

Swarthmore College
ENGL 050A
Reading Red, White, and In-Between in Early American Literature

Fall 2010
LPAC 301
Wed. 6-9 pm, 1 credit

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Office: LPAC 208
Hours: W 4:45-5:45pm

“You are our brethren of the same land.” –Thomas Jefferson

In the Great American Indian novel, when it is finally written,
all of the white people will be Indians and all of the Indians will be ghosts.
-Sherman Alexie

“And there can be no single overarching story.” -Annette Kolodny

Course Description

The course is principally concerned with studying (and enjoying!) literature and other cultural texts that construct Native- and Euro-American identities, relations, and cultural histories. Rather than frame generic “Native” and “European” cultural vantage points, the course invites students to think critically about and differentiate between writers, texts, and rhetorical purposes. Course readings will survey diverse voices in a broad range of genres and textual forms—journals, accounts, oral narratives, novels, poems, captivity narratives, short stories, letters, autobiographies, ethnographies, state papers, films, paintings, friezes, and so on. As students read course materials, they will encounter early American dialogues about issues and conflicts that shaped Native and European contact, colonization, cultural identities, the founding of a new American republic, and the politics of American history. Perhaps most importantly, students will explore ways in which these issues and conflicts are not completely confined to the past but continue into the present with perpetual vitality, even in our gaze upon the past.

Here is a sample of specific inquiries that touch on themes we will explore:

- Why do the Inuit figure the birth of humans from a pea pod?
- How do we read Columbus’s writings knowing that he misunderstands where he is and what he sees?
- Why do the Lenape depict the first Dutch settlers as intoxicators?
- Why might a sixteenth-century artist depict America as a naked Native woman lying on a hammock?
- Why does the Virgin Mary choose to appear before a lowly mestizo? Why can’t a bishop believe it?
- Why is Pocahontas portrayed so differently from one era to another?
- Why are so many white writers repulsed by “Indians” but attracted to “being Indian”?
- What really happened to white women captured by Indians?
- What forms of cross-racial relationships do early American novelists permit? Forbid?
- How does the art and architecture in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda depict Native-Euro relations?
- How does a Lakota woman derive power from mashing turnips and scratching out the devil’s eyes?

Class Texts*

1. *The Heath Anthology of American Literature, Volume A (Beginnings to 1800)*. Sixth Edition. Ed., Paul Lauter. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2009.
2. *Women’s Indian Captivity Narratives*. Ed. Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola. New York: Penguin, 1998.
3. Child, Lydia Maria. *Hobomok and Other Writings on Indians*. Ed. Carolyn Karcher. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1999.
4. Cooper, James Fenimore. *The Last of the Mohicans*. 1826. BANTAM New York: Penguin, 1986.

*Students will also use the Evans Digital Edition to Early American Imprints for some assignments.

Course of Study

Reading assignments must be completed by the date specified on the schedule below. Be prepared for quizzes on the assignments. In the event of a quiz, a student's *own handwritten* notes may be open and used. Consider the professor's reading guides when reading, taking notes, and contemplating texts. Read introductory materials and footnotes, as they will help to frame your understanding of the text.

The schedule for submitting **Response Papers** is encoded: "G" = "Group," "R" = "Response," and the numerals signify Group numbers and Response numbers. The "G1-R1" in Week 2 means that students in Group 1 (G1) will submit their first response paper (R1) at the beginning of class on September 8. The subject of the Response Paper must be one or more of the assigned readings for that week. The "G2-R1" in Week 3 means that students in Group 2 (G2) will submit their first response paper (R1) at the beginning of class on September 15. The subject of the G2-R1 paper must be one or more of the assigned readings for that week. The same patterns apply to G3-R1, G1-R2, G2-R2, G3-R2, and so on.

The texts listed on the schedule below are possible texts for our study; I will trim readings according to the interests and themes that develop through our course together. The numbers following the selection title correspond to *Heath* page numbers. Selections without numbers will be accessible through electronic means or otherwise provided by the professor. Selections marked "FHL" will be provided by the professor, but are also available at Swarthmore's Friends Historical Library. Students are expected to get electronic access to selections tagged as "Early American Imprints," either through Swarthmore's online library services or a Blackboard link.

Week 1 Sept. 1

- Introduction
- Syllabus
- Creation Narratives & Cultural Perspectives
 - Genesis* Creation Narrative
 - Apache, Cherokee, Inuit, Huron, Iroquois Creation Narratives

Week 2 Sept. 8, G1-R1

Native Literatures and Cultural Perspectives

- Lakota, "Wohpe and the Gift of the Pipe," 52-54
- Christine Dunham, Oglala Sioux, "Iktomi and the Dancing Ducks," 60-62
- Cherokee, "Origin of Disease and Medicine, 65-67

Accounts of First Contact

- Christopher Columbus, *Diario*, 21 October to 12 November 1492, 138-46
25-26 December 1492
- Palacios Rubios, "Requiremientto (ca. 1512), 132-33
- Yuchi, "Creation of the Whites," 73
- Lenape-Delaware, "The Arrival of the Whites," 74-79
- Micmac, "The Floating Island"
- Flathead, "Creation of the Red and White Races"

-In class: clips from *Conquest of Paradise 1492*

Week 3 Sept. 15, G2-R1

New Spain

- Cabeza de Vaca, *La Relacion*, Prologue, Chapters X, XI, XXI, XXIV, XXVII, XXXII, 157-60, 163-68
- "The Apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe in 1531," 196-204
- Don Antonio de Otermin, "Letter on the Pueblo Revolt of 1680," 213-21

-Hopi, "The Coming of the Spanish and the Pueblo Revolt," 221-25

-In class: clips from *Cabeza de Vaca*

-In-class readings from Bartolome de Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1542), recounting events in New Spain, Guatemala, and Yucatan

Week 4 Sept. 22, G3-R1

New France

-Samuel de Champlain, *The Voyages to the Great River St. Lawrence, 1608-1612*, 238-42

-*The Jesuit Relations*, 242-52

-In class: view clips from feature film: *Black Robe*

-Response to Reviews and Criticism

Week 5 Sept. 29

New Netherland

-Adriaen van der Donck, *A Description of the New Netherlands*, 310-13

Chesapeake (Virginia)

-John Smith, *Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England . . .* (1624), Book III, 276-81

A Description of New England (1616), 281-84

-Richard Frethorne, Letters from Virginia (1623), 288-91

New England (Massachusetts region)

-William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, 351-64

-Thomas Morton, *New English Canaan* (1637), 321-26

-Images of Pocahontas

-In class: clips from *Pocahontas*

Week 6 Oct. 6

Mary Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and the Goodness of GOD . . . a Narrative of the Captivity and Restauration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (1682), 464-92

Fall Break from Oct. 8-18

Week 7 Oct. 20, G1-R2 4-6 Page Formal Essay Due

Colonial Pennsylvania

-William Penn, Description of the Lenape, from "Letter to the Committee of the Free Society of Traders, [August 6, 1683] FHL

-The "Walking Purchase," 1737

-Delaware Indians, "Complaint against the 'Walking Purchase,' November 21, 1740

-Canasatego, "Response to the Delawares' Complaint," July 12, 1742

-The "Paxton Boys" Massacre at Conestoga, 1762

-Benjamin Franklin, *Narrative of the Late Massacre in Lancaster County, of a Number of Indians, Friends of this Province, By Persons Unknown. With some Observations on the Same.* 1764. Early American Imprints, Series 1, no. 9667.

-Matthew Smith and James Gibson. *A Declaration and Remonstrance Of the distress and bleeding Frontier Inhabitants Of the Province of Pennsylvania*, 1764.

Early American Imprints, Series 1, no. 9630.

Week 8 Oct. 27, G2-R2

from *Women's Indian Captivity Narratives* (required book for course)

-Hannah Dustan, *A Notable Exploit* from *Magnalia Christi Americana* by Cotton Mather (1702), 53

- A Surprising Account of the Discovery of a Lady Who Was Taken by the Indians* (1787), 81
- Mary Kinnan, *A True Narrative of the Sufferings of Mary Kinnan* by Shepard Kollock (1795), 105
- Mary Jemison, *A Narrative of the Life of Mary Jemison* (1824), Introduction, Chapters I, II, III, VI and VII, 125-48, 159-69

Week 9 Nov. 3, G3-R2

- Samson Occom, *A Short Narrative of My Life* (1768), 1175-81
- Ben Franklin, *Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America* (1784), 854-57
- Haudenosaunee, “Iroquois or Confederacy of the Five Nations,” 57-60
- Hopocan (Captain Pipe), “Speech to British Colonel DePeyster, November 1781”
- John Filson, “Appendix. The Adventures of Col. Daniel Boone,” from *The Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucke*, 49-82 (1784), Early American Imprints, Series 1, no. 18467.

-Supplementary

Hugh Henry Brackenridge (ed.), *Narrative of Late Expedition Against the Indians with An Account of the Barbarous Execution of Col. Crawford . . . in 1782* (1783), Early American Imprints, Series 1, no. 17993.

Week 10 Nov. 10, G1-R3

- Katteuha, “Letter from Cherokee Indian Women, to Benjamin Franklin, Governor of the State of Pennsylvania” (1787), 827
- Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Query VI (1787), 1026-31.
 “Letter to Benjamin Hawkins, Feb. 18, 1803,” 1054-55
 “[Address] To Brother Handsome Lake, Nov. 3, 1802,” 1057-58
- Red Jacket, “On the Religion of the White Man and the Red” (1805)
- Reverend Jacob Cram, “The Missionary’s Account of His Encounter with Red Jacket,” (1805) FHL
- Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, Selected Poems
- William Apess, “An Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man” (1833)

Supplementary Texts

- James Monroe, “The Monroe Doctrine” (1823)
- Chief Justice John Marshall, “Cherokee Nation v. Georgia” (1831)
- Andrew Jackson, “On Indian Removal: The President’s Message to Congress” (1830)
- William Cullen Bryant, “The Prairie” (1832)

Weeks 11 & 12 Nov. 17, G2-R3; Nov. 24, G3-R3

- James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826)

-In class: clips from *The Last of the Mohicans* (1936 & 1992)

Week 13 Dec. 1, 6-8 Page Formal Essay Due

- Lydia Maria Child *Hobomok* (1824)

Final Exam (the Final Exam period begins on December 8)—The date of our exam will be announced when Swarthmore publishes the exam schedule. The final exam will concentrate on Lydia Maria Child’s short novel entitled *Hobomok* (1824), as seen through the perspectives explored in the course.