

PROF. ELISE BARTOSIK-VELEZ  
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OFFICE HRS: M 9:30-11:30, TH 3:00-4:00  
AND BY APPOINTMENT  
OFFICE: BOSLER 320

AND  
PROF. DAVID M. BALL  
[BALLD@DICKINSON.EDU](mailto:BALLD@DICKINSON.EDU)  
OFFICE HRS: M 11:00-12:00, TH 10:00-12:00  
AND BY APPOINTMENT  
OFFICE: EAST COLLEGE 401

## ROUTES THROUGH THE EARLY AMERICAS: MULTICULTURAL AMERICAN LITERARY HISTORY, BEGINNINGS-1891



One lens through which to view the course of early American history and literary history is that of national, cultural, and linguistic frontiers. Traditional understandings of this frontier—the most famous of these being Frederick Jackson Turner’s thesis—conceive of it as a single, westward-moving, and continuously receding line across the North American continent. Recent historians and literary critics have challenged this model, employing theories that take into account zones of contact that are hemispheric, multilingual, multidirectional, contested, and often discontinuous. We’ll be testing these hypotheses throughout the semester, as we look at representative works from multicultural and multidisciplinary texts that traverse the Americas in the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries, including travel journals, captivity and slave narratives, visual culture, and novels. At stake will be not only the boundaries of indigenous, colonial, and new national territories, but the very meanings of the three words contained in our course title: “American literary history.”

[M] = available as a .pdf file on the course Moodle site

Week 1: Orientations

- Aug 29** Introductions, Course Policies and Expectations  
Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Maps and Visual Depictions of the Americas
- Sep 1** Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893) [M]  
Annette Kolodny, "Letting Go Our Grand Obsessions: Notes Toward a New Literary History of the American Frontiers" (1992) [M]

**CONTACT**

Week 2: New World

- Sep 5** Columbus, Letter to the Sovereigns 4 Mar 1493/Carta a los Reyes (1493) [M]
- Sep 8** Tzvetan Todorov, "Columbus and the Indians" in *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other* (1984) [M]

Week 3: New Spain I

- Sep 12** Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, selections from *A Very Brief Relation/Naufragios* (1542) [M]  
Richard A. Gordon, "Following Estevanico: The Influential Presence of an African Slave in Sixteenth-century New World Historiography" (2006) [M]
- Sep 15** de Vaca (cont.)  
Don Antonio de Otermín, "Letter on the Pueblo Revolt of 1680" (1680) [M]  
Hopi [Edmund Nequatewa], "The Coming of the Spanish and the Pueblo Revolt" [M]

Week 4: Found Land

- Sep 19** Thomas Harriot, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Founde Land* (1590)
- Sep 22** John Smith, selections from *The Generall Historie of Virginia...* (1612) [M]  
Anna Brickhouse, selections from *The Unsettling of America* (2015) [M]

**\*\*Close Reading Assignment Due Friday September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 5:00 PM\*\***

**CAPTIVITY**

Week 5: New Spain II

- Sep 26** Alonzo Ramírez, *The Misfortunes of Alonso Ramírez/Los misfortunos de Alonso Ramírez* (1690)
- Sep 29** Ramírez, cont.  
Fabio López Lázaro, critical introduction in the Ramírez volume

Week 6: American Autobiography I

- Oct 3** Mary White Rowlandson, selections from ... *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson...* (1682)

- Oct 6** Rowlandson (cont.)  
Anne Bradstreet, “The Prologue” (1650), “The Author to Her Book” (1678) [M]  
Michelle Burnham, “The Journey Between: Liminality and Dialogism in Mary White Rowlandson’s Captivity Narrative” (1993) [M]

Week 7: American Autobiography II

- Oct 10** Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789)  
Phillis Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America” (1773), “A Farewell to America” (1773) [M]

- Oct 13** Equiano, Wheatley (cont.)  
Henry Louis Gates, Jr., “The Trope of the Talking Book” (in Equiano) (1988)

**\*\*October 17: Fall Pause\*\***

American Autobiography III

- Oct 20** Francisco Nuñez de Pineda, *Happy Captive/El Cautiverio Feliz* (1863) [M]  
Ralph Bauer, “Creole Identities in Colonial Space: The Narratives of Mary White Rowlandson and Francisco Nuñez de Pineda y Bascuñán” [M]

**CONFLICT & CONQUEST**

Week 8: Westward Frontiers

- Oct 24** William Clark and Meriwether Lewis, *The Journals ...* ([1804-06])
- Oct 27** Lewis and Clark (cont.)  
Martin Brückner, “Native American Geographies and the Journals of Lewis and Clark” (2006) [M]

Weeks 9-12: Global Frontiers

- Oct 31** Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick* (1851)

- Nov 3** Melville (cont.)  
Melville criticism TBD

- Nov 7** Melville (cont.)  
Melville criticism TBD

- Nov 10** Melville (cont.)  
Melville criticism TBD

- Nov 14** Melville (cont.)  
Melville criticism TBD

Nov 17 Melville (cont.)  
Melville criticism TBD

Nov 21 1-on-1 conferences

**\*\*November 24 Gobble, gobble\*\***

Week 13: Ecstatic Frontiers

Nov. 28 Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (1855); Martí, “Our America” (1891) [M]

Dec 1 Whitman and José Martí (cont.)

**\*\*Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5:00 PM: Paper Proposals Due\*\***

Dec 5 Student presentations

Dec 8 Student presentations

Conclusions, evaluations, celebration

**\*\*Final paper due Friday Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> by 2:00 pm; a one-hour, timed ID exam will be available on Moodle from 2:00-3:00 on the 16<sup>th</sup>—Failure to Turn in all Written Coursework by these Deadlines will Result in a Failing Grade for the Course\*\***

**REQUIREMENTS:**

- TIMELY AND THOUGHTFUL COMPLETION OF READING ASSIGNMENTS
- PUNCTUAL ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGED CLASS PARTICIPATION, INCLUDING WEEKLY MOODLE POSTINGS
- A SHORT, 2-3-PAGE CLOSE READING EXERCISE
- A 2-PAGE PROPOSAL AND 15-20-PAGE RESEARCH PAPER ANALYZING ONE OF THE TEXTS INCLUDED ON THE SYLLABUS
- A 10-MINUTE ORAL PRESENTATION ON YOUR WORK-IN-PROGRESS IN THE FINAL WEEK OF THE SEMESTER
- PAINLESS 50-MINUTE, TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM

**REQUIRED TEXTS:** All seven course texts are available for purchase at the campus bookstore and are accessible via three-hour reserves in Waidner-Spahr Library. **If you purchase your books through an online vendor or other sources, please only purchase the edition/ISBN indicated below.**

Thomas Harriot, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (Dover)

**ISBN: 9780486210926**

Mary Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* (Bedford/St. Martin's)

**ISBN: 9780312111519**

Alonso Ramírez, *The Misfortunes of Alonso Ramírez* (Fabio López Lázaro ed.) (U of Texas P)

**ISBN: 9780292743892**

Olaudah Equiano, *Norton Critical Edition: The Interesting Life of Olaudah Equiano* (Sollors ed.)

**ISBN: 9780393974942**

William Clark and Meriwether Lewis, *The Essential Lewis and Clark* (Landon Jones ed.)  
(HarperCollins) **ISBN: 9780060011598**

Herman Melville, Norton Critical Edition: *Moby-Dick* 2nd ed. (Parker and Hayford eds.)  
**ISBN: 9780393972832**

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass: The Original 1855 Edition* (Dover, 2007)  
**ISBN#9780486456768**

**GRADING:** RESEARCH PAPER—55% (PROPOSAL 10%, REVISION 45%);  
CLASS PARTICIPATION—20%; ORAL PRESENTATION/REPORT—10%; SHORT  
ASSIGNMENT—5%; BRIEF, TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM—10%

**A NOTE ON CO-TEACHING AND CROSS-LISTING:** Profs. Bartosik-Velez and Ball are collaborators in every aspect of the course and will confer with one another throughout the semester. While the course blends both of our areas of expertise, you can expect us to lead almost every discussion section together, frequently in dialogue (read: open, often heated debate) with one another's and your ideas. Please come to seminar ready to share your observations about what you've read and eager to contribute to the back and forth of seminar discussion and debate. **Students who are taking this course for upper-level Spanish credit will be expected to read primary texts and write their final papers in Spanish. English majors wishing to take this course for pre-1800 300-level credit must write their final paper on the texts discussed in weeks 1-7 of the semester.**

**ENGL 300 - LITERARY STUDIES RESEARCH LAB:** If this is your first 300-level literature course in the English Department, you will be required to complete ENGL 300, the Literary Studies Research Lab. This P/F research course allows students to apply their work in English 220 into research and writing expectations for 300-level courses, ultimately in preparation for their senior theses. ENGL 300 adopts current best practices for using Dickinson's library resources; it also helps students to understand the tools, application, and proper MLA citation for all subsequent research in the English Department. Students will be taught how to shape research questions, find materials in our electronic databases, and organize sources within a formal research paper, including accurate citations in an annotated bibliography. ENGL 300 takes place over 3 sessions lasting 60 minutes each, with an optional 30-minute meeting. Students enrolled in ENGL 300 must visit the course's Moodle site to sign up for attendance. You should have received further information about ENGL 300 from Josefine Smith, library liaison to the English Department.

**LATE PAPER POLICY:** All papers and other assignments are due on the date and time indicated on the syllabus. With the extraordinary and rare exception for medical or emergency reasons, late papers will receive a failing grade. Failure to turn in all writing assignments by the final will result in a failing grade for the course.

**COURSE ATTENDANCE POLICY:** More than two unexcused absences will result in a failing course participation grade. More than four unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the course. Excused absences for non-academic reasons (job interviews, significant extracurricular commitments, etc.) must be arranged with us well in advance of the scheduled date. Attendance is measured not only by your physical presence, but by active contributions to course discussion; consistent, silent attendance will receive a "C."

**LAPTOP POLICY:** While tremendous tools for learning, we have found (and studies have shown) that laptops in the seminar classroom to inhibit rather than promote intellectual dialogue. Unless you have a documented need for a laptop for note taking, please print out all of the course readings and bring them to class, and please refrain from using any internet-enabled devices in the classroom.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** taken from “The Dickinson College Plagiarism Policy”:  
“To plagiarize is to use without proper citation or acknowledgment the words, ideas or original research of another. [. . .] When one borrows facts which are not matters of general knowledge—including all statistics—one must indicate one's indebtedness in the text or footnote. When one borrows an idea or the logic of an agreement, one must acknowledge indebtedness either in a footnote or in the text. When in doubt—footnote [. . .] if you have questions, consult with your instructor.”

**WRITING RESOURCES:** We urge students to take advantage of writing assistance that is available on campus. You are encouraged to visit the Writing Center, or the Multilingual Writing Center if you are writing in Spanish, at any stage of the writing process, from formulating a thesis to polishing a final draft. In all likelihood you will not be able to make last-minute appointments (especially close to the end of the semester); plan ahead to take full advantage of these resources.

You can schedule an appointment online at this link:

[http://www.dickinson.edu/info/20158/writing\\_program/677/appointments](http://www.dickinson.edu/info/20158/writing_program/677/appointments)

For more information about hours and policies, visit the web:

<http://www.dickinson.edu/academics/resources/writing-program/content/Writing-Center/>

A research librarian can both elevate your scholarship and save tremendous amounts of time in your search for scholarly resources. Three contacts we particularly recommend are Josefine Smith, English library liaison; Anna Kozłowska, Spanish library liaison; and Malinda Triller, Special Collections Librarian, although anyone on staff at Waidner-Spahr can help orient you to the wealth of scholarly resources at the College in both the physical and digital archives.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES:** Dickinson College makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students requesting accommodations must make their request and provide appropriate documentation to the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in Dana Hall, Suite 106. Because classes change every semester, eligible students must obtain a new accommodation letter from Director Marni Jones every semester and review this letter with their professors so the accommodations can be implemented. The Director of ODS is available by appointment to answer questions and discuss any implementation issues you may have. ODS proctoring is managed by Susan Frommer (717-254-8107 or [proctoring@dickinson.edu](mailto:proctoring@dickinson.edu)). Address general inquiries to 717-245-1734 or e-mail [disabilityservices@dickinson.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@dickinson.edu). For more information, go to [www.dickinson.edu/ODS](http://www.dickinson.edu/ODS).

**HAVING READ THE SYLLABUS COMPLETELY, PLEASE FILL OUT THE PERSONAL INFORMATION FORM AVAILABLE IN “COURSE MATERIALS” TAB OF THE COURSE MOODLE PAGE AND EMAIL IT TO US DIRECTLY. THANK YOU AND WELCOME TO THE CLASS!**