

## God of liberty: religion, and religious thought in the American revolution

---

|                   |  |                    |               |
|-------------------|--|--------------------|---------------|
| <b>Start date</b> | 21 January 2017                          | <b>Time</b>        | 10:00 – 16:45 |
| <b>Venue</b>      | Madingley Hall<br>Madingley<br>Cambridge |                    |               |
| <b>Tutor</b>      | Dr Simon Doney                           | <b>Course code</b> | 1617NDX020    |

**Director of Programmes** Emma Jennings  
**For further information on this course, please contact** Public Programme Co-ordinator, Clare Kerr  
[clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk) or 01223 746237

**To book** See: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk) or telephone 01223 746262

---

### Tutor biography

Since academic research into Puritanism, Dr Doney has been teaching adult learners for a number of educational institutions. He has experience of teaching a wide range of learners from diverse backgrounds and who have a desire to know more about history. He aims to get students introduced to key historical sources and debates and to encourage and stimulate further reading in the subject of church history and theology. His main interests include Protestantism and radical religion in early-modern Europe and England, and he provides lectures on the History of Christianity and Historical Theology.

---

## Course programme

---

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 09:30         | Terrace bar open for pre-course tea/coffee  |
| 10:00 – 11:15 | <b>Introduction: Religion and Belief in Colonial America</b>                                |
| 11:15         | Coffee  |
| 11:45 – 13:00 | <b>Liberty and Toleration</b>   |
| 13:00         | Lunch   |
| 14:00 – 15:15 | <b>'Victory over the beast': The Millennium and the American Revolution</b>                 |
| 15:15         | Tea   |
| 15:30 – 16:45 | <b>The birth of civil religion: Christian Virtue and Freedom in the American Revolution</b> |
| 16:45         | Day-school ends   |

---

## Course syllabus

---

### Aims:

The overall purpose of the course is to:

- identify the main forms of religious belief in Colonial America
- evaluate the impact Christianity on the origins and outcomes of the American Revolution
- analyse the impact of Christianity on arguments for and against opposition to British rule

### Content:

Colonial America was a growing nation of many diverse forms of Christianity but with a common ground which played a significant part in defining the American struggle against British tyranny in the American Revolution. This is an introduction to the role of religious thought in the period, including some short studies on the legacy of the 'Great Awakening', 'anti-Catholicism', American evangelicalism, and Christian republicanism.

### Presentation of the course:

Each session will be shaped around interactive lectures with slide presentations and time for class discussions. Student activities are based on reading contemporary ideas and of primary importance will be the study of relevant historical sources.

### Outcomes:

**As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:**

- Identify the main religious beliefs in Colonial America on the eve of the American Revolution
- evaluate the contribution of arguments for religious liberty and toleration in the American Revolution
- understand the role of millennialism in the religious belief and popular culture of Colonial America
- understand the role of 'virtue' and 'freedom' in the birth of civil religion during the American Revolution

---

## Reading and resources list

---

Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

---

Bailyn, B. *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (London: Harvard University Press, 1992)

Gray, E. and Kamensky, J. (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the American Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)

Greene, J. and Pole, J. (eds) *A Companion to the American Revolution* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003)

Hatch, N. *The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Republican Thought and the Millennium in Revolutionary New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977)

Kidd, T. *God of Liberty: A Religious History of the American Revolution* (London: Basic Books, 2012)

Mahaffrey, J. *Accidental Revolutionary: George Whitefield and the Creation of America* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2011)

Noll, M. *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)

Noll, M. *Christians and the American Revolution* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1986)

Wood, G. *The American Revolution: A History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2003)

---

## Additional information

---

### Venue

Details of how to find Madingley Hall can be found on our website:  
<http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/who-we-are/how-to-find-the-institute>

### Refreshments

Tea and coffee and lunch will be provided. If you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies and have not already advised us, please inform our Admissions Team on [ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk) or +44 (0)1223 746262.

**Note** Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

*Information correct as of:* 11 November 2016