

## AMERICAN LITERATURE TO 1800

BC 3179x Fall 2011

MW 11:00-12:15 Milbank 327

Lisa Gordis  
Office: Barnard Hall 408D  
Office phone: 854-2114  
Mailbox: Barnard Hall 417  
lgordis@barnard.edu

<http://www.columbia.edu/~lmg21>  
Office hours: Wednesday 2:00-3:30  
To make an appointment, go to  
<http://professorgordis.pbworks.com>.

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> , 7th edition, Vol. A	The 6th edition of the NAAL does not include Foster's <i>The Coquette</i> . The novel is available both online at <a href="http://tinyurl.com/2eu97o">http://tinyurl.com/2eu97o</a> and in a paperback edition from Oxford University Press. Students planning to enroll in ENG BC3180y may want to purchase Package 1, which includes both Vol. A and Vol. B
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.
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.
Brown	<i>Wieland and Memoirs of Carwin</i> (Penguin)	Available online at <a href="http://tinyurl.com/39cfeh">http://tinyurl.com/39cfeh</a>
<b>Recommended text:</b> Equiano	<i>The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano</i> (Penguin)	This text supplements 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.

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 online. 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**, both in class and via the course blog. 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. As we will be working closely with course texts, **please bring assigned readings to class each day**. If you read on reserve, please bring your reading notes. Note that participating in discussion involves both expressing your views and listening to your classmates' ideas.

Most materials are found on the course **blog**. To join the blog, go to <http://edblogs.columbia.edu/englx3179-001-2011-3/> and log in using your uni. Then click on **Site Admin** at the right side of the screen, which will take you to the blog **Dashboard**. Click on your username in the upper right hand corner to access your profile. (You can also click on **"Your Profile"** at the lower left of the screen.) Fill in your first and last name, and then edit the setting **"Display name publicly as"** to show your first and last name. You may also add other information to your profile. **You must join the blog and edit your profile by September 12.**

**Also, please fill out the student data form at <http://bit.ly/rhaX1s>.**

### **WRITTEN REQUIREMENTS:**

You will write **four two-page papers** during the course of the semester. Short papers are due at 11:00 am on the day for which the material about which you're writing is assigned. They should discuss a particular aspect of the assigned reading. You may do a close reading of a passage, explore a theme or issue in the text, or 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, and should show close work with the language of the text.

During the semester, you must write four such essays. Essays are due on the day that we're discussing the material about which you're writing. You may not submit more than one essay in a week without requesting special permission to do so. You must hand in your first short paper **no later than October 5**. Aside from these constraints, you may choose when to write your essays. Each paper must be handed in to me on paper, and **must also be posted to the course blog**.

**To post your paper to the blog**, first **compose your post in a word processor**. Then go to the blog **dashboard** by following the link to **"site admin."** At the left side of the screen, click on **"Posts"** and then on **"Add New."** You can copy and paste your text into the editing screen. There's a button specifically for pasting from Microsoft Word. There are also buttons which make it easier to add images and videos. (You are not required to add images. Images should be added using links, as we have a space quota.) Once you've adjusted the format to your satisfaction, click **"Update"** at the right side of the screen. You should also assign your post to the relevant **categories**, including the names of authors you're discussing.

In response to class discussion, comments from your classmates, or comments from me, you may choose to **revise your essay on the blog**. If you do so, you should use the comments feature on the blog to **add a comment briefly summarizing the changes you've made** (e.g. "I clarified the discussion of my point about Shepard's representation of Joanna's death" or "I corrected some typographical errors"). This will prevent confusion if your classmates have posted comments (especially if you decide to change a point in response to a classmate's comment) and will also alert me to read your revised posting and give you credit for your revision.

Over the course of the semester, you must post **three comments** on your classmates' blog postings. Your first comment must be posted **no later than October 10**. To comment, click on the comment count at the top right of the post on which you want to comment. Type your

comment in the text-entry box, and click on “submit.” **All blog postings and comments must be posted by December 12.**

In addition, you will write **one five-to-six-page paper** on a topic of your choosing, which may develop out of your short papers. I will hand out suggested paper topics, 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 5**. However, if you submit your paper **by November 4**, 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 about an extension. Work that is late without an extension will be penalized.

All essays 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 *Rules for Writers*, *A Writer's Reference*, 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:

short papers:	30%
five-to-six-page essay:	30%
final exam:	30%
class participation (including blog comments):	10%

#### **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

- Students will learn to think critically, to read analytically, and to use textual evidence in support of oral and written arguments.
- They will study the literature, history, religion, and culture of colonial America and the early Republic through early American texts.
- They will gain familiarity with a range of genres including histories, sermons, poetry, autobiography, drama, and novels.

#### **SCHEDULE OF READINGS:** (NA = Norton Anthology 7th edition; W = online)

W 9/7	Introduction and Origins
M 9/12	ORIGINS II: Bradford, <i>Of Plymouth Plantation</i> , chs. 1-14 (Modern College Library Edition pp. 1-154) <b>DUE: join blog and edit profile</b>
W 9/14	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 138-146)

- M 9/19 ORIGINS II, continued: Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, chs. 23-36 (Modern College Library Edition pp. 278-385)
- W 9/21 ORIGINS III: Winthrop, *A Model of Christian Charity* (NA 147-158); "[Winthrop's Speech to the General Court]," from *The Journal of John Winthrop* (NA 164-167)
- M 9/26 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)
- W 9/28 PRIVATE PIETY: Thomas Shepard, *The Autobiography*, in *God's Plot*, pp. 35-79.
- M 10/3 PURITAN POETS I: Bradstreet, "The Prologue" (NA 188-189), "In Honor of That High and Mighty Princess Queen Elizabeth of Happy Memory" (NA 189-93); selection from "The Four Monarchies" (read the first twenty lines, and then read "Semiramis," lines 70-279) (W), "Contemplations" (NA 195-202), "The Flesh and the Spirit" (NA 202-204), "The Author to Her Book" (NA 204-205), "Before the Birth of One of Her Children" (NA 205-206), "To My Dear and Loving Husband" (NA 206), "A Letter to Her Husband Absent Upon Public Employment" (NA 206-207), "Another [Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment]" (NA 207-208), "Here Follows Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House" (NA 212-213), "As Weary Pilgrim" (NA 213-214), "Meditations Divine and Moral" 38 (handout), "A Dialogue between Old England and New" (W), "To My Dear Children" (NA 214-217)
- W 10/5 PURITAN POETS II: Bradstreet continued; Taylor, "Prologue" (NA 269-270), "Meditation 8 (First Series)" (NA 270-271), "Meditation 16 (First Series)" (NA 271-272), "Meditation 22 (First Series)" (NA 272-273), "Meditation 42 (First Series)" (NA 275-276), "Meditation 26 (Second Series)" (NA 276-277), "Meditation 150 (Second Series)" (NA 277-278), "The Preface" (NA 278-279), "The Soul's Groan to Christ for Succor" (NA 279-280), "Christ's Reply" (NA 280-283), "The Joy of Church Fellowship Rightly Attended" (W), "Upon Wedlock, and Death of Children" (NA 283-284), "Upon a Wasp Chilled with Cold" (NA 284-285), "The Ebb and Flow" (W), "Upon the Sweeping Flood" (W), "Meditation 3 (First Series)" (W); George Herbert, "Jordan (II)" (W).
- DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF FIRST SHORT PAPER (HARD COPY TO PROFESSOR GORDIS AND DIGITAL VERSION POSTED TO BLOG)**
- M 10/10 PURITAN POETS II: Taylor, continued  
**\* DUE: FIRST COMMENT ON A CLASSMATE'S BLOG POSTING**
- W 10/12 PURITAN POETS III: Wigglesworth, *The Day of Doom*. If you're reading from the University of Virginia etext, please see the EEBO edition for "A [Prayer] unto Christ the ludge of the World."
- M 10/17 CAPTIVITY NARRATIVE: Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (NA 235-267)
- W 10/19 JONATHAN EDWARDS AS SCHOLAR AND THEOLOGIAN: "A Divine and Supernatural Light" (NA 404-417), "[The Beauty of the World]" (W), excerpts from *Images or Shadows of Divine Things* (W)

- M 10/24 EDWARDS AND THE GREAT AWAKENING: Edwards, "Personal Narrative" (NA 386-396), "[Sarah Pierrepont]" (NA 396-397), "Letter to Rev. Dr. Benjamin Colman" (NA 417-425), "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (NA 425-436); Charles Chauncy, "Enthusiasm Described and Cautioned Against" (excerpt, W)
- W 10/26 THE AWAKENING II: Samson Occom, *A Short Narrative of My Life* (NA 440-1 and W)
- M 10/31 THE AWAKENING III: John Marrant, *A Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black* (W)
- W 11/2 QUAKER PIETY AND ABOLITION: Woolman, *The Journal of John Woolman* (23-192, 297-8)
- F 11/4 **Deadline for early submission of 5-6-page paper with revision option.**
- M 11/7 **ACADEMIC HOLIDAY--NO CLASS**
- W 11/09 QUAKER PIETY AND ABOLITION: Woolman, continued.
- M 11/12 DECLARING INDEPENDENCE I: Franklin, *The Autobiography* (NA 472-587)
- W 11/14 DECLARING INDEPENDENCE I: Franklin, continued. Paine, *The Age of Reason* (excerpt in NA 643-649)
- M 11/21 DECLARING INDEPENDENCE II: Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (excerpts in NA 674-709)
- W 11/23 DECLARING INDEPENDENCE III: Paine, *Common Sense* (excerpts in NA 630-637); Jefferson, *The Autobiography of Thomas Jefferson* (excerpts in NA 649-657); Adams and Adams, *The Letters of John and Abigail Adams* (excerpts in NA 616-629), Murray, "On the Equality of the Sexes" (NA 724-733)
- M 11/28 AMERICAN NEOCLASSICISM AND PUBLIC POLEMICAL VERSE:  
Wheatley, "On Being Brought from Africa to America" (NA 753-753), "To the Right Honorable William, Earl of Dartmouth, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for North America, &c." (NA 754-755), "To the University of Cambridge, in New England" (NA 755-756), "On the Death of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield, 1770" (NA 756-757), "Thoughts on the Works of Providence" (NA 757-760), "To His Excellency General Washington" (NA 761-762), selected letters (NA 763-764);  
Freneau, "On the Emigration to America and Peopling the Western Country" (NA 743-744), "The Wild Honey Suckle" (NA 744-745), "The Indian Burying Ground" (NA 745-746), "To Sir Toby" (NA 746-748), "On Mr. Paine's Rights of Man" (NA 748-749), "On the Religion of Nature" (NA 749-750), "Literary Importation" (handout)
- W 11/30 AMERICAN AND ENGLISH CULTURE: Barlow, *The Hasty Pudding* (W); Tyler, *The Contrast* (NA 764-805)
- M 12/5 THE NOVEL IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC I: Foster, *The Coquette* (NA 806-904)  
**\* FINAL DEADLINE FOR FIVE-TO-SIX-PAGE PAPER**
- W 12/7 THE NOVEL IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC II: Brown, *Wieland*; Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (excerpt in NA 595-605).  
(Note: *Memoirs of Carwin*, printed with *Wieland* in the Penguin edition, is not

assigned.)

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

\* **FINAL SHORT PAPERS DUE**

\* **DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION OF ALL BLOG POSTINGS AND COMMENTS**

W 12/14 OPTIONAL REVIEW SESSION

**FINAL EXAMINATION** as scheduled by the registrar, tentatively scheduled for **Monday December 19** at **9 am** in **Milbank 327**.