

**English 401 “The Edges of Empire: Global Eighteenth Century”
Spring 2009 Mon. 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Knapton 315**

James Mulholland
Office: Meneely 317
Office Phone: 508.286.3609
Office Hours: Mon. and Wed. 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m.
email: Mulholland_james@wheatoncollege.edu

Course Description:

During this seminar we will investigate what scholars recently have started calling the “global eighteenth century.” In 1773 the imperial administrator George McCartney wrote enthusiastically of Britain’s “vast empire on which the sun never sets and whose bounds nature has not yet ascertained.” This notion of a territory that the sun always shines upon and whose boundaries defy nature and the imagination became increasingly popular and contentious during the eighteenth century. With the colonies of North America, the commerce in India, Ceylon, Turkey, and the Middle East, the slave trade across the Atlantic, and the exploration of the Pacific, the interests of eighteenth-century Britain were indeed world wide. In this class we will use concepts such as “empire” and the “globe” to develop new methods for organizing and interpreting English literature and culture. In particular, we will examine eighteenth-century literature’s “global consciousness” by looking at the texts of British writers who act globally and of colonial subjects who “write back” to empire. These texts will include novels, poems, letters, paintings, engravings, and more. While analyzing them, we will consider the extent to which British writing advances and questions the creation of empire, and determine how notions of empire change what it means to be a British subject. We will draw from theories of post-colonialism, global history, nationalism, and world literature to interpret texts that range from Scotland, Ireland, North America, the Caribbean and Africa, India, and the South Pacific.

Required Texts:

Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, *The Journey to the Western Islands and The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (0140432213)
Samuel Johnson, *The History of Rasselas* (014043108X)
Maria Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent* (0192835637)
Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko* (0140439889)
Mary Wortley Montagu, *The Turkish Embassy Letters* (1853816795)
Phebe Gibbes, *Hartley House, Calcutta*, (0195685644)
Jonathan Swift, *The Writings of Jonathan Swift* (0393094154)
Robert Burns, *Selected Poems* (0140423826)
Edward Said, *Orientalism* (039474067X)
Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative...* (0142437166)
Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (0300107595)

Additional Readings are available on the course website.

(All texts are available at the Wheaton College book store. Please be sure to get these specific editions of the books; check that the ISBN, located above in parenthesis, are correct because other editions of the same title will not be acceptable for the course—different paginations will make it impossible for you to follow along in class. I may provide additional readings throughout the semester.)

Research Paper: The major assignment for this course is a final research paper. During the course you will develop a topic, connected to the issues and debates that we discuss in the course. You will then research the topic, devise an argument, organize supporting evidence. You will compose a one-page proposal for your paper. You will periodically present your findings to the class, and to other English majors. You will have your draft edited by your fellow students. We will be approaching this paper as your attempt to produce a publishable scholarly article. The paper must be a minimum of **20 pages**. It is a serious undertaking and you should consider it as such throughout the course. It should meaningfully engage with a scholarly debate, mark out a framework, and make a contribution to that debate.

Attendance and Participation: Since this course is a seminar, meets infrequently, and is the capstone of the major, it is essential that you attend *every* class. **There are no absences allowed in this class.** You should come to class even if you are sick. Absences will severely affect your grade. If you cannot attend class for an extraordinary reason we will discuss the situation.

I see myself as a moderator and facilitator for the class. But you direct it; it is very much your class. Therefore, being prepared for class is essential. Do **ALL** the reading for class, and be prepared to participate in class. I **expect to hear from every single person in every single class;** you will add something to every single class. **Silence in class will be interpreted as lack of preparation.**

DO NOT wait until Sunday to prepare the reading. There is an enormous amount of material to contend with for each class, so you should prepare yourself to devote time to the class on a near daily basis.

Facilitations: Each student will be assigned a group. In groups, you will be responsible to facilitate and lead one class session. Your facilitation should have a number of parts:

1. **Meet with me as a group TWO weeks before you are assigned to facilitate. We will discuss your facilitation. You are responsible for making this appointment. I will not remind you. Missing this appointment will adversely affect your facilitation grade.**
2. You are responsible for selecting the readings as part of the “Contexts” for the class. These should be critical sources that you find with your partner. (This can also include other brief primary sources that you think are relevant, but you must clear that with me.) **You must find these critical sources and distribute them to the class the WEEK BEFORE you are assigned to facilitate.** You may distribute these materials by photocopy or over email. *****Include me in these emails***.** If applicable, will then post contextual readings on the website.

3. At the same time as you distribute your critical sources, you should also distribute a Blackboard response prompt. You may compose the prompt in any way that you like. As part of your role as facilitators, you should be familiar with your fellow students' responses. Email me your response, I will add it to the course Discussion Board.

4. **During your assigned class, you should be prepared to run the first half of class.** You will start and direct the conversation. You can do this in any way you wish; YOU pick the pedagogy for the class. You may ask questions, have students describe their Blackboard responses, create a performance piece, sing a song, whatever you like—just be sure there is a clear and coherent rationale for the pedagogical tools you pick. Be inventive; consider how best to open up and cover the material.

Blackboard Discussion: You will be asked to respond on Blackboard to a prompt. For the first two weeks, I have provided a prompt on the course website. For the other weeks, student facilitators, as part of their responsibility as presenters, must compose the prompt for the class. (When you are facilitating class you DO NOT compose a response.)

These responses should help you to collect your thoughts in preparation for the class discussion. They will be your initial entry into the debate for class. Think of them as your response, your first contribution, after the presentation/facilitation of your fellow students. Please post your responses on the website by class time and bring a hardcopy to class. **There are no make-up responses. If it is not handed in during class you will not receive a grade.**

Using the Discussion Features of the Course Webpage: To post a response you will need to log onto the course webpage. Go to the website via blackboard.wheatoncollege.edu and click on our course site under the course number. Click on the “Discussion Board” link. Once in the Discussion Board you will find a forum for each of the responses by number. You should copy and paste the text of your response into the text box. **Please do not post your responses as an attachment.** Students are encouraged to use the responses as a source of ideas for the course.

Grading: Your grade for the course will be calculated according to the following formula:

Attendance and participation: 10%

Responses: 10%

Class Facilitation: 20%

Seminar Paper: 60%

Plagiarism and the Honor Code: Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. You should always cite your sources; references are an essential part of critical thinking and academic writing, so don't be afraid to use other people's ideas to develop and advance your own. If you are unsure about any aspect of the policy on plagiarism, please come and speak with me.

Below is a copy of the Wheaton College Honor Code. Please be sure to read it and follow it throughout this course:

As members of the Wheaton community, we commit ourselves to act honestly, responsibly, and above all, with honor and integrity in all areas of campus life. We are accountable for all that we say and write. We are responsible for the academic integrity of our work. We pledge that we will not misrepresent our work nor give or receive unauthorized aid. We commit ourselves to behave in a manner which demonstrates concern for the personal dignity, rights and freedoms of all members of the community. We are respectful of college property and the property of others. We will not tolerate a lack of respect for these values.

I accept responsibility to maintain the Honor Code at all times.

Syllabus

Note: Works on the course website are indicated by an asterisk.

Jan. 26 INTRODUCTION: BRITAIN RULES

[Meet in the library electronic classroom, first floor of Madeleine Wallace Clark]

CORE TEXTS:

James Thomson, “Rule Britannia”*

CONTEXTS:

David Mallet, *Alfred* (1740)*

Suvir Kaul, “Introduction,” *Poems of Nation, Anthems of Empire* (2001)*

Stuart Hall, “Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-Structuralist Debate” (1985)*

Group Assignments for Class Facilitation; I will assign groups.

Feb. 2 BRITAIN AND BRITISHNESS

CORE TEXTS:

Daniel Defoe, *The True Born Englishman* (1701)*

Alexander Pope, *Windsor-Forest* (1713)*

CONTEXTS:

Benedict Anderson, selections from *Imagined Communities* (Intro, chaps. 1-3, 1983)*

Linda Colley, Intro. and Chapters 1-3 in *Britons: Forging the Nation* (1992)

Colin Kidd, “Integration: Patriotism and Nationalism” from the *Blackwell Companion to the Eighteenth Century* (2002)*

I WILL FACILITATE; MY PROMPT

Feb. 9 SCOTLAND

CORE TEXTS:

James Macpherson, *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* (1760)*

Robert Burns, from *Selected Poems*:

 “The Twa Dogs. A Tale”

 “The Vision”

“Scotch Drink”
 “The Holy Fair”
 “Epistle to a Friend”
 “The Fornicator. A New Song”
 “To a Mouse”
 “The Death and Dying Words of Poor Mailie”
 “To a Louse”
 “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”
 “Address to the Deil”
 “Address of Beelzebub”
 “A Bard’s Epitaph”
 “Lines Written under the Portrait of Robert Fergusson”
 “Lines Written on a Banknote”
 “Auld Lang Syne”
 “Tam o’Shanter”

Samuel Johnson, *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775)

James Boswell, *The Journal of the Tour to the Hebrides* (1785)

CONTEXTS:

Leith Davis, selections from *Acts of Union* (Intro. and Chap. 3, 1997)*

Robert Crawford, selections from *Devolving English Literature* (Intro., chap. 2)

Alex Macdonald, “Scotland and the Union” from the *Blackwell Companion to the Eighteenth Century**

I WILL FACILITATE; MY PROMPT

Feb. 16

IRELAND

CORE TEXTS:

Jonathan Swift, *A Letter to the Tradesmen, Shop-Keepers, Farmers, and Common-People of Ireland* (1724), *A Short View of the State of Ireland* (1728);

“A Modest Proposal” (1729); all in the *Writings of Jonathan Swift*

Maria Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent* (1800)

CONTEXTS:

Thomas Barlett, “Ireland, Empire, and Union, 1690-1801” (2004)*

Robert Tracy, “The Cracked Lookingglass of a Servant: Inventing the Colonial Novel” (1998)*

GROUP 1 FACILITATES

Feb. 23

WALES

CORE TEXTS:

Thomas Gray, "The Bard" (1757)*
 Evan Evans, "Paraphrase of the 137th Psalm"*
 Robert Southey, *Madoc*, Part 1, Books I-XVIII (1805)* [note: this is a large amount of poetry]
 Percy Bysshe Shelley:
 "On Leaving London for Wales" (1812)*
 "Sonnet: To A Balloon Laden with Knowledge" (1812)*
 "Sonnet: On Launching some Balloons Filled with Knowledge into the Bristol Channel" (1812)*
 "Sonnet: On Waiting for a Wind to Cross the Bristol Channel from Devonshire to Wales" (1812)*
 Felicia Hemans, *Welsh Melodies* (1822)*

CONTEXTS:

Katie Trumpener, Intro. to *Bardic Nationalism* (1997)*

GROUP 2 FACILITATES

Mar. 2 **THE ATLANTIC**

CORE TEXT:

Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko: Or, the Royal Slave* (1688)
 Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative...* (1789)

CONTEXTS:

Srinivas Aravamudan, from *Tropicopolitans* (Introduction, Chap. 2, 6, 1999)*

GROUP 3 FACILITATES

Mar. 9 **Spring Break, No Class**

Mar. 16 **ARABIA**

CORE TEXTS:

Mary Wortley Montagu, selections from *The Turkish Embassy Letters*
 Samuel Johnson, *Rasselas* (1751)
 Frances Sheridan, *History of Nourjahad* (1767)*

CONTEXTS:

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1974), pgs. 1-149

GROUP 4 FACILITATES

*****PROPOSAL DUE*****

Mar. 23 **INDIA**

CORE TEXTS:

Phebe Gibbes, *Hartly House, Calcutta* (1789)

Din Muhammad, selections from *The Travels of Dean Mahomet...* (1794)

Eyles Irwin, "Bedukah" (1780)*

CONTEXTS:

Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?*"

Vinay Dharwadker, "English in India and Indian Literature in English: The Early History, 1579-1834"

GROUP 5 FACILITATES

*****PRELIMINARY ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE*****

Mar. 30 **SOUTH SEAS**

CORE TEXT:

George Vason, "Falling from Grace"; selections from *Exploration and Exchange: A South Seas Anthology*, ed. Jonathan Lamb et al.

Selected satires of Omai:*

[1.Scott, John, An Epistle From Oberea, Queen of Otaheite, to Joseph Banks, Esq 1775. 2. Omiah's Farewell; 3. An Historic Epistle, from Omiah, to the Queen of Otaheite]

CONTEXT:

Homi Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse"

Neil Rennie, selection from *Far-Fetched Facts* (Chap. 5, 1994)*

GROUP 6 FACILITATES

Apr. 6 **Research Class at the Library**

Apr. 13 **Class Presentations**

*****RESEARCH PAPER DRAFT DUE*** [DISTRIBUTED TO EDITORS]**

Apr. 20 Evening Presentations to English 290

Apr. 27 Research Class; Final Workshop

*****EDITORIAL COMMENTS DUE IN CLASS*****

In-class editing workshop

*****Final Paper Due May 7th in my office. Please hand your paper to me in person between 1 pm and 2 pm. All papers must be handed to me in person. Any paper not handed to me will be considered late.*****