

Timeline for an Alternative American History

We study the myth of innocence in order to reframe it, to imagine a future that exists in potential within the essence of the myth.

1500-1530: Spaniards bring concepts of racial purity; both colonialism and puritanism begin.

1620: English bring both slavery and Puritanism to their colonies. The Paranoid and the Predatory Imaginations take hold.

1675-1700: Bacon's Rebellion, King Philip's War, captivity narratives, witch craze. Most elements of the myth are in place: opportunity, freedom, new start, growth, mobility, whiteness, empire, inner and outer Others.

1775-1800: Final elements, equality, good intentions and exceptionalism, are added to the story, along with shadow of racism. "Sealing of the alchemical vessel."

1820-1830: Beginning of inclusion of the Other (abolitionism); Manifest Destiny.

1875-1890: Outer Other shifts from Indians to communists while inner Other solidifies as Jim Crow. "Americanism" becomes the civic religion.

1920: Women included in the *Polis*; America begins to dance.

1950: Blacks enter *Polis* as the American empire reaches its apogee.

1960-1975: Major cracks appear in the myth of innocence; conservative reaction begins.

2000: The myth is re-invigorated. Outer Other shifts from communists to terrorists. Gays enter the *Polis*.