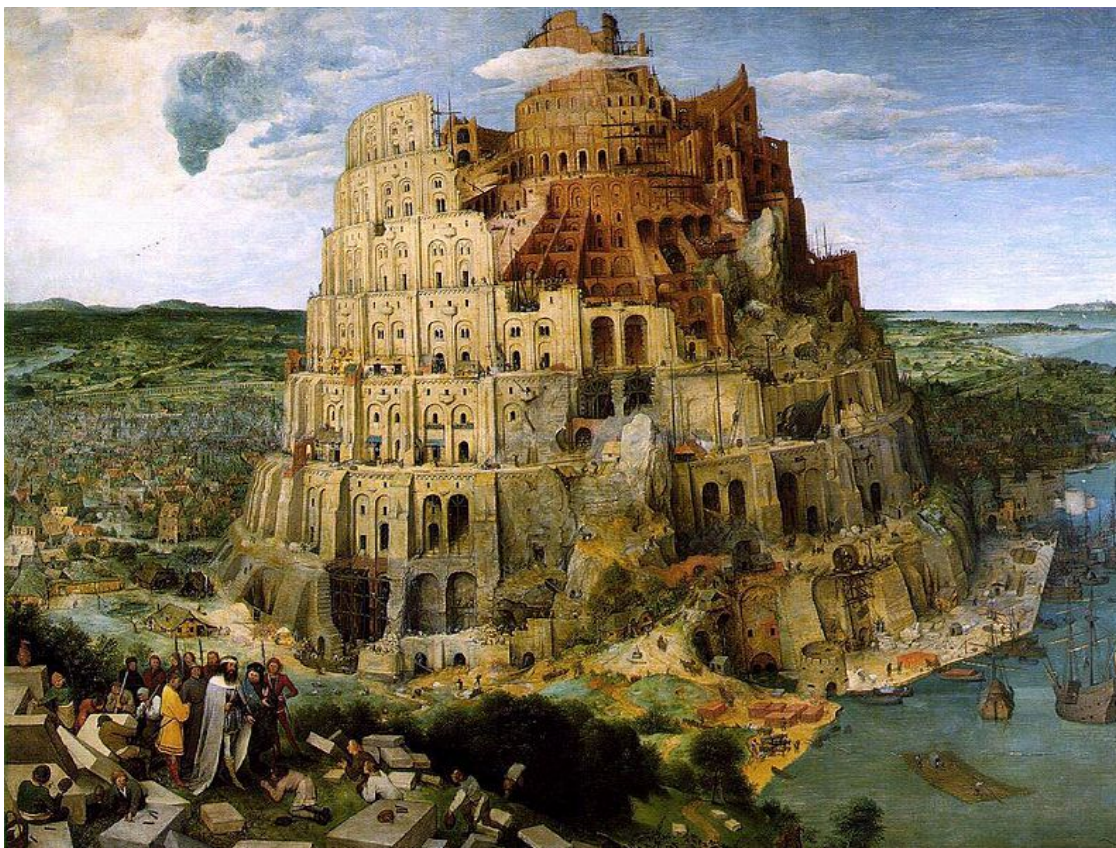


ENGLISH 6110: SEMINAR IN AMERICAN LITERATURE I
Beyond Babel: The Multilingual Literatures of Early
America
FALL 2014
W 5:30-8 PM
TLC 1204



DR. PATRICK M. ERBEN

OFFICE: TLC 2239

**OFFICE HOURS: MW 10AM-12PM, W 4-5PM,
AND BY APPOINTMENT.**

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NB: THIS COURSE DOES NOT USE COURSEDEN!

Course Description: This course examines the central roles of multilingualism and polyvocality in the development of American literature. We will focus on four paradigmatic early American genres—the captivity narrative, poetry, autobiography, the novel—and compare different national, linguistic, religious, cultural, and ethnic approaches. Simultaneously, we will study methods of translingual and intercultural literary criticism. As a final project, we will produce a comparative study of two texts of the same genre but from different national/linguistic/ethnic traditions—one Anglo-American and one none-Anglo-American (e.g. African American, Native American, Dutch, French, German, Spanish, etc.). In surveying both canonical and traditionally marginalized figures and literary traditions, this course will also serve as an excellent preparation for your American I portion of the oral M.A. exam.

How, then, do Anglo-phone colonial and early national authors approach multivocality and difference (linguistic, ethnic, racial, etc.)? How do non-Anglo-phone writers approach cultural, religious, philosophical, and literary paradigms differently from their Anglo-phone counterparts? Are multilingualism, multivocality, and difference ultimately destructive or constitutive to the American experiment? How has the cliché of America as a Babel of languages and peoples affected our cultural and political perception of this multiplicity?

To help us understand comparative methodologies in recent literary and cultural scholarship, one or two individual students will present *brief* reviews of scholarship (critical essays or book chapters) during each class meeting. As a final project, we will produce a comparative study of two (or more) texts from different national/linguistic/ethnic traditions—one Anglo-American and one none-Anglo-American (e.g. African American, Native American, Dutch, French, German, Spanish, etc.).

REQUIRED TEXTS and MATERIALS:

- ☞ Gordon M. Sayre, ed. *American Captivity Narratives*. Wadsworth Publishing. 978-0395980736.
- ☞ Hannah Webster Foster, *The Coquette*. Broadview Press. 9781551119984.
- ☞ Charles Brockden Brown, *Wieland*. W. W. Norton. 978-0-393-93253-9.
- ☞ David Shields, ed. *American Poetry: The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Library of America. 978-1931082907.
- ☞ Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography*. W. W. Norton (critical edition). 978-0393935615
- ☞ Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative*. Broadview Press. 978-1551112626.
- ☞ William Apess, *A Son of the Forest and Other Writings*. U of Massachusetts Press. 978-1558491076.
- ☞ Additional primary and secondary readings will be supplied by the instructor as handouts or as PDFs through email.

Recommended Texts/Materials:

- Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th edition (previous editions are acceptable). MLA style will be required for all papers turned in for this course.

- A handbook of literary terms (e.g. Holman/Harmon, *A Handbook to Literature*, or M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*).

USEFUL LIBRARY DATABASES FOR SECONDARY RESEARCH:

Worldcat
 MLA Bibliography
 Project Muse
 America: History & Life
 JSTOR
 Google Scholar [not a library database]

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE BREAKDOWN:

☞ Participation (including group work, in-class writing, and peer review)	20%
☞ Reading Quizzes	10%
☞ Short Analytical Paper	10%
☞ Critical Source Review and Presentation	10%
☞ Research Paper Presentation	10%
☞ Comparative Research Paper	40 %
○ Breakdown:	
▪ Paper Proposal (5%)	
▪ Annotated Bibliography (5%)	
▪ Draft (10%)	
▪ Final Paper (20%)	

ASSIGNMENT and REQUIREMENT DESCRIPTIONS: (detailed handouts to follow for all papers)

Participation: All reading assignments are to be completed by the beginning of the class period scheduled for discussion of these assignments (see detailed course schedule). **I expect you to bring all assigned texts to the class meeting during which they are to be discussed.** I encourage you to cultivate an active and engaged reading style, using underlining, marginalia, notes, etc. Classroom discussion will usually involve close readings, and I will ask you to support your comments with appropriate evidence from the text. **Active class participation** is the essence of successful learning and a successful course. I evaluate both the quality and quantity of your contributions, so less vocal students may excel through fewer but thoughtful comments.

Quizzes: I will ask you to complete weekly reading quizzes, testing general knowledge of the reading assignments for that particular day (primary readings only). Quizzes are multiple choice (10 questions = 100%; i.e. 10 correct answers = A, 9 correct answers = B, etc.) and are closed book. There are NO make-up quizzes, except for students participating in previously arranged, official university business (such as athletic team events, debate team events, etc.). If you miss class, you also miss the quiz for that day, resulting in a grade of 0% for that quiz.

Short Analytical Paper (4-page minimum; based on two primary sources): For this paper, pick two of the captivity narratives we read at the beginning of the semester and compare the treatment of *one* specific element in each account, e.g. the contact with Native Americans, the tension between victimization and agency/survival, acculturation vs. assimilation, food, religion, language, etc. Use close reading skills to support a critical argument/thesis. No secondary sources for this assignment. **(DETAILED DESCRIPTION TO FOLLOW)**

Secondary Source Review (1-page handout) & Class Presentation (circa 15 minutes): As rising literary critics, we need to be familiar with, understand, and be able to critique the work of other scholars. Recently, more and more scholarship studies American literature from a comparative, transatlantic, transcultural, or translingual perspective. Thus, I would like for you to find one scholarly article or book chapter that employs such critical methods, focusing on one of our topical units, such as captivity, the novel, etc. At the beginning of the semester, you will sign up for a specific date; on that day in class, you will present your article review to the **class orally, accompanied by a one-page summary handout (printed)**. Your analysis of the article/essay/chapter should summarize the argument, describe the methodology and evidence, and assess/evaluate the significance of the work to understanding primary works, a period, or a critical issue. Specifically, you should highlight how the transnational/translingual methodology employed by the scholar works and what it yields to our understanding of texts, contexts, and critical paradigms. Please talk to me if you are not sure which scholarly source you should pick and how you should approach the presentation. **(DETAILED DESCRIPTION TO FOLLOW)**

Comparative Research Paper (circa 15-20 pages): After producing a short comparative analysis and reviewing a transnational/translingual critical essay, the main accomplishment of the semester will be for you to produce a comparative research paper. This paper should be the size of a scholarly article (a minimum of 15 full pages) and use a comparative approach to a specific genre or body of texts (e.g. captivity narratives, poetry, novels), analyzing texts across linguistic/national/ethnic differences. While your research paper may utilize the texts we have studied this semester, you may also branch out to find other texts from the same genre. Your paper must also be informed by substantial research in secondary sources, including literary criticism, literary and cultural theory, history, theology, art history, anthropology, political science, sociology, philosophy, and so forth. We will develop your research paper in stages, from a research proposal and annotated bibliography to a draft and a final version. **(DETAILED DESCRIPTION TO FOLLOW)**

Research Project Presentation: During our final meeting (the final exam session), we will meet to share our research with each other. In a short presentation (max. 10 minutes), you should present on your research project, i.e. introduce the texts you are covering, your methodology, your background research, and your argument. Also, you may want to talk about the larger implication of your translingual/transnational analysis on our understanding of American literature, culture, and history. **(DETAILED DESCRIPTION TO FOLLOW)**

COURSE POLICIES:

Paper Use: Following the English Department's new guidelines for paperless teaching, this course strives to reduce paper use as much as possible. Handouts, syllabi, reading/discussion questions, and supplementary readings will be available through my personal website (www.westga.edu/~perben/). This course does NOT use CourseDen.

Attendance and Deadlines: In case of absence, you are responsible for keeping up with all assignments, readings, and in-class work. **I do not make lecture notes etc. available to students who missed class** (please get in touch with a fellow student). Powerpoint presentations will be posted on my website, but class discussion, other lectures, and blackboard/whiteboard notes also constitute material that will be relevant to the papers and exams. I can only accept late work if you discussed the issue with me ahead of time. All exceptions and acceptance of excuses are completely at my discretion.

Tardiness: A roll book will circulate at the BEGINNING of class. Everyone who is late will be noted as tardy. **Three (3) "tardies" will result in one (1) absence!**

Plagiarism: There are different forms of plagiarism, from blatant theft of entire papers to negligence in acknowledging a source in your writing. However, you will be held responsible for any form of plagiarism—whether intentional or not. Consequences and responses to plagiarism are entirely at the discretion of the instructor. Please pay specific attention to the English Department's site on plagiarism: <http://www.westga.edu/%7Eengdept/Plagiarism/index.html>. I expect all out-of-class work to abide by MLA Format (See: *MLA Handbook for the Writers of Research Papers*) for proper documentation of sources (primary and secondary).

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE: *NB: Before you read the following, keep in mind that I wouldn't have to address these issues if they hadn't caused problems in the past.* I expect everyone to be ready to work at the beginning of class. This means in particular having ALL reading materials assigned for that day as well as any tools for note-taking on hand and ready to use. You MAY bring drinks and/or non-smelly or non-noisy food to class. Most importantly: Be respectful toward the opinions, ideas, and personal identity of all members of our class!

TECHNOLOGY POLICY: As a general rule, all electronic devices, such as phones, i-pods, tablet computers, etc. must be silenced and tucked away in your bag for the entire class. If you urgently have to take care of some kind of business, please step outside of class. However, we will sporadically conduct brief online searches for relevant materials going along with the texts we are discussing in class. **You may then take out your digital device and conduct the assigned search and communicate your findings to the rest of class. You may also use your tablet or laptop computer to take notes, but please let me know that you are using your device for that purpose.**

Communication and E-mail Policy and Etiquette: According to university policy, I can only accept and answer emails sent from your official West Georgia email account (you can access this remotely through webmail or through "MyUWG."). I would also like to instate an "email

etiquette;” i.e. please observe basic rules of politeness and formality in email messages. These rules include:

- All messages must include a subject line
- All messages must include an address line (e.g. “Dear Dr. Erben” or “Dr. Erben”)
- Use polite and appropriate language, as well as reasonably edited prose (i.e. complete sentences, correct spelling, etc.)!
- No text-messaging language and abbreviations.
- Always sign your name!

Individual Help, Office Hours, and Writing Center: The writing center provides individual tutorials for any writing-related problems, but no proofreading service. The center is located in TLC 1201. However, I am not only available during my designated office hours, but am happy to speak to you about assignments and any other questions by appointment (or right after class).

Special Accommodations: Students in the UWG community have a right to equal access to classes and materials, regardless of special needs, whether temporary or permanent. Students with disabilities on file with Disability Services will be accommodated in this class per West Georgia regulations. Please see me immediately for arrangements. Disability services may be reached at (770) 839-6428.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

All changes are at the discretion of the instructor. **Important: All assignments, including readings, are to be completed for the date listed in the schedule! Other assignments may be added during the semester and will be made available electronically or in hardcopy by the instructor (free of charge).**

DATES	READINGS AND COURSE TOPICS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
W 8/27	Introduction to course, syllabus	
W 9/3	Captivity Narrative and the New World Encounter Read: Gordon Sayre, Introduction (1-17); “The Foundational Narrative of Mary Rowlandson” (127-176); “Two Puritan Captivities as Told by Cotton Mather” (177-197).	2 Students: Secondary Source Review—Captivity Narratives
W 9/10	Continued Captivity Narratives—“A Captive to Cannibals” (18-58); “Saved by the Chief’s Daughter” (59-90); “Jesuit Missionary Martyrs” (91-126). Film clips (in class): <i>Black Robe</i> , <i>How Tasty Was My Little Frenchman</i> , <i>The New World</i>	2 students: Secondary Source Review—Captivity Narratives

W 9/17	<p>Early American Poetry Read: <i>American Poetry: The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries</i> (please read biographical notes in the back first, then the complete selections by the following authors): Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor, Francis Daniel Pastorius, Christopher Witt; Selected writings by Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz (handout) Film clips (in class): <i>I, The Worst Of All</i></p>	2 students: Secondary Source Review—Poetry
W 9/24	<p>Read: <i>American Poetry</i>: Susanna Wright, Hannah Griffitts, Mercy Otis Warren, Annis Boudinot Stockton, Elizabeth Graeme Fergusson, “To Doctor Fothergill,” Phillis Wheatley, Lucy Terry.</p>	2 students: Secondary Source Review—Poetry Short Analytical Paper Due.
W 10/1	<p>The Early American Novel Read: Hannah Webster Foster, <i>The Coquette</i>: Introduction (9-29); Hannah Webster Foster Chronology; Appendix C: “The Education of Young Women” (pp. 333-338); the text (37-176).</p>	
W 10/8	<p>Cont. discussion <i>The Coquette</i>. Appendix A: Elizabeth Whitman: The Model for Eliza Wharton (317-324); Davidson, from <i>Revolution and the Word</i>, “Privileging the Feme Covert: The Sociology of Sentimental Fiction” (185-232; see course reserves) Introduction to Research Paper</p>	2 students: Secondary Source Review—Novel
W 10/15	<p>Read: Charles Brockden Brown, <i>Wieland</i>: “Preface” (vii-x); the text (7-181).</p>	
W 10/22	<p><i>Wieland</i> cont. Read: “Sources and Context” (each piece assigned to different students) (235-313).</p>	2 students: Secondary Source Review—Novel
W 10/29	<p>The Beginnings of Autobiography Benjamin Franklin, <i>The Autobiography</i>: “Introduction” (xiii-xxvi), “The Text of the Autobiography” (1-160); D. H. Lawrence, “Benjamin Franklin” (325-335).</p>	
W 11/5	<p>Olaudah Equiano, “Introduction” (by Angelo Costanzo), 9-30; “Chronology,” 31-36; “A Note on the Text,” 37-38; <i>The Interesting Narrative</i>, 39-253. Appendix A, 255-266.</p>	2 students: Secondary Source Review—Autobiography

W 11/12	William Apess, "Introduction" (by Barry O'Connell), ix-xxii; "Chronology," xxiii-xxv; <i>A Son of the Forest</i> , 1-56.	2 students: Secondary Source Review—Autobiography
F 11/14		Proposal and Annotated Bibliography due (emailed by 5pm to perben@westga.edu).
W 11/19	View (at home): <i>Belle</i> (Amma Asante, dir.; 2013); discussion in class. Research Paper Workshop	
W 11/26	Thanksgiving Break—no classes	
W 12/3	Peer Review (bring two printed copies of your draft to class)	Research Paper Draft due.
W 12/10	Final Exam Period; 5:00-7:30 pm	Research Paper Presentations
F 12/12	BY 5PM (IN MY EMAIL INBOX)	FINAL PROJECT DUE (EMAILED BY 5PM TO PERBEN@WESTGA.EDU)