

English 142: Early American Literature

Professor Michael Ziser
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Office Hours: MW 1:30-3:00pm

Spring 2004, 202 Wellman
Lectures: MWF 10:00-10:50
Final Exam: 16 June 1:30-3:30pm
TA: Angie Chau achau@ucdavis.edu
TA Office Hours: Friday 1-2 in 244 Voorhies

This course will survey the English-language literature of early America before 1800. Anglophone America was settled in four major waves, each originating in a different regional subculture of England and ending up in a different part of North America. As might be expected, each of the different American cultures that emerged made place for different kinds of literary self-expression, and in this course we will start by approaching each tradition on its own terms. After an extended consideration of the historical, religious, and poetic writing of New England, we will shift our attention to the imperial *belles lettres* of Virginia and the other staple colonies; to the Enlightenment works emanating from the pluralistic Middle Atlantic colonies; to the folk literature of the Appalachian back country; and, finally, to native, slave, and non-Anglophone writings that cut across these categories and establish their own.

Required Texts:

Nina Baym, ed. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, Sixth Edition, Volume A: American Literature to 1820 (NY: Norton, 2002) ISBN 0-393-97898-2. **Available at the Campus Bookstore and On Reserve at Shields Library.**

*Periodic additional readings available via download or website link on course webpage.

Requirements:

Regular attendance. A sign-in sheet will be circulated at the beginning of every class. Late arrivals will count for one-half of the full attendance grade; unauthorized early exits will result in a zero for the day.

Active participation. A daily participation grade will be given. Reading guides will be sent out weekly via email in order to give you an opportunity to formulate your thoughts ahead of time. Please use these as a basis for your contribution to our class discussion.

In-class midterm and final examinations (the latter not cumulative) consisting of short answer questions and passage identifications.

Short assignments. Each week there will be a short assignment sent out with the weekly reading guide, usually due the following Friday. You are responsible for completing **ANY THREE** of these. Your work on these assignments will be graded Acceptable/Unacceptable/Redo. In the case of a "Redo" grade, you can either do the assignment over or simply replace it with a later assignment.

One short paper (3-4 pp), on a topic assigned by the professor. **Due Monday 3 May in class.** Details to follow.

One long paper (6-7 pp), comparative and contextualized, on a topic of your choosing. **Due Wed. 9 June in class.** Details to follow.

Extra Credit. There will be several opportunities for small amounts of extra credit. Details to follow.

Grading:

Attendance and Participation	10%	
Short Assignments (3)	10%	Due at various points throughout the quarter
Short paper	20%	Due Monday 3 May in class
Midterm Exam	15%	Monday 10 May in class
Long Paper	30%	Due Wednesday 9 June in class
Final Exam	15%	Wednesday 16 June 1:30-3:30pm , Wellman 202

NOTE: This syllabus and all other course handouts will be posted on ENL142's MyUCDavis webpage. Important reading links, images, etexts, writing guides, class policies, and FAQs will also be posted there. Make it a habit to check the site on a regular basis.

English 142: Early American Literature Reading Schedule

			Readings	(complete before lecture)
1	F	4/2	NO READING	INTRODUCTION
2	M	4/5	John Smith	from <i>A Description of New England</i> (NAAL 114-118) from <i>New England's Trials</i> (NAAL 118-120)
	W	4/7	William Bradford	from <i>Of Plymouth Plantation</i> (NAAL 157-196)
	F	4/9	Thomas Morton	from <i>New English Canaan</i> (NAAL 197-204)
3	M	4/12	John Winthrop	"A Model of Christian Charity" (NAAL 206-217) "Before the General Court" ("On Liberty") < http://douglassarchives.org/wint_a54.htm >
	W	4/14	Roger Williams	from <i>The Bloody Tenet of Persecution</i> (NAAL 235-237) "A Letter to the Town of Providence" (NAAL 237)
	F	4/16	Roger Williams	<i>A Key into the Language of America</i> (NAAL 227-235)
			Samson Occom	<i>Short Narrative</i> (NAAL 647-652)
4	M	4/19	Mary Rowlandson	<i>Narrative</i> (NAAL 309-340)
	W	4/21	NO READING	
	F	4/23	John Winthrop	from <i>The Journal of John Winthrop</i> (NAAL 217-226)
			Trial of Anne Hutchinson	readings and transcript on the Web < www.annehutchinson.com > "Biography," "Creed," and "Trial"
5	M	4/26	Cotton Mather	from <i>Magnalia Christi Americana</i> (NAAL 397-416) from <i>Wonders of the Invisible World</i> (NAAL 392-395)
			Cotton Mather	<i>Pillars of Salt</i> (NAAL 417-424)
			Samuel Sewall	<i>Diary</i> (NAAL 371-387)
			Sarah Kemble Knight	from <i>The Private Journal of a Journey from Boston to New York</i> (NAAL 436-447)
	W	4/28	Anne Bradstreet	Poems (NAAL 239-275)
	F	4/30	Michael Wigglesworth	from "The Day of Doom" (NAAL 293-307)
			Edward Taylor	Poems (NAAL 342-365)
6	M	5/3	Jonathan Edwards	(NAAL 466-510)
	W	5/5	John and Abigail Adams	From <i>Letters</i> (NAAL 683-699)
			Judith Sargent Murray	"On the Equality of the Sexes" (NAAL 783-791)
	F	5/7	Royall Tyler	<i>The Contrast</i> (NAAL 826-866)
7	M	5/10	MIDTERM EXAMINATION	NO READING
	W	5/12	John Smith	<i>General History of Virginia</i> (NAAL 103-114)
			Thomas Hariot	<i>Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia</i> (NAAL 80-85 and add. selections on website)
			Thomas Jefferson	from <i>Notes on the State of Virginia</i> (NAAL 733-738)
	F	5/14	William Byrd	from <i>The Secret Diary</i> (NAAL 448-453) from <i>The Secret History of the Dividing Line</i> (NAAL 453-463)
8	M	5/17	James Grainger	from <i>The Sugar-Cane</i> (NAAL 628-645)
			Moses Bon Sàam	<i>The Speech of Moses Bon Sàam</i> (NAAL 653-657)
	W	5/19	Briton Hammon	<i>Narrative</i> (NAAL 874-878)
			Olaudah Equiano	<i>Interesting Narrative</i> (NAAL 747-781)
	F	5/21	John Woolman	(NAAL 610-626)
			Francis Daniel Pastorius	(NAAL 366-371)
9	M	5/24	J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur	From <i>Letters from an American Farmer</i> (NAAL 657-682)
	W	5/26	Benjamin Franklin	"The Way to Wealth," "Rules By Which A Great Empire May Be Reduced to a Small One," "To those Who Would Remove to America," "Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America" (NAAL 515-537)
	F	5/28	Benjamin Franklin	<i>Autobiography</i> (NAAL 538-610)
10	M	5/31	MEMORIAL DAY	NO CLASS
	W	6/2	Thomas Paine	From <i>Common Sense</i> From <i>The Crisis</i> From <i>The Age of Reason</i> (NAAL 704-724)
			Thomas Jefferson	From <i>Declaration of Independence</i> (NAAL 726-732)
	F	6/4	Phyllis Wheatley	Poems (NAAL 808-817)
			Philip Freneau	Poems (NAAL 793-808)
11	M	6/7	Alexander Hamilton	Federalist #1 (NAAL 739-741)
			James Madison	Federalist #10 (NAAL 742-747)
	W	6/9	NO READING	Summary, course evaluations
	W	6/16	FINAL EXAMINATION	1:30-3:30pm, Wellman 202

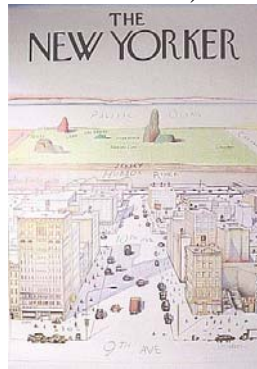
English 142: Early American Literature Short Assignments

General Directions: You are expected to complete 3 short assignments over the course of the quarter. Which assignments you complete is your choice, though you may only complete one from any particular week.

Week 2 Options

Due in Class, Monday 12 April

1. Compare *Of Plymouth Plantation* with the Bible (specifically Exodus 1, Exodus 5, Exodus 23:23-30, and Deuteronomy 26:6-8—if you are well-versed you will find many others as well). What scriptural elements (plot, diction, rhetorical figures, etc.) has Bradford borrowed from the Bible? Why do you suppose he has been explicit about this in some places but not in others? Is he offering these parallels as simple analogies, or do you think that he is making a stronger case for the chosenness of the Plymouth colonists? Write a 1½ to 2 page response touching on these questions and others that occur to you.
2. Look carefully at the early maps of the Americas, and particularly of New England, at the following website (also linked from class website):
<http://www.usm.maine.edu/~maps/exhibit2/contents.htm>
What can you infer from them about the nature of the mapmakers' experience, interests, and intentions? You may either write a 1½ to 2 page response to the maps OR draw a map of your own (as a critical commentary on or pointed alternative to) these early ways of visualizing the new world. For a recent ironic take on the process of mapmaking, see Saul Steinberg's "View of the World From 9th Avenue" (larger version on class website).



3. Review the Plymouth Colony Archive website:
<http://etext.virginia.edu/users/deetz/>
After carefully examining the content and structure of the website, write up a 1½ to 2 page review for your fellow students, detailing what kind of information is on the site (what texts, images, articles, etc.), how it can be accessed, what you would like to see changed about it, etc. Be sure to include any unusual finds you make.

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Week 3 Options

Due in Class, Monday 19 April

(NOTE: All texts are on Shields Reserve. All responses should be 2 pages in length.)

1. Read and write a review of the **introduction and one chapter** of the following scholarly works on early New England:
 - Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (NY: Knopf, 1998).
 - William Cronon, *Changes in the Land : Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (NY: Hill and Wang, 1983).
 - Edmund Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1958).

2. Choose one Puritan sermon from the collection listed below and analyze some component of its diction, structure, or logic.
 - *Election Day Sermons, Massachusetts* (New York: AMS Press, 1984)
SHLDS GEN BV4260.M4 E43 1984

3. Read one of John Eliot's works about missionary work among the natives collected in the following edition; summarize and discuss.
 - *The Eliot Tracts*, ed. Michael P. Clark (Westport: Praeger, 2003) Shields Library E151.C56 no. 199.

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Week 4 Options

Due in Class, Monday 26 April

(NOTE: All texts are on Shields Reserve. All responses should be 2 pages in length.)

1. Read one of the short captivity narratives collected in Vaughan and Clark, eds. *Puritans Among the Indians: Accounts of Captivity and Redemption, 1676-1724* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1981). Compare it to Rowlandson's narrative. What elements are common across both narratives? Where are there salient differences? What difference does the gender or the social status of the narrator make?
2. The captivity narrative is now a stock literary convention, showing up in pop culture everywhere from old silent movies (remember the damsel tied to the railroad tracks?) to *Aliens* to the ongoing hostage crisis in Iraq. One notable recent appearance of the form is in the retelling of Pfc. Jessica Lynch's capture and "rescue" in the early days of the second Iraq war. Read part of Rick Bragg's pulpy *I'm a Soldier, Too: The Jessica Lynch Story* (NY: Knopf, 2003) pp. 60-126. Identify as many conventional aspects of his retelling as possible, comparing the text with Rowlandson's classic account.

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Week 5 Options

Due in Class, Monday 3 May

(NOTE: All texts are on Shields Reserve. All responses should be 2 pages in length.)

1. Read and review the first chapter, on early New England crime accounts, in UCD History professor Karen Halttunen's *Murder Most Foul* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998). What is the Puritan interest in these accounts? How is this both like and unlike our contemporary interest in true crime?
Shields Library Reserve HV6524 .H28 1998
UCDLaw Lib HV6524 .H28 1998

2. From 1953 to 1956 American poet John Berryman wrote a strange and beautiful "Homage to Miss Anne Bradstreet." Read Berryman's poem and discuss it as a literary-critical act. What insights does Berryman's reading provide? At what points do you think Berryman is misrepresenting Bradstreet? To what end?
Shields Library Reserve PS3503.E744 H6
Also at Shields Library Special Collections PS3503.E744 H6

3. Review the following academic website:
<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/salem/SALEM.HTM>
After carefully examining the content and structure of the website, write up a 2 page review for your fellow students, detailing what kind of information is on the site (what texts, images, articles, etc.), how it can be accessed, what you would like to see changed about it, etc. Be sure to include any unusual finds you make.

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Week 6 Options

Due in Class, Monday 10 May

(NOTE: All printed texts are on Shields Reserve. Responses should be 2 pp in length.)

1. The most famous preacher during the Great Awakening was George Whitefield. Read one of his revivalist sermons at the web site below and compare it to Jonathan Edwards's "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Where are there similarities and where differences of style, emphasis, and argument?
<http://www.reformed.org/documents/Whitefield.html>

2. Charles Chauncy was the most influential of the clergymen who publicly objected to the enthusiastic character of religious revivalism. Read his sermon, *Enthusiasm Described and Cautioned Against* in *The Great Awakening*, ed. Alan Heimert and Perry Miller (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967) and recount and respond to his arguments against the likes of Whitefield.
Shields Library Reserve BR520 .H39

3. Besides being a crackerjack theologian and philosopher, Jonathan Edwards was no mean naturalist. Read his "Of Insects" **OR** "The Spider Letter" at the website below and discuss how his interest in the natural world both enlarges and challenges his orthodox theology.
<http://www.jonathanedwards.com/science.htm>

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Week 7 Options

Due in Class, Monday 17 May

(NOTE: All texts are on Shields Reserve. All responses should be 2 pages in length.)

1. When Thomas Hariot explored Virginia in 1585, he had a gifted artist along with him. From John White's watercolors of the New World, engravings were made that eventually became some of the most widely-circulating images in the New World. Amazingly, most of the original watercolors survive into the present day. Take a look at these early visual images and reflect on what they tell us about the priorities and proclivities of the Roanoke explorers (esp. as compared to the early New England verbal accounts.) What is depicted? How are the subjects—both human and natural—framed?

America, 1585 : the complete drawings of John White, edited by Paul Hulton
(Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

Shields Library Reserves NC242.W53 A4 1984

2. One of the important contexts of both Hariot's and Jefferson's writings is the growth and professionalization of the natural sciences concomitant with the discovery of the new world. Examine the following web exhibition at the American Philosophical Society and meditate on the ways that Hariot and Jefferson reflect or contradict some of the other naturalistic approaches described in the exhibit.

<http://www.amphilsoc.org/exhibitions/nh/>

Note: Be sure to examine each of the headings and subheadings listed in the left-hand column of the front page (i.e. "Introduction" through "Popular Natural History")

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Week 8 Options

Due in Class, Monday 24 May

(NOTE: All texts are on Shields Reserve. All responses should be 2 pages in length.)

1. The brevity and structure of this course prevents us from entering completely into the complexity of African-American and Afro-Caribbean literature before 1900. In this short assignment, you are to remedy that by reading and reporting on a single selection from the following anthology:

Vincent Carretta, ed. *Unchained Voices* (Lexington: U of Kentucky Press, 1996).
Shields Reserve **PR9085.U55**

Who is your author speaking to, and what is (s)he saying? To what extent is a “black voice” distinguishable from the predominantly white voices that you have encountered so far?

2. If you wish you can access one of the more important early slave narratives online, asking of it the questions above:
A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, an African Prince, as Related by Himself
<http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/gronniosaw/menu.html>
3. It is important to read Equiano’s text and others as part of an identifiable African-American literary tradition rather than as disconnected phenomena. One of the most influential attempts to identify this tradition can be found in “The Trope of the Talking Book” in Henry Louis Gates’s *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) 127-169. Read Gates’s essay and explain in your own words what unifying traits he sees in early African-American writing. Does it resonate with your sense of later African-American writing, oratory, music, and/or art? With non-African American literatures? How?

(Please note: I’m having trouble securing a copy of this essay, but it will definitely be on reserve at Shields (probably as a photocopy) by Tuesday afternoon.)

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Week 9 Options

Due in Class, Wednesday 2 June

(NOTE: All texts are on Shields Reserve. All responses should be 2 pages in length.)

- 1) One of the major Franklin scholars has put together an exhaustive documentary treasure trove on old Ben. Review ONE of the phases of Franklin's life covered by Leo LeMay's website, evaluating it for its usefulness to undergraduate researchers:

<http://www.english.udel.edu/lemay/franklin/>

- 2) A text that performs much the same ideological work as Crèvecoeur's—with a few significant differences—is Timothy Dwight's "Greenfield Hill" (1794). Download the text of the second section of that poem from the class website ("Resources"), read it, and contrast it with *Letters from an American Farmer*.
- 3) One of the major contexts for Franklin is the rise of the American printer and publisher as a cultural force in the 18th century. Read one of the following from Amory and Hall, eds. *History of the Book in America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): James N. Green, "English Books and Printing in the Age of Franklin," 248-298; David S. Shields, "Eighteenth Century Literary Culture," 434-476; or all of Chapter 10 (on periodicals), 347-376.

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Week 10 Options

Due in Class, Monday 7 June

(NOTE: All texts are on Shields Reserve. All responses should be 2 pages in length.)

- 1) Colonial House. PBS is broadcasting its version of reality TV, tracking a group of colonists who have agreed to live under the same conditions as 1628 settlers along the Maine coast. Watch an episode of this show and write a 2 page response relating it to what you have read for our class (did it clarify anything for you about early New England writing or history?) and/or thinking more broadly about the phenomenon of such reenactments (to what does the show appeal? What hidden motivations might the producers have?).

Schedule:

KVIE Channel 6

Episode 5 - Saturday, May 29 at 9:00 PM

Episode 6 - Saturday, May 29 at 10:00 PM

Episode 7 - Sunday, May 30 at 9:00 PM

Episode 8 - Sunday, May 30 at 10:00 PM

- 2) Consult the following anthology of Revolutionary writings and choose one text of any length. Read your selection and write a 2 page response. Some possible starting points: Does your piece reflect an intellectual position different from those we've read in class or those you've come across before? Are ideological differences reflected in the style of the writing you analyzed?

The American Revolution: Writings from the War of Independence

(New York: Library of America, 2001)

Shields Reserve E203 .A579 2001

- 3) American epic poetry received a boost from the Revolution and the patriotic sentiments that accompanied it. One of the most famous and popular of the patriotic epics was Joel Barlow's *Columbiad*. Read the Preface to Barlow's poem and respond to the ideological and poetical arguments he is putting forward there. What place does he imagine for literature (and all the arts) in an independent America? The e-text is available as a Word file download from our class web site (see "Week 10 Resources").