

Keri Holt
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ENGL 6350: American Literature and Culture
Hispanic American Literature, 1500-1900: From the Colonies to California

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Within the past decade, American literary studies (and the field of American studies, more broadly) has been increasingly informed and influenced by transnational or hemispheric approaches. Just as contemporary critics have become more invested in examining how literature and cultures are produced by complex relationships of interaction and exchange that extend across traditional national borders, this course offers students a way of engaging with this critical movement by examining the history of Hispanic American literature and culture in the United States from the early colonial period through the end of the 19th century. Over the course of the semester, we will read a range of texts—some written by writers of Hispanic descent, others written by writers who were interested in representing and engaging with a number of different Hispanic communities and literatures in the early U.S.— and by studying these works, we will consider what it means to develop a more “transamerican” view of U.S. literature. In doing so, we will also think critically about the problems and issues that arise when trying to define and discuss a “Hispanic American” literary tradition, particularly when considering the range of regions, communities, and cultural traditions these different works represent. Although the course begins in the colonial period, the majority of the class will focus on Hispanic American literature written in the 19th century, encompassing a range of novels, short stories, and poetry. In addition to literary texts, we will also be reading a wide range of contemporary criticism to explore some of the larger critical frameworks and arguments that will arise from our critical discussions. Finally, this class will also focus developing strong methods and strategies for working with primary texts and conducting archival research, as well as for composing and completing a formal conference presentation and research paper.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Kirsten Silva Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture: The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*
- *The Account: Álvaro Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca's Relación* (1542)
- Jose Joaquin Fernandez De Lizardi, *The Mangy Parrot: The Life And Times Of Periquillo Sarniento Written By Himself For His Children* (trans. David L. Frye)
- Timothy Flint, *Francis Berrian or The Mexican Patriot* (online)
- *Xicotencatl* (1826), trans. Castillo-Feliu, Guillermo I.
- John Rollin Ridge, *The Life and Adventures of Joquin Murieta* (1854)
- Herman Melville, selections from *The Encantadas* (1854)
- Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, *The Squatter and the Don* (1885)
- selected works by Jose Heredia, Maria Gowan Brooks (Maria del Occidente), and William Cullen Bryant
- José Martí, selections from *Selected Writings*
- Assorted articles to be provided either via website or course reserve

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

The assignments for this course are designed to help you develop your skills as an academic scholar and writer. A series of short, weekly response papers will help you hone your close reading skills, while also providing you with a chance regularly practice your writing skills. Your research presentation will allow you to gain experience with the strategies and methods of conducting archival research, as well as with situating that research within a contemporary critical context. Your conference abstract and formal presentation will provide you with the skills, practice, and feedback that you need to successfully submit your work to academic conferences and forums in the future, and your final, formal research paper will allow you to gain experience in the academic writing process, from your initial research to the development of a successful and polished argument.

Grade breakdown

Participation (includes attendance, active engagement in class discussion, and successful completion of all response papers)	20%
Archival research assignment	20%
Conference paper abstract	10%
Conference presentation	20%
Final Paper	30%

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1: 1/5

Course Introduction

Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone"

Anthology examples:

- The Heath Anthology of American Literature* (1st edition, 1989), (ed. Paul Lauter)
- Early American Writings* (2001) (eds. Carla Mulford, Angela Vietto, and Amy Winans)
- The Literatures of Colonial America* (2001) (eds. Susan Castillo, Ivy Schweitzer)

Week 2: 1/12

Hemispheric and Transnational Studies: A Few Key Texts

- Lewis Hanke "Introduction" from *Do the Americas Have a Common History?* (1964)
- Caroline F. Levander and Robert S. Levine, "Introduction: Essays Beyond the Border" from *Hemispheric Studies* (2008)
- Sandhya Shukla and Heidi Tinsman, "Introduction: Across the Americas" from *Imagining Our Americas: Toward a Transnational Frame* (2007)
- Kirsten Silva Gruesz, Ch. 1 "Alone With the Terrible Hurricane" from *Ambassadors of Culture* (2002)
- Gustavo Pérez Firmat, "Introduction: Cheek to Cheek" from *Do the Americas Have a Common Literature* (1990)

Week 3: 1/19

-NO CLASS- Martin Luther King Day

Week 4: 1/26

The Account: Álvaro Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca's Relación (1542)

Jose Joaquin Fernandez De Lizardi, *The Mangy Parrot: The Life And Times Of Periquillo Sarniento Written By Himself For His Children* (trans. David L. Frye) (Ch. 1-9, Ch. 13-18)

Week 5: 2/2

- *The Mangy Parrot*, Cont'd (Ch. 26-28, Ch. 30-32, Ch. 35-38, Ch. 42-43, Ch. 51-52)

* Workshop: Conducting archival research *

- Roderigo Lazlo, "La Famosa Filadelfia: The Hemispheric American City and Constitutional Debates"

- Kirsten Silva Gruesz, "The Mouth of New Empire" in *Ambassadors of Culture*

Week 6: 2/9

Timothy Flint, selections from *Francis Berrian or The Mexican Patriot* (1826)

Week 7: 2/17

Anonymous, *Xicotencatl* (1826), trans. Castillo-Feliu, Guillermo I.

Week 8: 2/23

- Kirsten Silva Gruesz, Ch 2 "The Chain of American Circumstance" and Ch. 3 "Tasks of the Translator"

- Selected poetry and articles by Jose Heredia, Maria Gowan Brooks (Maria del Occidente), and William Cullen Bryant

Week 9: 3/2

John Rollin Ridge, *The Life and Adventures of Joquin Murieta* (1854)

Corridos: *The Ballad of Joquin Murieta*

Week 10: 3/9-3/13: SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS

Week 11: 3/16

Archival research presentations and discussion

Week 12: 3/23

-Herman Melville, selections from *The Encantadas* (1854)

- Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, *The Squatter and the Don* (1885)

Week 13: 3/30

Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, *The Squatter and the Don*, cont'd

Week 14: 4/6

Conference Paper Presentations

Week 15: 4/15

Conference Paper Presentations

Week 16: 4/20

José Martí, selections from *Selected Writings*