

**HTY 398-2**  
**Furs, Frontiers, and Fame:**  
**North American Exploration**  
University of Maine  
Fall 2013



Tuesdays and Thursdays  
Canadian-American Center  
Seminar Room  
11:00 am – 12:15 pm

**Instructor:** Dr. Tina Adcock  
**Email:** [christina.m.adcock@maine.edu](mailto:christina.m.adcock@maine.edu)  
**FirstClass:** Christina Adcock  
**Offices:** 275B Stevens & 154 College Avenue  
(at the Canadian-American Center)  
**Office hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays,  
1:30-3 pm (Stevens) or by appointment (Can-  
Am Center)

### **Course description**

Who counts as an explorer? What does it mean to undertake exploration? Has the age of exploration forever ended—or are we still living in an exploratory world? This course will consider these and other questions through an examination of the identities, practices, and spaces of exploration in North America from the late fifteenth to the early twentieth centuries. We will investigate the different political, economic, scientific, and cultural factors that inspired the Spanish, French, English, and later American explorers of this continent. We will scrutinize friendly and not-so-friendly encounters between Native Americans and Euro-Americans from multiple perspectives, and analyze the textual and visual records that emerged from such occasions. We will also explore the contradictory ways in which explorers are remembered and discussed in late twentieth- and early twenty-first century society. As this is a writing-intensive course, we will be devoting substantial time to discussing strategies for good writing and to practicing low-stakes writing inside and outside of class meetings.

### **Course objectives**

By the end of this course, you will be able:

- 🌐 To compare and contrast specific political, economic, scientific, and cultural motivations for the exploration of North America over the past five hundred years
- 🌐 To distinguish between and identify factors that gave rise to different kinds of cultural encounters in the history of North American exploration
- 🌐 To evaluate historical events from the perspective of different cultures and systems of knowledge and belief
- 🌐 To analyze textual, visual, and material objects associated with the practices and representations of exploration
- 🌐 To identify and successfully complete the stages of writing a research essay in the academic discipline of history.

## Course organization

This course involves micro-lectures and tutorials by the instructor (generally no more than 15 minutes in length) as well as classroom discussions and activities. The latter will sometimes be conducted with the entire class; at other times we will break up into pairs or small groups. Because this is a small class, students are expected to take an active role at each class meeting in the ways outlined in the section on participation below.

## Course readings

There are no required textbooks for this course. All readings will be available on the course's Blackboard site. Readings should be completed by the date under which they are listed. I have consciously striven to make the reading load manageable: most weeks, you will be reading between 30-70 pages of material. The success of our meetings depends on everyone having done the reading(s) prior to each class.

## Course evaluation

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Attendance and participation	15%
Thinkpieces	15%
Research essay written in stages:	
Annotated bibliography	10%
Peer review of first draft	10%
Final draft of essay	30%
Take-home final exam	20%

Your regular **attendance and participation** will enhance your enjoyment of this course, contribute to a dynamic and mutually profitable classroom environment, and greatly increase your understanding and retention of the material. I expect you to come to class with the readings in hand or with the files on your laptop or tablet, having read them carefully and thoughtfully. I also expect you to reflect critically on lectures, readings, and primary sources in written and spoken form, to listen to your peers and engage with their viewpoints, and to practice expressing your ideas and arguments clearly, concisely, and convincingly. If you work at doing these things consistently throughout the term, you will receive full marks for participation.

You are expected to prepare for and attend every class session. I will determine your final attendance grade based on the following rubric:

A	0-2 absences	C	8 absences
A-	3 absences	C-	9 absences
B+	4 absences	D+	10 absences
B	5 absences	D	11 absences
B-	6 absences	D-	12 absences
C+	7 absences		

If you have to be absent from class unexpectedly, please send me an email explaining why, and provide documentation from another instructor, a program director, or a medical professional, if appropriate. If you know you will have to miss class due to religious observances/practices or another such conflict (e.g. athletic competitions, interviews for professional programs), please let me know as soon as possible. Excused absences will not affect your attendance grade.

## Course assignments

Academic research demonstrates that “low-stakes” or informal writing has a number of benefits. It helps you to keep up with assigned readings, to engage actively with the ideas and subject matter in a course, and to find your own language for expressing and discussing important concepts. Most importantly, regular low-stakes writing will improve your high-stakes writing in essays or on exams. Accordingly, for the first six weeks of the course, you will be asked to reflect on each week’s readings in a series of **thinkpieces**. We will discuss in class what kinds of topics you might address as well as expectations as to length, style, and so on.

I will ask to you to submit your thinkpieces weekly to me on Thursdays in hard copy at the beginning of our class meetings. I will return them the following class with comments, but no grades. Thinkpieces will be graded only on the completeness of your submissions. To receive full marks for this segment of course work, you only have to make sure that you write and submit a thinkpiece every week for which it is expected. For each missing thinkpiece, I will subtract **5%** from your mark for this portion of the course.

The Department of History expects that in a 300-level course, students will conduct research for primary and secondary sources, and that they will write an **intermediate-length research essay**. You will address these tasks through the production of such an essay in stages. You may choose any topic related to the themes and subjects of this course that falls within its temporal remit. I will schedule one-on-one meetings with each of you during the **last week of September** to discuss your ideas for topics, and to give you some initial guidance as to sources you might consult.

Beginning your work on this paper early will ensure that you produce a well-thought-out and well-researched piece of scholarly writing. The first step (after our meeting) in the process will be to produce a tentative **research question and annotated bibliography** of 5 sources pertaining to the topic of your paper. At least one of these must be a primary source. We will discuss the length and content of annotations in class closer to the due date, which will be **Tuesday, October 29**.

Having finished your research and drafted an outline or plan of your thesis statement, principal arguments, and the evidence you plan to use to support these, you will write a first draft of your paper, which will be due in hard copy on **Tuesday, November 26** and which should be **about 8-10 pages long**. This should include all the attributes of a finished piece of formal writing, including footnotes/endnotes and a complete list of works cited. It is vitally important that you complete this draft on time, as that day in class you will be trading essays with a classmate. Each of you will critique the other’s draft during that class session, using guidelines I will provide. I will also provide you with feedback on this draft via email by the beginning of the Thanksgiving break.

Having considered my comments on your draft and those of your peer reviewer, you will then incorporate whatever changes you believe are necessary into your final draft. Your final draft will be due in hard copy at the beginning of our last class on **Thursday, December 12**.

The final examination for this course will consist of a **take-home exam**. The exam will consist of essay questions that will ask you to synthesize course material in order to make broad arguments about the course’s overarching themes. I will hand out the examination on the last day of class, and it will be due in hard copy in my Stevens mailbox by **5 pm on Thursday, December 19**. This will be an open-book exam. You may make use of any course materials to answer the questions, including readings, lecture notes, excerpts from primary sources, video clips or films, and so on.

### **Extra credit**

Although there is already a great deal of reading and writing to do in this course, an extra-credit assignment is available to anyone interested. It will involve reading Philip Levy's short monograph *Fellow Travelers: Indians and Europeans Contesting the Early American Trail* (2007) and writing a 5-page book review. Please contact me for further details.

### **Policies regarding assignments**

All assignments are due at the beginning of class and must be submitted in hard copy. Please include your name, the date, and some kind of descriptive title on the first page; a separate title page is not necessary. Please also number the pages of the assignment if it runs to more than one page. All assignments must be word-processed, using standard 1-inch margins, at least 1.5-inch spacing, and 11 or 12-point font. Use Chicago style for footnotes or endnotes (you may employ whichever of the two you prefer) and for lists of works cited.

A late assignment will have **5%** of its final mark subtracted for each day it is late. Excuses will not be entertained unless you can produce relevant official documentation, such as a doctor's note. Extensions must be requested at least 72 hours in advance of an assignment's due date. Please do not request an extension unless personal or medical circumstances seriously warrant one.

### **Academic honesty**

Academic honesty is very important. It is dishonest to cheat on exams, to copy term papers, to submit papers written by another person, to fake experimental results, or to copy or reword parts of books or articles into your own papers without appropriately citing the source. Students committing or aiding in any of these violations may be given failing grades for an assignment or for an entire course, at the instructor's discretion. In addition to any academic action that an instructor may take, these violations are also subject to action under the University of Maine's Student Conduct Code. The maximum possible sanction for academic dishonesty under this code is dismissal from the university.

### **Students with disabilities**

If you have a disability for which you would like to request an accommodation, please contact Ann Smith, the Director of Disability Support Services, at [ann.smith@umit.maine.edu](mailto:ann.smith@umit.maine.edu) or 581-2319 as early as possible in the term. More information about accommodations for disabilities may be found at this website: <http://umaine.edu/disability/>

### **Classroom policies**

Please arrive to class in a timely fashion to avoid disrupting the learning environment for your classmates and me. Please also do not leave the room during class unless it is absolutely, physically unavoidable.

Please turn your cell phones to silent and refrain from using them during class. Feel free to use your laptop, tablet, or netbook to take notes or look up things, but please don't use such devices in ways (Facebook, YouTube, online poker, etc) that will disrupt the attention of other students in your vicinity. Your distraction will be very obvious in a small class. You may bring beverages to class, but please don't bring food along. A little courtesy toward your classmates and me goes a long way.

I may make minor changes to the syllabus during the term. I will notify you of these. You will always be able to find the most recent version of the syllabus on the course's Blackboard site.

## Course schedule: Lectures, readings, and due dates

### Week 1: Introduction

Tues Sept 3 Course introduction & review of syllabus

Thurs Sept 5 Exploration, contact, and encounter

*Readings:* Mary Louise Pratt, "Criticism in the contact zone" (11 pgs)  
Urs Bitterli, "Types of Cultural Encounter: Contacts, Collisions and Relationships" (32 pgs)

### Week 2: Columbus and his legacy

Tues Sept 10 Columbus and the New World

*Reading:* Excerpt from William D. Phillips Jr. and Carla Rahn Phillips, *The Worlds of Christopher Columbus* (~25 pgs)

Thurs Sept 12 Remembering 1492

*Reading:* James Axtell, "Moral Reflections on the Columbian Legacy" (26 pgs)  
**\*Thinkpieces for Weeks 1 and 2 due**

### Week 3: The Spanish in southern North America

Tues Sept 17 The incredible journey of Cabeza de Vaca

*Readings:* David J. Weber, "First Encounters" (30 pgs)  
Dennis Reinhartz and Oakah L. Jones, "The Incredible Journey of Cabeza de Vaca" (9 pgs)

Thurs Sept 19 The strange tale of Oñate's foot

Film: *The Last Conquistador* (2008)

*Reading:* Excerpt from Douglas Seefeldt, "Oñate's Foot: Histories, Landscapes, and Contested Memories in the Southwest" (12 pgs)

**\*Thinkpiece for Week 3 due**

### Week 4: The English in northern North America

**One-on-one meetings on paper topics will be held this week.**

Tues Sept 24 Library session with Melvin Johnson

CETA Classroom, first floor of Fogler Library

Thurs Sept 26 Englishmen and contact

*Readings:* Stephen Hornsby, "Creating an English Atlantic, 1490-1620" (18 pgs)

"Inuit and Englishmen: The Nunavut Voyages of Martin Frobisher"

<http://www.civilization.ca/cmc/exhibitions/hist/frobisher/frint01e.shtml>

(equiv. ~20 pgs)

**\*Thinkpiece for Week 4 due**

### Week 5: The French in eastern North America

Tues Oct 1 Building cross-cultural relationships

*Reading:* Excerpts from Conrad Heidenreich, "Early French Exploration in the North American Interior" (42 pgs)

Thurs Oct 3 Exploration, mapping, and multivocality  
*Reading:* Margaret Wickens Pearce and Michael James Hermann, "Mapping Champlain's Travels: Restorative Techniques for Historical Cartography" (13 pgs)  
*Document:* "'They Would Not Take Me There': People, Places, and Stories from Champlain's Travels in Canada, 1603-1616" (map)  
**\*Thinkpiece for Week 5 due**

Week 6: The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century fur trade

Tues Oct 8 The middle ground  
*Reading:* Richard White, "Introduction" and "The middle ground" (51 pgs)

Thurs Oct 10 Voyageur travel in the *pays d'en haut*  
*Readings:* Carolyn Podruchny, "Rites of Passage and Ritual Moments: Voyageur Cosmology" (34 pgs)  
**\*Thinkpiece for Week 6 due**

Weeks 7-8: Exploration and the scientific turn

Tues Oct 15 **No class—Fall break**

Thurs Oct 17 Enlightenment science and exploration  
*Reading:* Michael S. Reidy et al., "Ordering Nature in the Age of Enlightenment" (32 pgs)

Tues Oct 22 Centres of calculation  
*Reading:* Excerpt from Bruno Latour, "Centres of calculation" (33 pgs)

Thurs Oct 24 **No class—Dr. Adcock away. Please spend the extra 75 minutes working on your annotated bibliography.**

Week 9: Alexander the Great and late eighteenth-century exploration

Tues Oct 29 Alexander Mackenzie: hero or failure?  
*Reading:* TBD  
**\*Annotated bibliography due**

Thurs Oct 31 Alexander von Humboldt: new methods for a new century  
*Readings:* Kathryn Olesko, "Humboldtian Science" (equiv. ~6 pgs)  
Michael Robinson, "Why We Need a New History of Exploration"  
<http://www.common-place.org/vol-10/no-1/robinson/>  
(equiv. ~16 pgs)

Week 10: The British in the Northwest Passage

Tues Nov 5 Concerning Franklin and his gallant crew  
*Readings:* Clive Holland, "Sir John Franklin" (equiv. ~17 pgs)  
Parks Canada, "The Underwater Archaeology Search for Franklin's HMS Erebus and HMS Terror" (equiv. ~10 pgs)  
<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/culture/franklin/index.aspx>

Thurs Nov 7 "The contents of the kettles": Cannibalism and Arctic exploration  
*Reading:* The Dickens-Rae exchange in *Household Words* (73 pgs)

Week 11: The nineteenth-century American West

Tues Nov 12 Nineteenth-century scientific exploration  
*Reading:* Michael S. Reidy et al., "Scientific Exploration of a Manifest America" (26 pgs)

Thurs Nov 14 John Wesley Powell: survey, spectacle, settlement  
*Reading:* Donald Worster, "Landscape with Hero: John Wesley Powell and the Colorado Plateau" (18 pgs)

Week 12 (Nov 19 and 21)

**Dr. Adcock is away, so there will be no classes this week. Please spend the extra hour and a half working to complete the first draft of your essay.**

Week 13: Peer review

Tues Nov 26 \***First draft of essay due.** Bring **two hard copies** to class in preparation for in-class peer review and subsequent review by Dr. Adcock.

Thurs Nov 28 **No class—Thanksgiving break**  
You will receive Dr. Adcock's comments on your draft essay via email by today.

Week 14: The race for the North Pole

Tues Dec 3 Cook and Peary: Explorers behaving badly  
*Reading:* Excerpt from Michael Robinson, *The Coldest Crucible: Arctic Exploration and American Culture* (40 pgs)

Thurs Dec 5 Hidden histories of polar exploration  
*Readings:* TBD

Week 15: The death of exploration...?

Tues Dec 10 "Explornography": Exploration in a (post)modern world  
*Readings:* John Tierney, "Going Where A Lot of Other Dudes With Really Great Equipment Have Gone Before," <http://goo.gl/ktz1A> (equiv. ~10 pgs)  
Felix Driver, "Modern explorers" (9 pgs)

Thurs Dec 12 Wrap-up and review. Take-home exam distributed.  
**\*Final draft of essay due**

Thurs Dec 19 **Take-home exam due in my mailbox in 270 Stevens Hall by 5 pm**

Name and contact information of two classmates:

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