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Thesis 1: Colonial Encounters with the Other

In their accounts of encounters with Native Americans, colonial authors grasped with the radical other by imposing on it categories, norms, and values of their own society. This is especially true for notions of gender, which informed not only the representations of Native American people but also the colonial conception of the North American land itself.

Attached Lectures & Sources

Issues I, Session 3: “John Smith and Pocahontas” May 14, 2021.

Issues I, Session 6: “Puritanism for Beginners II” June 11, 2021.

Galle, Theodoor. *Allegory of America, from New Inventions of Modern Times*. Ca. 1600.

Gleach, Frederic W. “Pocohontas and Cpt. John Smith Revisited.” *Algonquian Papers*, 1994.

Rowlandson, Mary. *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*. 1682.

Smith, Henry N. *Virgin Land*. Harvard UP, 1971.

Smith, John, and Jay I. Kislak Reference Collection. *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England & the Summer Isles*. New York: Macmillan, 1907.

Thesis 2: Conspiracy Theories

Conspiracist thinking, i.e. making sense of one’s lived experience through conspiracy theories, lay at the heart of colonial American society and played a pivotal role in the unfolding of major historical moments, including the Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692 and the American Revolution.

Attached Lectures & Sources

Issues I, Session 7: “The Salem Witchcraft Crisis.” June 18, 2021.

Issues I, Session 10: “Towards the Revolution.” July 16, 2021.

Butter, Michael. *Plots, Designs, and Schemes: American Conspiracy Theories from the Puritans to the Present*, Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2014.

Jefferson, Thomas et al. *Copy of the Declaration of Independence*. Library of Congress, 1776.

Norton, Mary Beth. *In the Devil’s Snare*.

Paine, Thomas. *Common Sense; Addressed to the Inhabitants of America*.

Parris, Samuel. *Sermon of January 3, 1692*.

Wood, Gordon S. “Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style: Causality and Deceit in the Eighteenth Century.” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 39, no. 3, 1982, pp. 402–41.

Thesis 3: Tensions between individuality and the collective

A certain tension between themes of individuality and notions of a collective can be traced through much of American cultural and literary history. Two very different examples of this are 1) the self-construction of the narrator figure in 19th century slave narratives between exceptional individual and representative of a group, and 2) the seemingly paradoxical stressing of self-reliance and individuality in transcendentalist theory.

Attached Lectures & Sources

Issues II, Session 5: "Slavery in Literature." December 3, 2021.

Issues II, Session 7: "Antebellum Literature: Transcendentalism." January 7, 2022.

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. 1845.

Gura, Philip F. *American Transcendentalism: A History*. Hill and Wang, 2007.

Levine, Robert S. *Martin Delany, Frederick Douglass, and the Politics of Representative Identity*, 1997.

Thoreau, Henry D. *Walden, or, Life in the Woods* 1854

Thesis 4: Essentialist Notions of Race

From the late 18th century onwards, a motion within the discourse on race towards an essentialist perspective of white superiority, informed by ideas of the Enlightenment, can be observed in American society and literature. Interestingly, this is also true for both sides of the abolitionist discourse – which suggests that the Civil War was not fought for moral reasons alone.

Attached Lectures & Sources

Issues II, Session 3: "Writing the Nation II" November 12, 2021.

Issues II, Session 6: "Resistance to Slavery for Moral and Other Reasons" December 10, 2021.

Butter, Michael. "Conspiracy Theories in American History." *Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories*, 1st ed., 2020.

Chappel, Alonzo. *Captain John Smith Saved by Pocahontas*. 1865.

Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. 1872.

Stowe, Harriet B. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. 1852.

Thesis 5: The Construction of the Wild West

At the turn of the 19th century, intellectuals and artists from urban, east coast America, such as Frederic Remington, Owen Wister, and Frederic Jackson Turner construct a nostalgic myth of the Wild West, in which they negotiate anxieties about a crisis of American masculine identity.

Attached Lectures & Sources

Issues III, Session 3: "The Frontier & the Outlaw" April 30, 2014.

Issues III, Session 6 "Masculinity vs Modernity" May 21, 2014.

Remington, Frederic. *A Dash for the Timber*. Painting. 1889.

Remington, Frederic. *Fight for the Waterhole*. Painting. 1903.

Turner, Frederick J. *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*. 1893.

Slotkin, Richard. *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800-1890*. Atheneum, 1985.

Smith, Henry N. *Virgin Land*. Harvard UP, 1971.

Thesis 6: Photography and Progressivism

Photography, both as a medium and as a profession, played a pivotal role in advancing progressivist social issues, such as monopolization, housing crises, and female emancipation at the turn of the 19th century.

Attached Lectures & Sources

Issues III, Session 7: "Naturalism and Progressivism" May 28, 2014.

Issues III, Session 8 "Women Photographers" June 18, 2014.

Hine, Lewis. *Lewis Hine Collection*. Albin O. Kuhn Library & Gallery Digital Collections, contentdm.ad.umbc.edu/digital/collection/hinecoll.

Johnston, Frances B. *What a Woman can do with a Camera*. 1897.

Riis, Jacob. *How the Other Half Lives*

Szto, Peter. "Documentary Photography in American Social Welfare History: 1897-1943," *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*. vol. 35/2, 2008.