

## ENGL 741, Seminar in American Studies: Remembering Revolutions

Fall 2022 Tuesdays 4:00-6:50 G18 Colson

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Office Hours: 213 Colson, Tuesdays 3:00-4:00 & by appointment

### Overview

*You know the rest. In the books you have read . . .*

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “Paul Revere’s Ride”

Do we know the rest? In her classic work *On Revolution*, political philosopher Hannah Arendt differentiates “revolutions” from other “insurrections,” “civil wars,” “rebellions,” and “uprisings.” Our present moment invites us to think through Arendt’s distinction in relation to the impending 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the revolution of 1776, the January 6, 2021 insurrection, and other less violent instances of political protest. In addition to Arendt, we will work with C. L. R. James and Frantz Fanon. The central question asked in different ways by these theorists is: How can violent liberation be linked to the production of ongoing freedom? We will consider this question specifically in relation to the 1776 revolution—including its impact in Indian country—the Haitian revolution, other attempts by enslaved peoples to claim their freedom by means of violence, and the appropriation of revolutionary rhetoric in the run-up to the Civil War. Recent critical texts will model a range of approaches to the final paper.

**Required Texts.** Many of the required readings are available from online sources or as PDFs linked to the syllabus. I have ordered the following books through the WVU bookstore:

Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (1963). Penguin 9780143039907

Catherine Maria Sedgwick, *The Linwoods* (1835). Harper Perennial 9780062356130

Lenora Sansay, *Secret History, or, the Horrors of St. Domingo* (1808). Broadview  
9781551113463

Martin Delany, *Blake, or, the Huts of America* (1862). Harvard UP 9780674088726

Recommended background/reference text: Woody Holton, *Liberty is Sweet: The Hidden History of the American Revolution* (Simon and Schuster, 2022)

### Graded Work



- Eight weekly response papers (500 words). **Due 1:00 on the day of class (or earlier)**. Don’t turn one in the week you are leading the class. 5% each, total 40% of your final grade.
- Lead the class discussion one week. 10% of final grade.
- Final project including prospectus, rough draft, oral presentation, and article-length final paper (about 6000 words). 50% of final grade.

## **Land Acknowledgement Statement** (from WVU Native American Studies program)

WVU, with its statewide institutional presence, resides on land that includes ancestral territories of the Shawnee, Lenape (Delaware), Haudenosaunee (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk, Tuscarora), Cherokee, and other Indigenous peoples.

In acknowledging this, we recognize and appreciate those Indigenous nations whose territories we are living on and working in. Indigenous peoples have been in the land currently known as West Virginia since time immemorial. It is important that we understand both the context that has brought our university community to reside on this land, and our place within this long history.

We also recognize that colonialism is a current ongoing process, and as scholars seeking truth and understanding, we need to be mindful of our present participation in this process.

## **Policies**

Late work will not be accepted. If you must miss class for any reason, including illness, and a paper is due that day, email me the paper ahead of time. In cases of debilitating illness, we will work together to devise a schedule for the completion of course work.

Inclusivity. The WVU community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. For more information on WVU's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see the DEI website <https://diversity.wvu.edu> (304-293-5600).

Accessibility. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in your classes, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with Accessibility Services <https://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu> (304-293-6700).

Sexual Misconduct. WVU does not tolerate sexual misconduct, including harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or relationship violence. (BOG Rule 1.6) It is important for you to know that there are resources available through the Title IX office if you or someone you know needs assistance: <https://diversity.wvu.edu/equity-assurance/title-ix> (304-293-5600). You may speak to a member of university administration, faculty, or staff; keep in mind that they have an obligation to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator. If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the [Carruth Center](#), 304-293-9355 or 304-293-4431 (24-hour hotline), and locally within the community at the [Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center](#) (RDVIC), 304-292-5100 or 304-292-4431 (24-hour hotline).

Mental health concerns or stressful events can adversely affect your academic performance and social relationships. WVU offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns that you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at the Carruth Center for Psychological and Psychiatric Services (CCPPS) website: <https://carruth.wvu.edu/>. If you are in need of crisis services, call the CCPPS main number 24/7: (304) 293-4431. Crisis services are also available through text: Text WVU to 741741 for support 24/7 from a trained Crisis Counselor.

## Schedule

8/23	Intro
8/30	<p>Thomas Paine, <a href="#"><i>Common Sense</i></a> (1776)            Jefferson, <a href="#"><i>Declaration of Independence</i></a> (1776), from the <i>Autobiography</i> (1821)            Wheatley, <a href="#">“To His Excellency General Washington”</a> (1775)  <a href="#">Patriot and Loyalist Songs and Ballads</a> from the Heath anthology vol. A            William Dunlap, <a href="#">André</a> (1798) and <a href="#">Glory of Columbia</a> (1803)  <a href="#">“Major Andre’s Death”</a>            Russ Castronovo, <i>Propaganda 1776</i> (2014) <a href="#">chapter 5</a></p>
9/6	Hannah Arendt, <i>On Revolution</i> (1962)
9/13	<p>Francis Parkman, <a href="#">chapter</a> from <i>The Conspiracy of Pontiac</i> (1851)            Joseph Brant, “Speech of the United Indian Nations” (1786)  <a href="https://wardepartmentpapers.org/s/home/item/39863">https://wardepartmentpapers.org/s/home/item/39863</a>            Hendrick Aupaumut, <a href="#">A Short Narration of My Last Journey to the Western Country</a> (1794, published 1827)            Lisa Brooks, <i>The Common Pot</i> (2008) <a href="#">chapter 3</a> &amp; <a href="#">notes</a>            Stephen Joyce, “Authentic-Deconstructionist Games and Tragic Historiography in <i>Assassin’s Creed III</i>,” <i>American Literature</i> 94.1 (March 2022), 133-58</p>
9/20	Catherine Maria Sedgwick, <i>The Linwoods</i> (1835)
9/27	<p>Washington Irving, <a href="#">“Rip Van Winkle”</a> (1819)            Nathaniel Hawthorne, <a href="#">“My Kinsman, Major Molineux”</a> (1832)            Lydia Maria Child, “The Black Saxons,” from <i>Fact and Fiction</i> (1849), pp. 190-204,  <a href="https://books.google.com/books/about/Fact_and_Fiction.html?id=4-5ZxwEACAAJ">https://books.google.com/books/about/Fact_and_Fiction.html?id=4-5ZxwEACAAJ</a>            Seneca Falls Woman’s Rights Convention, Declaration of Sentiments (1848),  <a href="https://www.virginiamemory.com/docs/SenecaConvention_trans.pdf">https://www.virginiamemory.com/docs/SenecaConvention_trans.pdf</a>            Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “The Landlord’s Tale” aka “Paul Revere’s Ride” (1863)  <a href="https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44637/the-landlords-tale-paul-reveres-ride">https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44637/the-landlords-tale-paul-reveres-ride</a>            Paul Downes, <i>Hobbes, Sovereignty, and Early American Literature</i> (2015) <a href="#">chapter 7</a> &amp; <a href="#">notes</a></p>
10/4	<p><b>Class meets on Zoom 385 895 4753 (no password necessary), guest speaker Jim Greene</b>            James Roberts, <i>Narrative of James Roberts</i> (1858)  <a href="https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/roberts/roberts.html">https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/roberts/roberts.html</a>            William Cooper Nell, <i>Colored Patriots of the American Revolution</i> (1855): <a href="#">MA</a>, <a href="#">DE etc.</a>            Jacob Lawrence, <i>The American Struggle</i> (1954-55) <a href="https://www.pem.org/jacob-lawrence-the-american-struggle-panels">https://www.pem.org/jacob-lawrence-the-american-struggle-panels</a>            James Greene, <i>Soldier’s Two Bodies</i> (2020) <a href="#">chapter 4</a> &amp; <a href="#">notes</a></p>
10/11	<p>C. L. R. James, <i>The Black Jacobins</i> (1938, 1962), chapter XIII  <a href="https://politicaleducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/CLR_James_The_Black_Jacobins.pdf">https://politicaleducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/CLR_James_The_Black_Jacobins.pdf</a>            Lenora Sansay, <i>Secret History</i> (1808) (also read the appendices, but not <i>Laura</i> 155-222)            Theresa: <i>A Haytien Tale</i> (1828) <a href="https://jtoa.americanantiquarian.org/welcome-to-just-teach-one-african-american/theresa-a-haytien-tale/">https://jtoa.americanantiquarian.org/welcome-to-just-teach-one-african-american/theresa-a-haytien-tale/</a></p>
10/18	<b>Presentation of prospectus (not graded)</b>

	<b>Prospectus due</b>
10/25	Frantz Fanon, "On Violence," from <i>Wretched of the Earth</i> (1963), 35-95. <a href="https://monoskop.org/images/6/6b/Fanon_Frantz_The_Wretched_of_the_Earth_1963.pdf">https://monoskop.org/images/6/6b/Fanon_Frantz_The_Wretched_of_the_Earth_1963.pdf</a> Herman Melville, " <a href="#">Benito Cereno</a> " (1854) <i>Confessions of Nat Turner</i> (1831) <a href="https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/turner/turner.html">https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/turner/turner.html</a> From <i>Echoes of Harper's Ferry</i> , ed. James Redpath (1860): Thoreau, " <a href="#">Plea for John Brown</a> " Emerson, " <a href="#">Speech at Salem</a> " Whittier, <a href="#">Poem on John Brown and Controversy with Garrison</a>
11/1	Martin Delany, <i>Blake</i> (1859-62)
11/8	Election day recess
11/15	<i>Hamilton</i> viewing and discussion
11/22	Thanksgiving recess
11/29	<b>Draft of final paper due</b> <b>Peer workshop</b>
12/6	<b>course evaluations</b> <b>Presentation of final paper</b>

**Final paper due Friday, 12/9**