These texts have been placed on Reserve in Stauffer Library.

Students may wish to purchase: A. Carlos and F. Lewis, *Commerce by a Frozen Sea: Native Americans and the European Fur Trade* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), which is not part of the course package. Copies are available at the campus bookstore. The book is also available on Reserve in Stauffer Library. All the other required readings are available in a course package, which can be purchased from the Copy Center (P&CC) located in the JDUC. Journal articles can also be downloaded from the web-based journal archives, available through the Queen’s library home page.

Objectives of the Course:

The central purpose of this course is to introduce students to research on the development of Canada and the United States in the years prior to the 1860s. Throughout we use economic
reasoning to help explain aspects of North America's past, and the topics include major developments that shaped the North American Economy. Among the themes to be discussed are the aboriginal economy, early income growth and the relation of income to nutrition and stature, human and physical capital accumulation, migration and settlement, agricultural and industrial productivity change, slavery, and commercial policy. Taken as a whole the topics, although by no means exhaustive, illustrate how scholars have combined evidence and theory to further our understanding of history and economic development.

Mid-Term Thursday, October 28th - in class.

Term Paper

A research paper is required of every student. Suggested topics plus some bibliographical material will be distributed. If a student wishes to write on a topic not on the list, permission should be obtained prior to beginning work on the essay. The paper should be about 14 to 16 pages in length (double spaced), and should include sources for all quotations, tables, charts and so on.

Reading List (* indicates a required reading)

INTRODUCTION Cliometrics - The "New" Economic History


PART I: Early Colonial Development

A. Overview: Canada to 1763

1. Norrie et al., chapters 1-3.

B. The Aboriginal Economy and the Fur Trade

*1. A. Carlos and F. Lewis, Commerce by a Frozen Sea: Native Americans and the European Fur Trade, Introduction, chapters 2, 4, and 5, and appendix B.


A. Migration to the American Colonies - Indentured Servitude


PART II: Economic Growth and Productivity Change

A. Growth in Pre-industrial North America

1. Norrie et al., chapter 6.

2. Atack and Passell, chapters 1 and 2.


B. Labour and Early Industrialization


C. Agricultural Productivity

(i) Agriculture Productivity in Lower Canada

1. Norrie et al., chapter 5.


(ii) Diffusion of Technology


D. Farm Settlement in Upper Canada


PART III: Aspects of Slavery in the Americas

A. Slave Productivity and the Slave Trade


B. Incentives and the Slave System


C. The Cost of the Civil War


PART IV: Human and Physical Capital Accumulation

A. Income, Nutrition and Human Stature


*3. A. Carlos and F. Lewis, *Commerce by a Frozen Sea*, chapter 7 and appendix D.

B. Capital Accumulation

(i) Savings and Demographic Change


(ii) The Building and Financing of Early Canadian Railways

1. Norrie et al., chapter 9.


PART V: Trade and Commercial Policy

Canada-U.S. Reciprocity

1. Norrie et al., chapter 8.


Abbreviations of Periodicals

*C.J.E.* - Canadian Journal of Economics
*E.E.H.* - Explorations in Economic History
*J.E.H.* - Journal of Economic History
*J.P.E.* - Journal of Political Economy