

**ENGLISH 124 or 151: COLONIAL AMERICAN
LITERATURE – SALEM WITCH TRIALS
and
HONORS 124:
Salem Witch Trials and Questions of Evidence**

Lisa West,

Fall 2018 Office Hours:

Monday 12:00-3:00 PM;

Tuesday 11 AM-12:00 PM;

Thursday 11 AM-12:00 PM;

AND by appointment

I will post additional office hours on the Blackboard course site from time to time.

Fall 2018 Class Meets Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-10:45 in Howard Hall 308

This course fits into many curricular slots. It is an option for the LPS and Women's and Gender Studies Programs as well as an Honors course. It counts for the Historical Consciousness AOI (depth) and it is part of the History and Traditions track of the English major. Please check early in the semester to make sure you are registered for the title (English or Honors) that you want on your transcript. Contact me if you want me to change your registration to the different course number and title. Note that recently the English course number has changed due to departmental curriculum changes and course catalog changes. If you are having difficulties getting credit for a different field or concentration, contact me early in the term.

INTRODUCTION

What caused the infamous witch trials? Religious attitudes? A social crisis? Introduction of new ideas from the West Indies? Trauma from recent Indian attacks? Local politics? Changes in the status of women? This course will read a variety of explanations of the Salem witch trials. However, rather than decide what "really" happened, this course will focus more on the nature of evidence. When we read a description of "what happened," what constitutes the evidence? How do these ideas of evidence come into play with various strategies of writing from personal narrative to sermon to other forms? What is the role of writing, memory, representation, narrative and other "literary" concepts? Who gets to decide what is valid and what is not? How does this increased awareness of the way evidence is "embedded" in social reality affect your views about your own reading, writing, and judging?

We will read historical and critical accounts of the past, primary documents, and historical fiction. Our discussions of fiction will focus on what aspects of the Salem trials are emphasized, how fiction is (or is not) different from non-fiction, and what it means to be "historically accurate" or take "artistic license" with the past.

Hopefully, after this course you will approach this episode in history with a greater appreciation for its complexity. Hopefully you will also approach ANY period in history with a greater appreciation for its complexity and challenges. And hopefully you will read legal documents, petitions, policy statements, and other documents of daily life with an appreciation for possible narratives that exist beneath (or even within) their surfaces.

Course objectives:

- 1) practice critical thinking skills to analyze evidence and theories surrounding the trials;
- 2) use a database of primary texts (READDEX) and analyze a variety of primary documents;
- 3) understand the role of historical structures, such as social attitudes (about women, race), institutions and political/religious ideas, in how daily life was experienced in the past – and how we have access to such structures through the archives;
- 4) articulate how the witch trials have been interpreted in the years since 1692, with awareness of “what is at stake” in the different interpretations or adaptations of the events of 1692;
- 5) understand that when the word “witch” is used, something else is NOT being said; some issue other than witchcraft is important in each use of the words “witch” and “witchcraft”;
- 6) become more aware of what it means to look at a historical event through “interdisciplinary” methods, including how evidence is related to disciplinary theories and standards; and
- 7) acquire a vast array of knowledge about the 1690s that will undoubtedly serve you well in many capacities in your lives after Drake.

These course objectives are consistent with the mission statement of the English department, which is as follows:

Through sustained practice in reading, writing, and discussion, our students develop critical literacy for a digital age. Our programs foster enduring habits of mind such as intellectual curiosity, thoughtful analysis, a playful imagination, an openness to change and uncertainty, and a passion for literature in its myriad forms.

How I will Reach You:

By e-mail using your Drake e-mail address for individual messages and by Blackboard class email and/or announcements for general messages.

Required Texts:

Salem Possessed (Boyer and Nissenbaum)

Tituba, Reluctant Witch of Salem (Breslaw)

Salem Witch Trials Reader (Hill)

The Crucible (Miller)

The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane (Howe)

The Mirror for Witches (Forbes) – we may waive this one. Out of print.

E-Reserves and handouts
Peer work

Grading Assessment:

Unit One Document Take Home Test	5%
Unit Two Document Take Home Test	10%
Unit Three Narrative Take Home Test	10%
Position Papers	10%
Mid-Term Literature Review Paper (10+ pages)	20%
Fiction Paper (6+ pages)	10%
Final Paper due during exam week (10+ pages)	20%
Homework/other writing/Blackboard posts	15%

Take Home Tests:

There will be three different take home essay “tests.” I am calling these tests because I will not offer help in reading drafts, suggesting revisions, etc. All are open book. Unit One test will cover background information and context –and applying course information to newly encountered documents. Unit Two test will ask you to comment on a cluster of newly encountered primary sources – or material drawn from peer midterm papers. Unit Three will ask you to construct and defend your own “narrative” of the Salem trials. Together, these take home tests account for 25% of the final grade.

Mid-Term Literature Paper:

Students will select a literary genre in early American literature. Examples could be the captivity narrative, war narratives, sermon, diary, scientific writing, or other genres. We will use the Readex database held by Cowles Library for this project. We will also use the MLA Bibliography database for secondary sources. There will be requirements for a minimum number of both primary and secondary sources. This paper can be revised for a grade change if turned in on time, and we will upload them to Blackboard so the entire class will have access. More information on this assignment will be added to the Blackboard site. **REQUIRED:** at least one conference with me. I do plan to incorporate this material into the second half of the course and use peer papers as references for the final paper.

Fiction Exercise: Students will write a 6+ page essay on one or more of the “fiction” readings, focusing on the “literary” interpretation of the Salem trials. This exercise is an attempt to consider the literary aspect of understanding Salem, history in general, or some of the issues of the course (possession, sexuality, women’s bodies, property, representations of the devil). More information will be posted on Blackboard regarding paper requirements.

Homework/Blackboard/Short Response Papers: Expect to do some writing every week. We will have Blackboard posts on a variety of issues, from responses to reading to comments after class. We will have homework involving short research assignments, such as researching the biographical information on witches or researching historic events. One of my goals for the course is to have STUDENTS provide as much

information as possible rather than having me lecture. Our Blackboard site will become a class archive. Each student will also write at least two longer (full page single spaced) response papers that will be used to start discussion. We will have signups for these. These “position papers” have been given a separate grading component. Position papers, short writing and homework will be given a quantitative grade. I will have points entered on the Blackboard grading center. “Typical” short homework assignments will receive up to 5 points, while longer, more substantive assignments will receive 10 or more. Together, the short writing component counts for 25% of the final grade.

If class is canceled, there will be a substantial (at least 10 point) Blackboard assignment to complete within 24 hours of the missed class. Usually I will try to have the class accomplish on Blackboard what I wanted to accomplish in class discussion.

In-class work deriving from Blackboard, short responses or other homework may also count for this grading component. I will not give point totals for all in-class work.

Each Blackboard discussion board prompt post has a possible 5 points unless otherwise noted. In addition, I occasionally distribute a “bonus point” for exceptional posts or exceptional participation in a discussion forum. “Late” posts will receive a zero – if the point was to upload material BEFORE class, adding it after a discussion does not accomplish the same goals. 5= post is thoughtful, includes text details (direct quote is best), responds to peer or instructor ideas clearly, and advances the overall discussion. In terms of length, think 400+ words. Exceeds expectations. 4= thoughtful but either lacks text details or critical thinking about issues – or a bit short. 3=acceptable; post shows you have read the text and are on target but not reaching the level of detail and discussion for A or high B work; 2= minimal. I can’t tell you understand the texts or question; 1= did you read the book? 0= missing or late post. When a post is worth more than 5 points, I will let you know.

Final Paper: After all this reading, what still doesn’t make sense?

Students will write a 10+ page paper during the exam period in which they will reflect on “what doesn’t make sense” to them. I wanted to have a final paper address where/how knowledge falls apart rather than have each student write a clear explanation of why/how the witch trials happened. This essay will utilize material from the class “archive” such as peer posts, peer mid-term papers, documents, and readings from the course. More information will be posted on Blackboard regarding paper requirements. There will be several different options, including expanding on the narrative, fiction or midterm assignments. REQUIRED: conference with instructor.

Grades: I will post grades on the Blackboard grading center, but I want to remind students that Blackboard is not the official grade site; official midterm and final grades will be entered via DUSIS. The grades entered on Blackboard will not reflect weighting, absences, or other issues. If you have questions regarding your grade, please set up an office appointment; I will not respond to questions about grades via email.

Class Expectations: Come to class on time. Do the reading ahead of time and have at least one passage flagged for discussion. If you miss class, contact a peer so you can be caught up for the next class and receive any handouts you missed. Be respectful of others. Take turns leading group discussions. WRITTEN WORK is due before the start of class or it will be considered late. Bring the reading to class – this means printing out E-Reserves or having notes. To be prepared to find out about missed work, take some time to find a peer NOW. My peer contact for this class is _____. His/her/their e-mail is _____. His/her/their phone # (or other way to contact) is _____.

Electronics and Technology:

DO bring laptops to every class if you have one.

DO use laptops as needed for group work and for uploading responses (if needed) during class.

DO regularly review peer contributions to Blackboard, Blackboard announcements and all Blackboard additions. Blackboard is the place to notice full paper assignments and criteria, not this syllabus, which only has outlines for some material.

DO NOT use laptops during full class discussion unless we have discussed it that class period.

DO NOT do work for another class or engage in personal electronic use during the class period.

If you have an electronic version of text, use the technology responsibly. I will take it away otherwise.

Respect: Listen to peers. Try to respond to peer ideas. Disagree politely (if you disagree). Nothing derogatory in terms of race, gender, sexuality, religion, etc. Even a comment that seems funny about the 1690s can deeply hurt a classmate who is identifying with that position. Avoid interrupting or dominating conversation. Let other students be different from who you are.

Attendance: I firmly believe that if you are not in class, you will miss something. (See message above about having a peer contact). And, if you are not in class, you cannot contribute. But if you are sick, you should stay at home. So, here is my compromise. Everyone has 2 absences with no penalty. After that, additional absences will count negatively toward your grade (down one step per additional absence) – unless you do extra work to convince me you were prepared. IF you don't want your grade to drop, please email me two pages of writing (single-spaced) for each day you miss – sent within 24 hours of the missed class. Write about the reading itself or connect the reading to other issues we have discussed in class. Your goal is to show me you have done the work and WERE prepared to participate. This extra work will cover you for absences 3 and 4, if needed. (Some students might even choose to do extra writing at the first absence to save their freebies.) Missing 5 classes will drop your final grade a FULL grade no matter what extra writing you have done: for example, you will drop from a B to a C. Missing 6 or more classes results in failing the class even if you write pages and pages and pages.

Note that mandatory conferences will count toward attendance. I understand the need to reschedule appointments, but not showing up or not rescheduling the appointment within a timely manner will be penalized.

IF you end up with a major health issue or other family issue, you need to see me ASAP about any variations to this policy.

This is an Honors course with over 30 pages of written work. I am requiring conferences with me to discuss paper planning and organization, but you also should think about using the writing workshop.

WRITING WORKSHOP:

The Writing Workshop, located on the lower level of Cowles Library in Room 47, serves undergraduate, graduate, and law students who are writing papers and need assistance with individual assignments.

The emphasis of the one-on-one tutoring session is not to fix but to devise actions that the individual can take to improve and to start dealing with writing problems or questions individually. This is a free service to all Drake University students.

The Writing Workshop can help you with: evaluating your habits of reading and writing; learning new strategies appropriate for a particular writing or reading task; making sense of assignments and assigned reading material; coming up with ideas; revising sentence style; resolving problems with word choice, grammar, etc.; revising organization, argument, viewpoint or perspective; overcoming writer's block.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic Dishonesty: This course will follow the principles of academic dishonesty expressed in the online statement under academics for the college of Arts and Sciences. (I am also attaching the main policy to the syllabus.) The first instance of academic dishonesty will result in an F for the assignment (with no possibility of revision) and the second will result in failing the course and a notice to the Dean's office. In addition, if I find downloading of material from a website or another form of direct copying, failure of the course will occur immediately – no second chances. I want to remind everyone that “intention” is not a core aspect of academic honesty. In other words, explaining that you did not know you were plagiarizing or that you were not dishonest on purpose does not excuse you from a violation of the policy.

From Drake website – Arts and Sciences Academic Dishonesty Policy

Academic dishonesty is an all-encompassing term involving any activity that seeks to gain credit for work one has not done, or to deliberately damage or destroy the work of others. It includes plagiarism (the misrepresentation, either by intent or negligence, of another's ideas, phrases, discourse, or works as one's own), cheating (the act, or attempted act, of giving or obtaining aid and/or information by illicit means in meeting

any academic requirement, including examinations), fabrication (intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic sense in any academic exercise), and facilitating academic dishonesty (intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty). Examples of such cases include, but are not limited to:

- copying from the Internet or worldwide web and representing it as one's own thoughts or work;
- copying from another student's paper, laboratory report, or other report, or computer files or listing and representing it as one's own thoughts or work;
- using, during a test or laboratory experiment, material and/or devices not authorized by the instructor in charge;
- without the instructor's permission, collaborating with another, knowingly assisting another or knowingly receiving the assistance of another in writing an examination or in satisfying any other course requirements;
- incorporating into written assignments materials written by others without giving them credit, or otherwise improperly using information written by others (including that which might be stored on computer disks or other technological devices), or submitting commercially prepared papers as one's own;
- submission of multiple copies of the same or similar papers without prior approval of the several instructors involved;
- claiming as one's own work that which was done by tutors or others with no mention of credit to or the assistance of those persons;
- deliberately damaging or destroying another's laboratory experiments, computer work or studio work;
- knowingly obtaining access to, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release;
- substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, to take a test or other assignment or to make a presentation;
- intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise;
- forgery, alterations, or misuse of University documents;
- falsifying information submitted or failure to reveal relevant information in any University application form or offering any false information in any University disciplinary proceeding. Each instructor reserves the right to further clarify and define his/her expectations of academic integrity orally or in written form, such as through the course syllabus.

The College of Arts and Sciences has more information about its Academic Dishonesty Policy, including statements about penalties and appeals. I suggest everyone read the entire policy at least once per semester.

DISABILITY

Disability: I will make any changes needed to accommodate learning disabilities or any other kinds of disabilities. Please contact me ASAP to make necessary arrangements.

The following information is taken from the Drake website:

Here at Drake we are excited about our diverse student population. We realize that diversity is bigger than race and gender; it also includes differences such as disabilities. Because of this we have a full time Student Disability Services Coordinator to help coordinate accommodations for our students with disabilities.

Your instructor will make appropriate accommodations for documented disabilities. If you have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and know that specific subjects elicit an uncontrollable emotional response, and you want advance warning about classroom material, **please contact Michelle Laughlin, Student Disability Services coordinator, who will work with you to make your instructor aware of your request. Your instructor will then** work with you to determine what the appropriate accommodation might be.

If you have not been diagnosed but find a certain topic so distressing that you are unable to perform academically, we encourage you to consult Ms. Laughlin; her office can refer you to the appropriate resource.

CONTACT INFORMATION REMOVED FOR SYLLABUS SHARING

Counseling and Mental Health

The following information is taken from the Drake website:

The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers to all currently enrolled Drake students a variety of counseling services. Depending on the student's need, individual, couple, family, or group counseling may be provided. The UCC is available for workshops, training, psychological testing, and for referral information. In addition, we offer consultation services to students, staff, and faculty who might have questions about student mental health issues or topics.

CONTACT INFORMATION REMOVED FOR SYLLABUS SHARING

English Department Statement on Sensitive Classroom Materials

English department faculty are individually responsible for choosing which texts and other materials (films, videotapes, audiotapes, websites) students in their courses are to be assigned, and, more importantly, how these are to be used to advance the specific aims of these courses. Insofar as English faculty, like those in other departments, are evaluated by their peers in part on the basis of their teaching, faculty use of curricular materials is subject to peer evaluation.

The Department recognizes that a student may find assigned materials objectionable, on whatever grounds, and honors students' right to express such a

response freely, and the importance of so doing. However, the department does not view students' experience of such a response as legitimate grounds for excusing students from reading, viewing, or listening to such materials.

This policy should not be construed to condone sexual or other harassment, by faculty or by students, in the conduct of courses. For a full description of the University's policies and procedures, see the Drake University Student Handbook.

Sexual and Interpersonal Misconduct

The University has resources available for students who have experienced sexual or interpersonal misconduct, which can include sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking, for example. Some resources are legally confidential, which means personal information will not be shared with anyone else. Other non-confidential (yet still private) resources can explain how to locate support resources, file a complaint within the university, or file criminal charges – these non-confidential resources need to share incidents of sexual and interpersonal misconduct with the Title IX Coordinator.

As an instructor, I am non-confidential; however, please know that sharing with the university does not mean the individual must participate in a formal university or criminal process; an individual could request confidentiality through the University, for example. Other services the university can provide include safety planning, counseling, disability or immigration services and assistance in academic and housing accommodations as needed.

University contacts:

Drake recognizes the problem of sexual and interpersonal misconduct in our society and continues to take steps to listen to concerns, educate the campus community, and treat reports of sexual and interpersonal misconduct seriously and equitably. **Define the Line. Respect the Line.** emphasizes that while everybody has the right to determine their own line when it comes to sexual behavior, there is one clear line at Drake: sexual or interpersonal misconduct is not tolerated, accepted, or ignored. Think, talk, learn, listen, and act in a way that respects this line—we are all part of Drake.

There are four principles behind **Define the Line. Respect the Line.** and the culture we strive to create at Drake:

Prevention: Education and discussion are crucial to establishing and enforcing our social norms and what we as a community expect at Drake. We must continue to talk about respect and consent.

Communication: More communication is better, both between sexual partners and also in our community, so that people feel comfortable discussing sexuality or sexual violence without fear or judgment.

Intervention: We have people of outstanding character at Drake. When something does not look right, we should be empowered to trust that intuition and intervene to ensure everyone is comfortable and safe with the situation.

Support: If you or someone you know experiences sexual or interpersonal misconduct, Drake has staff, resources, and procedures in place that can provide support.

(from Title IX information on Drake website)

DRAFT SCHEDULE

The course will have three units: frameworks (witchcraft and religion), “bodies of evidence,” and “getting past 1692” (or literary interpretations). There will be weekly writing and other short assignments that will be updated on the Blackboard announcements page. **NOTE that the blackboard webpage will be the most updated source of information on reading/writing assignments.**

UNIT ONE: FRAMEWORKS- BRING *SALEM WITCH TRIALS READER* (SWTR) TO CLASS EVERY DAY FOR THE FIRST UNIT

Tuesday August 28: review syllabus, in class discussion of SWTR

Thursday, August 30:

HOMEWORK: HARD COPY – Identify THREE historical events not on “American” soil between 1600 and 1700. These can be single events (like a particular earthquake) or can be ongoing issues (like a series of discoveries in biology). Try to think about different disciplines, different places. Bring to class write-ups (approximately one paragraph each) on your three events. Do NOT upload to Blackboard yet.

READ: Chapter One of SWTR

Tuesday, September 4

HOMEWORK: Identify and Write-up three events in “America” between 1600 and 1700. You can think broadly about what “America” would be during these years: Caribbean? Only British colonies? ALSO UPLOAD YOUR PREVIOUS THREE EVENTS FROM 9/1.

READ: Chapter two of SWTR

Thursday, September 6: Anne Hutchinson is on Trial, 1636

READ: E-Reserves on Anne Hutchinson and Puritanism; gender Blackboard prompt

ALSO UPLOAD YOUR THREE EVENTS FROM 9/4

Tuesday, September 11: Elizabeth Knapp is Possessed

READ Ceppi essay on Elizabeth Knapp (E-Reserves)
Blackboard prompt

Thursday, September 13: catch up, more contexts – introduction to READEX

READ: To be determined. Excerpts related to New England witchcraft trials and/or Goodwin/Mather case

Blackboard prompt

Unit One document test handed out DUE Thursday September 20.

UNIT TWO - “BODIES OF EVIDENCE” – Bring laptop and SWTR to class daily

Tuesday, September 18:

READ: *Salem Possessed* chapters TBD

Position Papers (selected students)

Thursday, September 20:

READ: *Salem Possessed* chapters TBD

Position Papers (selected students)

Unit One document test due

Tuesday, September 25: Tituba, Case Study

READ: Breslaw, *Tituba*, chapters TBD

Position Papers

Thursday, September 27: Tituba, continued

READ Tituba, chapters TBD

Position Papers

Tuesday, October 2: Witch Day (And Guest Professor Day. Not the same thing.)

HOMEWORK: Bring in 1-2 pages notes on your assigned “witch” to turn in to me at end of class. Must be typed. Include references to at least 3 17th century documents where you can find your witch’s name. During class, groups will upload most relevant material for class archive.

READ: I may also assign some general class reading from SWTR and/or website

Thursday, October 4: Witches continued (Guest Professor or Librarian Day)

I am expecting that we will need this day to complete the group presentations on witch profiles. Possibly meet in library.

Tuesday, October 9: Afflicted Girls

READ: Ruttenberg chapter on the afflicted girls (E-Reserves)

Position Papers

Thursday, October 11: MID-TERM PAPERS DUE

In class we will discuss papers and watch some of the movie *The Crucible*.

FALL BREAK October 16

Thursday, October 18: Afflicted Girls continued – Afflicted, Confessors, Accusers

READ: excerpts from Mary Beth Norton text; maybe Knight essay; material on confessors

Position Papers

Tuesday, October 23: moments of protest/end of trials

READ: Brattle Letter (SWTR), excerpts from *Cases of Conscience*, other material

Position Papers

Hand out Unit Two document test to be due Tuesday, October 30.

Thursday, October 25: Accusers Accused!

HOMEWORK: Prepare 1-2 pages of notes on your “villain” to be turned in at the end of class. Can have references to page numbers, etc. (You don’t have to copy quotes from class material). We will have an in-class trial.

READ: “When the State Kills” (E-Reserves)

Hand out Unit Three Narrative Assignment

UNIT THREE: “GETTING PAST 1692” – LITERARY INTERPRETATIONS

Tuesday, October 30: Catch up Day and Hand Out Unit Three narrative exercise.

Watch movie if we have time.

Unit Two document test due today AND any revisions for mid-term paper are due today.

Thursday, November 1: *The Crucible* and working across two historical periods

READ: *The Crucible* pages TBD and an essay or introduction about

McCarthyism and/or Arthur Miller

Position Papers (select students)

Tuesday, November 6: *The Crucible* (cont)

READ: finish the play

Position Papers

Thursday, November 8: Catch up

Unit Three Narrative Assignment is due

Hand out Fiction Exercise

NOTE: I will be gone at another work conference.

Tuesday, November 13: Esther Forbes and the Fantasy of the Found Document

READ: *Mirror for Witches*, pages TBD

Position Papers

NOTE: This text is out of print and bookstore did not feel comfortable getting it. We will still read it. I will have some copies available in the library or students can buy online.

Thursday, November 15: Esther Forbes (cont)

READ: Finish the novella *Mirror for Witches*

Position Papers

HOMEWORK: describe a fantasy document of your own. Include brief writing that is suitable to 17th century. No more than 500 words.

Tuesday, November 20: contemporary fictions

READ: *The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane*, pages TBD

Position Papers

Final Paper Assignment handed out

THANKSGIVING

Tuesday, November 27: contemporary fictions (cont)

READ: *PBDD*, pages TBD

Position Papers

Thursday, November 29: contemporary fictions (cont)

READ: *PBDD*, pages TBD

Position Papers

Tuesday, December 4: contemporary fictions (cont)

READ: finish *PBDD*

Fiction Paper due

Thursday, December 6: wrap-up

Share ideas for final paper

Final Paper will be due by 3 PM Friday, December 14. You can turn it in any time before that in person or by email; you do not need to be on campus to turn it in. I am happy to comment on drafts during finals week. We will not meet as a class during finals week but I will be available for office hours drop-ins and scheduled appointments.