

# AMERICAN LITERATURE TO 1800

BC 3179x Fall 2006

MW 11:00-12:15 Milbank 202

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BC 3179x surveys American literature written before 1800. While we will devote some attention to the literary traditions that preceded British colonization, most of our readings will be of texts written in English between 1620 and 1800. These texts--histories, autobiographies, poems, plays, and novels--illuminate the complexity of this period of American culture. They tell stories of pilgrimage, colonization, and genocide; private piety and public life; the growth of national identity (political, cultural, and literary); Puritanism, Quakerism, and Deism; race and gender; slavery and the beginnings of a movement towards its abolition. We will consider, as we read, the ways that these stories overlap and interconnect, and the ways that they shape texts of different periods and genres.

## TEXTS:

The following texts have been ordered at the Columbia University Bookstore:

Author	Title	Notes
Bradford	<i>Of Plymouth Plantation 1620-1647</i> (Modern Library College Edition)	
Baym, ed.	<i>The Norton Anthology of American Literature</i> , 6th edition, Vol. A	Students planning to enroll in ENG BC3180y may want to consider buying Package 1.
McGiffert, ed.	<i>God's Plot: Puritan Spirituality in Thomas Shepard's Cambridge</i> (University of Massachusetts Press)	The assignment in this text is relatively brief. Though the book is excellent, the frugal may want to do this reading on reserve.
Wigglesworth	<i>The Day of Doom</i> (American Eagle)	Also available online at <a href="http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/WCarson/wiggindx.htm">http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/WCarson/wiggindx.htm</a>
Woolman	<i>The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman</i> (Friends United)	Please read from the assigned edition; available online versions and most other printed texts are incomplete.
Foster	<i>The Coquette</i> (Oxford University Press) or <i>The Power of Sympathy &amp; The Coquette</i> (Penguin)	Available online at <a href="http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/foster/coquette/coquette.html">http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/foster/coquette/coquette.html</a>
Brown	<i>Wieland and Memoirs of Carwin</i> (Penguin)	Available online at <a href="http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/toccer-new?id= BroWiel&amp;tag= public&amp;images= images/modeng&amp;data= /texts/english/modeng/parsed&amp;part= 0">http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/toccer-new?id= BroWiel&amp;tag= public&amp;images= images/modeng&amp;data= /texts/english/modeng/parsed&amp;part= 0</a>
<b>Recommended text:</b>		This text is available as a supplement to the excerpts from Equiano's <i>Narrative</i> printed in the <i>Norton Anthology</i> . Students who choose to write on Equiano may wish to purchase this text.
Equiano	<i>The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano</i> (Penguin)	

These texts have also been placed on reserve at the Barnard library. Links to texts available online, as well as links to supplementary material, are available at the course website. Texts marked with a W on the schedule of readings below are available online, but are password

protected. When you click on these links, you will be asked to enter a username and password. Enter the username **gordis** and the password **texts**.

Please inform me **immediately** if you have difficulty obtaining any course texts.

### **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:**

You are expected to **attend class regularly** and to **participate in discussion**. To facilitate that discussion, you are expected to have completed all reading by the date for which it is assigned. Note that some of the assignments are long, and plan ahead. Please bring assigned readings to class each day. If you read on reserve, please bring your reading notes.

This course also has a **web site** from which you can access the schedule of readings and other course materials. Its URL is <http://www.columbia.edu/~lmg21/bc3179/3179home.html>. In order to enhance our discussion, and to facilitate interactions between our weekly meetings, I've also set up a **web discussion** for this course. You can reach the discussion list through the course website for this course or through the courseworks page at [courseworks.columbia.edu](http://courseworks.columbia.edu).

By **September 13**, post a brief message introducing yourself to the class under the topic heading "meet the class."

By **October 11**, post one of your reaction papers to the discussion list under the appropriate author heading.

By **November 1**, post a one-paragraph response to a classmate's posted reaction paper.

By **November 15**, post a second reaction paper to the discussion list under the appropriate author heading.

Once you've posted these four messages, you may post again or not as you wish. You should, however, check the discussion list periodically to see what your classmates have been writing and to see if there are any course-related announcements.

### **WRITTEN REQUIREMENTS:**

You will write **six two-page reaction papers** during the course of the semester. Reaction papers are due at 11:00 am on the day for which the material about which you're writing is assigned. They should discuss your reaction to a particular aspect of the assigned reading. You may choose to do a close reading of a particular passage, to explore a theme or issue in the text, or to connect the assigned text with other texts you've studied, either within or outside of the course. While each paper need not be a fully-developed essay with a fully explicated thesis, it should be an essay rather than a stream-of-consciousness document. Its prose should be paragraphed, polished, and free of errors. Moreover, each essay should reveal that you've put some serious thought into the assigned reading. During the semester, you must write six such essays. You may not submit more than one essay a week, and essays are due on the day that we're discussing the material about which you're writing. Also, you must hand in your first reaction paper **no later than October 9**. Aside from these constraints, you may choose when to write your essays.

Reaction papers will be graded on a  $\sqrt{+}$ ,  $\sqrt{}$ ,  $\sqrt{-}$  basis. You must post two of your reaction papers to the Courseworks discussion list during the semester. When you have written six reaction papers (**and by December 11**) you will resubmit the full set of six reaction papers in a **portfolio**. Your portfolio must include the original papers with my comments on them. You may also include revised versions of some or all papers, but revision of reaction papers is entirely optional. The full portfolio will be assigned a letter grade.

In addition, you will write **one five-to-six-page paper** on a topic of your choosing, which may develop out of your reaction papers. I will hand out suggested paper topics at several points during the term, and you may also develop your own topic in consultation with me. I strongly encourage you to consult with me as you write your essays. I'm happy to speak to you about ideas, about tentative outlines, and about rough drafts. This paper may be submitted at any point before **December 4**. However, if you submit your paper by November 1, you will have the opportunity to submit a revised version of the paper two weeks after it is returned to you.

Finally, there will be a comprehensive, closed-book **final examination** during the exam period.

If you find yourself unable to complete an assignment by the due date, you must speak to me at in advance. Work that is late without an extension will be penalized at the rate of a of a grade per day.

All essays (including reaction papers) must be typed, double-spaced, on white paper in standard fonts. Please don't use very small or very large fonts to squeeze or stretch out your essay. The page guidelines apply to standard 12-point fonts. Papers should follow the new MLA guidelines for essays; see the English department guide to the preparation of papers, *Rules for Writers*, or *The MLA Handbook* for details.

The Barnard English department, like Barnard College as a whole, values intellectual integrity very highly. Plagiarism (using the words or ideas of others without appropriate attribution) is a serious violation, and I report *all* cases of plagiarism to the Dean of Studies *without exception*. If you are at all confused about appropriate acknowledgment of sources, please see me for clarification.

I will calculate your grade based on the following formula:

reaction papers:	30%
five-to-six-page essay:	30%
final exam:	30%
class participation:	10%

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS:** (NA = *Norton Anthology*; W = online)

W 9/6	Introduction
M 9/11	ORIGINS I: Cusick, "The Iroquois Creation Story" (NA 19-23); Lloyd, "The [Pima] Story of the Creation" (NA 23-27); Abbey and Williams, "The Bungling Host" (NA 135-140); Williams, <i>A Key into the Language of America</i> (excerpts in NA, 226-235); de Las Casas, <i>The Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the Indies</i> (excerpts in NA, 38-42); Cabeza de Vaca, <i>The Relation of Á Ivar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca</i> (excerpts in NA 58-70); Champlain, <i>The Voyages of Sieur de Champlain</i> (excerpts in NA 86-103)
W 9/13	ORIGINS II: Bradford, <i>Of Plymouth Plantation</i> , chs. 1-14 (Modern College Library Edition pp. 1-154) <b>DUE: ONE MESSAGE POSTED TO COURSEWORKS DISCUSSION UNDER CATEGORY "MEET THE CLASS"</b>
M 9/18	ORIGINS II, continued: Bradford, <i>Of Plymouth Plantation</i> , chs. 15-22 (Modern College Library Edition pp. 154-277); Morton, <i>New English Canaan</i> (excerpts in NA, 196-205)

- W 9/20 ORIGINS II, continued: Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, chs. 23-36 (Modern College Library Edition pp. 278-385)
- M 9/25 ORIGINS III: Winthrop, *A Model of Christian Charity* (NA 205-217);  
" [Winthrop' s Speech to the General Court]," from *The Journal of John Winthrop* (NA 223-225)
- W 9/27 THE PURITAN SERMON: Hooker, *The Soules Preparation* (excerpts on W),  
Cotton, *Christ the Fountaine of Life*, sermons 1 and 3 (W); Shepard, *The Parable of the Ten Virgins*, chs. 1-6 (W)
- M 10/2 **NO CLASS**
- W 10/4 PRIVATE PIETY: Thomas Shepard, *The Autobiography*, in *God' s Plot*, pp. 35-79.
- M 10/9 PURITAN POETS I: Bradstreet, "The Prologue" (NA 239-40), " In Honor of That High and Mighty Princess Queen Elizabeth of Happy Memory" (NA 247-51);  
"Contemplations" (NA 253-9), "The Flesh and the Spirit" (NA 260-2), "The Author to Her Book" (NA 262)), "To My Dear and Loving Husband" (NA 263), "A Letter to Her Husband Absent Upon Public Employment" (NA 264), "Another [Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment]" (NA 264-5), "Here Follows Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House" (NA 269-70), "As Weary Pilgrim" (NA 271), "Meditations Divine and Moral" 38 (handout), "To My Dear Children" (NA 272-5)  
**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF FIRST REACTION PAPER**
- W 10/11 PURITAN POETS I: Bradstreet continued.  
**DEADLINE FOR POSTING OF A REACTION PAPER TO COURSEWORKS UNDER THE APPROPRIATE AUTHOR HEADING**
- M 10/16 PURITAN POETS II: ; Taylor, "Prologue" (NA 343), "Meditation 8 (First Series)" (NA 344-5), "Meditation 16 (First Series)" (NA 345-6), "Meditation 22 (First Series)" (346-7), "Meditation 42 (First Series)" (NA 348-9),  
"Meditation 26 (Second Series)" (NA 350), "The Preface" (351-2), "The Soul' s Groan to Christ for Succor" (NA 352), "Christ' s Reply" (NA 353-5), "The Joy of Church Fellowship Rightly Attended" (NA 356),  
"Upon a Wasp Chilled with Cold" (NA 359), "The Ebb and Flow" (W),  
"Upon the Sweeping Flood" (W), "Meditation 3 (First Series)" (W);  
George Herbert, "Jordan (II)" (W)
- W 10/18 PURITAN POETS II: Taylor, continued.
- M 10/23 PURITAN POETS III: Wigglesworth, *The Day of Doom*
- W 10/25 CAPTIVITY NARRATIVE: Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (NA 308-340)
- M 10/30 JONATHAN EDWARDS AS SCHOLAR AND THEOLOGIAN: "A Divine and Supernatural Light" (NA 477-490), " [The Beauty of the World]" (NA 509-11), excerpts from *Images or Shadows of Divine Things* (NA 511-514)

- W 11/1 EDWARDS AND THE GREAT AWAKENING: Edwards, "Personal Narrative" (NA 466-76) "[Sarah Pierrepont]" (NA 476-7), "Letter to Rev. Dr. Benjamin Colman" (NA 466-74), "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (NA 498-509); Charles Chauncy, "Enthusiasm Described and Cautioned Against" (excerpt, W)
- DEADLINE FOR POSTING A ONE-PARAGRAPH RESPONSE TO A CLASSMATE' S POSTED REACTION PAPER**
- M 11/6 **ACADEMIC HOLIDAY--NO CLASS**
- W 11/8 QUAKER PIETY AND ABOLITION: Woolman, *The Journal of John Woolman* (23-192, 297-8)
- M 11/13 QUAKER PIETY AND ABOLITION: Woolman, continued.  
DECLARING INDEPENDENCE I: Franklin, *The Autobiography* (NA 538-610);
- W 11/15 DECLARING INDEPENDENCE I: Franklin, continued. Paine, *The Age of Reason* (excerpt in NA 718-24)
- DEADLINE FOR POSTING OF A SECOND REACTION PAPER TO COURSEWORKS UNDER THE APPROPRIATE AUTHOR HEADING**
- M 11/20 DECLARING INDEPENDENCE II: Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (excerpts in NA 747-781)
- W 11/22 DECLARING INDEPENDENCE III: Paine, *Common Sense* (excerpts in NA 706-12); Jefferson, *The Autobiography of Thomas Jefferson* (excerpts in NA 726-32); Adams and Adams, *The Letters of John and Abigail Adams* (excerpts in NA 683-98), Murray, "On the Equality of the Sexes" (NA 782-791)
- M 11/27 AMERICAN NEOCLASSICISM AND PUBLIC POLEMICAL VERSE:  
Wheatley, "On Being Brought from Africa to America" (NA 810), "To the Right Honorable William, Earl of Dartmouth, His Majesty' s Principal Secretary of State for North America, &c." (NA 812-3), "To the University of Cambridge, in New England" (NA 813), "On the Death of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield, 1770" (NA 814-5), "Thoughts on the Works of Providence" (NA 815-8), "To His Excellency General Washington" (NA 819-20), selected letters (NA 820-5);  
Freneau, "On the Emigration to America and Peopling the Western Country" (NA 799-800), "The Wild Honey Suckle" (NA 800-1), "The Indian Burying Ground" (NA 801-2), "To Sir Toby" (NA 802-4), "On Mr. Paine's Rights of Man" (NA 804-5), "To a New England Poet" (NA 807-8), "Literary Importation" (handout)
- W 11/29 AMERICAN AND ENGLISH CULTURE: Barlow, *The Hasty Pudding* (W); Tyler, *The Contrast* (NA 825-867)
- M 12/4 THE NOVEL IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC I: Foster, *The Coquette*  
\* FINAL DEADLINE FOR FIVE-TO-SIX-PAGE PAPER
- W 12/6 THE NOVEL IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC II: Brown, *Wieland*; Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (excerpt in NA 657-667).  
(Note: *Memoirs of Carwin*, printed with *Wieland* in the Penguin edition, is not assigned.)

M 12/11 THE NOVEL IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC II: Brown, *Wieland*, continued, and  
CONCLUSION

\* **FINAL REACTION PAPERS DUE**

\* **REACTION PAPER PORTFOLIOS DUE**

W 12/13 OPTIONAL REVIEW SESSION

**FINAL EXAMINATION** as scheduled by the registrar., tentatively scheduled for **Monday December  
18 at 9 am**