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MWF Per. 3
MCCB 1108
AML2410

Transatlantic America: Making Contact with “The New World” and the Old

Course Description:

When explorers and pilgrims first arrived on American shores, they deemed this land a “New World,” a phrase that Shakespeare immortalized in *The Tempest*. Even today, our sense of “newness” is embedded in our places—New York, New England, etc.—and our politics—the New Deal and Obama's "Change" campaign. By literally naming the land “new,” Spanish, French, and British settlers thought they would find a new humanity not only out there in the wild but also within themselves. In this class, we will investigate this desire for newness in the land and how that ideal ultimately failed, as evidenced by our continued treks on and across the sea, back to the “old” worlds.

In our first units this semester, we begin at the moment of discovery and first contact to understand how we got here and how we first approached the promise of the New World. Then, like the writers we discuss, we will make a few “return trips” back to the major colonial power, England. This travel, both in the texts we analyze and how we analyze them, is called transatlanticism. Through this textual travel, we must ask ourselves what American texts drew from Britain and what the British pulled from us.

While this may seem to occur in a far off time and place in history, this intertextuality between nations highlights how transatlanticism is still very much with us today. Politicians and patriots are always invoking an exceptionalist, self-made America, but are we really? Likewise, the British usually depict Americans as imbeciles, capable of only Hollywood-esque bursts of impulsive bravery, and yet many of Britain's greatest poets and novelists drew inspiration from our wild land. This course will teach you that national borders only exist on maps; our histories and cultures are mixed. We need to push past “sea to shining sea” and explore the sea itself. What happens in this 3,000-mile gap between America and Britain and how does it help us understand our nation then and today?

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities, and it also contributes 6,000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing.

Required Texts:

You are required to bring a hard copy of the text we are discussing to class.

- Coursepack available at Xerographic Copy Center
- *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare (Folger Shakespeare Library)
- *Letters from an American Farmer* by J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur (Penguin Classics)
- *Belinda* by Maria Edgeworth (Oxford World Classics)

Goals:

By the end of the semester, you should. . .

- Gain an appreciation for British and early American drama, captivity narratives, spiritual autobiographies, poetry, nonfiction, the early novel, and other prose.
- Have a strong sense of the dialogue between America and England from the 17th century to the early 19th century.
- Be able to make historical, literary historical, critical or theoretical statements about the texts you've read and should be able to support those statements.
- Have refined your basic writing skills, including drafting, proofreading, editing, and composing a polished final product.
- Know how to use proper MLA documentation style.

Assignments and Grading Scale:

Reading Responses: 3 entries in total, 500 words each, 15% of your grade

These responses should show that you have read the works assigned and critically analyzed them. In each response, you will cultivate an argument that responds to the prompt I give in class, typically one week before each blog is due. Five hundred words is a small space in which to make an argument, so have a critical eye toward concision and clarity. Take these responses as experiments toward the larger assignments—try different analyses out, play with various texts, and see what you like writing about best. These will all be turned in as blogs on Sakai and are due before class.

Synthesis Paper: 1,000 words, 20%

In this assignment, you will choose one work that we have discussed in class and another that we have not discussed, then cultivate an argument that grows from the synthesis of both texts. I encourage you to think outside the box and look at your other areas of interest or hobbies for inspiration (i.e., other literature, film, television, visual art, or pop culture). This is not a simple compare/contrast essay. Instead of placing two texts in opposing columns and discussing their similarities and dissimilarities from one another, you must address both texts separately then form an argument that can only arise from putting these two texts side by side. This is a tricky assignment that addresses an important critical skill, so I again encourage you to discuss topics and outlining with me.

Transatlanticism Paper I: 1,500 words, 20%

This paper will test your skills in using some basic methods of transatlanticism, as we have discussed transatlanticism in class so far. Similar to the synthesis assignment, you will choose one text we have discussed in class and one we have not. This time, however, I will be providing a list of outside texts you can choose from. The in-class text you choose must be American, while the list will provide an array of different British texts for you to synthesize with your chosen American text. Thus, you use many of the skills you learned through the synthesis paper, but now, your argument must depend on a *transatlantic* understanding of how this synthesis occurs. Through your argument, you answer why these texts illuminate one another AND how that reveals some important aspect of a transatlantic moment between nations.

Transatlanticism Paper II: 2,000 words, 25%

In your final paper, you will use the skills displayed in the synthesis paper and first transatlantic assignment, while adding critical theory to your argument. You will choose two works (one

American, one British) we discussed in class and form an argument using the theories at your disposal: postcolonialism, feminism, Marxism, cultural studies, psychoanalysis, and queer theory. You may choose from any of these or other theoretical lenses you may have learned in other literature or philosophy courses. Your paper should have a strong argument, which relies on your chosen critical theory. I expect unique and interesting arguments. Parroting in-class discussions or repetition through the whole paper is unacceptable. Also, you will be conducting outside research for this assignment and integrating this research into your argument.

Reading Quizzes: 10%

These quizzes will occur on a sporadic basis and will test if you read the text and how well you read the text. Therefore, it is important that you take time in your reading to understand issues concerning tone, theme, format, and character, as well as plot. Rather than focusing on just major scenes or chapters, these quizzes will establish the value of other major moments while reading. I will never ask questions that expect you to read my mind and figure out what interpretation I like best. If you read the text closely and attentively, these should all be easy A's.

Participation: 10%

Reading the texts and doing the assignments really only gets you half way there in this class. I expect active class discussion and participation on a daily basis. If you read the texts, but don't participate in class (or vice versa), then your work in general will suffer because of it. Our classroom acts as a safe environment where you can air your opinions and consider those presented by your classmates, so take advantage of this setup and see how something you're thinking of writing a paper on, for instance, flies in general discussion. In essence, active participation helps your personal work, and of course gets you the full 10%.

Grading Scale:

UF has recently instituted minus grades. As a result, letter grades now have different grade point equivalencies.

A =	93% = 4.0
A- =	90% = 3.67
B+ =	87% = 3.33
B =	83% = 3.0
B- =	80% = 2.67
C+ =	77% = 2.33
C =	73% = 2.0
C- =	70% = 1.67
D+ =	67% = 1.33
D =	63% = 1.0
D- =	60% = .67
E =	>60% = 0.0

NB: You must pass this course with a “C” or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C) and to receive the 6,000-word University Writing Requirement credit (E6). You must turn in all papers totaling 6,000 words to receive credit for writing 6,000 words.

PLEASE NOTE: a grade of “C-” will not confer credit for the University Writing Requirement or the CLAS Composition (C) requirement.

Grade Meanings: Here is the meaning behind the grades I assign to your papers (all papers are graded on a letter scale, not points); you can use these statements to determine how you might work toward a higher grade:

A: You did what the assignment asked for at a high quality level, and your work shows originality and creativity. Work in this range shows all the qualities listed below for a B, but it also demonstrates that you took extra steps to be original or creative in developing content, solving a problem, or developing a style.

B: You did what the assignment asked of you at a high quality level. Work in this range needs revision; however, it is complete in content, is organized well, and shows special attention to style.

C: You did what the assignment asked of you. Work in this range needs significant revision, but it is complete in content and the organization is logical. The style is straightforward but unremarkable.

D: You neglected some basic requirements of the assignment, and completed it at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The content is often incomplete and the organization is hard to discern. Attention to style is often nonexistent or chaotic.

E: An E is usually reserved for people who don't do the work or don't come to class. However, if your work is shoddy and shows little understanding of the needs of the assignment, you will receive a failing grade in this course.

General Classroom Policies:

Attendance

Attendance is *required*. Unlike some other classes you may have taken, just “reading the textbook” won’t get you anywhere near a good grade. You are allowed three absences without any direct effect on your grade. Your final grade will drop by a letter with each subsequent absence after your first three. If you reach six unexcused absences, you will automatically fail the course.

Absences involving military service, court-mandated activities (such as jury duty or testimony in court), or university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays are excused, but you must notify me of your absence prior to the date that will be missed.

Also, tardiness will not be tolerated. Two tardies equal one absence.

Cell phones and other assorted Gadgets

I turn my cell phone off or set it to silent ring before coming into the classroom and will expect the same courtesy from you. I should not see cell phones on desks or in your laps at any point during class time. If you are using a laptop in class, it should be used only for taking notes.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 8 July 2011)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

All the work submitted on Sakai will be passed through Turnitin.com, a website that compares your paper to other papers on the Internet, any published work, and the Internet itself. If you plagiarize, you will be caught, which could result in an automatic E for the assignment, the course, or a disciplinary measure from the university, depending upon the gravity and frequency of the matter.

Classroom Behavior

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and elicit strong opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. In other words, any rude, coarse, or offensive remarks based upon race, gender, or sexual identity will not be tolerated. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

In-Class Work

Students will be expected to work in small groups and participate in group discussions, writing workshops, and other in-class activities. Students must be present for all in-class activities to receive credit for them. In-class work cannot be made up. In general, students are expected to contribute constructively to each class session.

Paper Maintenance Responsibilities

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material.

Mode of Submission All papers will be submitted as MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) documents to E-learning/Sakai. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered.

Papers and drafts are due at the beginning of class or on-line at the assigned deadline. Late papers will not be accepted. Failure of technology is not an excuse.

Students with Disabilities

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting accommodation should contact the Students with Disabilities Office, Peabody 202. That office will provide documentation to the student whom must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Course Schedule:

Unit 1: Discovery

Week 1: January 6-10

M - Introduction to syllabus and the course

W - In-Class reading and activity

F - William Bradford: *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Book 1: Chs. 9 & 10

Week 2: January 13-17

M - John Winthrop: "A Model of Christian Charity"

W - William Shakespeare: *The Tempest* (Act 1)

F - William Shakespeare: *The Tempest* (Act 2)

Week 3: January 20-24

M - No Class!

W - William Shakespeare: *The Tempest* (Acts 3-4)

F - **Blog #1 Due!**

William Shakespeare: *The Tempest* (Act 5)

Unit 2: Colonial Contact with the Land

Week 4: January 27-31

M - Mary Rowlandson: *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*

W - Mary Rowlandson: *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*

In-class exercise: Mapping Rowlandson's "removes"

F - NO CLASS

Read and Critique: Michele Bumham: Excerpt from Captivity and Sentiment

Week 5: February 3-7

M - *Writing Workshop*: Bring in your thesis statements. Also, perform in-class group synthesizing of outside texts with those we've read in class

W - Elizabeth Ashbridge: *Some Account of the Fore-Part of the Life of Elizabeth Ashbridge*

F - Elizabeth Ashbridge: *Some Account of the Fore-Part of the Life of Elizabeth Ashbridge*

Unit 3: Introduction to Transatlanticism

Week 6: February 10-14

M - Synthesis Assignment Due!

Lecture and Discussion: What is transatlanticism? What's the point of looking back to Britain?

W - *In-class exercise*: Performing transatlantic readings of the American texts we have read so far.

F - Crèvecoeur: *Letters from an American Farmer*, Letters II and **TTT**

Week 7: February 17-21

M - Crèvecoeur: *Letters from an American Farmer*, Letter IX

W - Crèvecoeur: *Letters from an American Farmer*, Letter XI

F - Paul Giles: *Transatlantic Insurrections*, Introduction

Week 8: February 24-28

M - Blog #2 Due!

Writing Workshop: Writing a paper using a Transatlantic lens rather than Synthesis

W - Crèvecoeur: *Letters from an American Farmer*, Letter XII

F - William Wordsworth: "Composed by the Sea-Side, Near Calais" and "Calais, August, 1802"***

Week 9: March 3-7

SPRING BREAK!

Unit 4: Transatlanticism + Critical Theories

Week 10: March 10-14

M - Transatlantic Assignment I Due!

Lecture and Discussion: How to utilize critical theory alongside transatlanticism.

W - Olaudah Equiano: *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*

F - Olaudah Equiano: *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*

Week 11: March 17-21

M - Olaudah Equiano: *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*

W - Olaudah Equiano: *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*

F - NO CLASS

Read and Critique: Jocelyn Stitt: “Olaudah Equiano, Englishness, and the Negotiation of Raced Gender”

Week 12: March 24-28

M - S.T. Coleridge: *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

W - S.T. Coleridge: *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

F - *In-Class Exercise:* Forming transatlantic, postcolonial arguments using Coleridge and Equiano

Week 13: March 31-April 4

M - **Blog #3 Due!**

The Narrative of K. White

W - *Lecture and Discussion:* Gender and queer theory, especially within a Transatlantic context

F - Sharon Halevi: Introduction to *The Narrative of K. White*

Week 14: April 7-11

M - Henry Fielding: “The Female Husband”

Excerpts from *The Female Review: or, Memoirs of an American Young Lady*

W - Maria Edgeworth: *Belinda*, Ch. 1-2

F - Maria Edgeworth: *Belinda*, Ch. 3-4

Week 15: April 14-18

M - *In-Class Exercise:* Debate on gender in *Belinda* and *K. White*

W - *Writing Workshop:* Integrating outside sources into your own writing

F - Scheduled conferences!

Week 16: April 21-25

M - **Peer Review for final paper!**

W - No class: Conferencing throughout the week!

F - **Paper Due!**