

American Literature I: Beginnings to 1865

Fall 2022

English 241.01

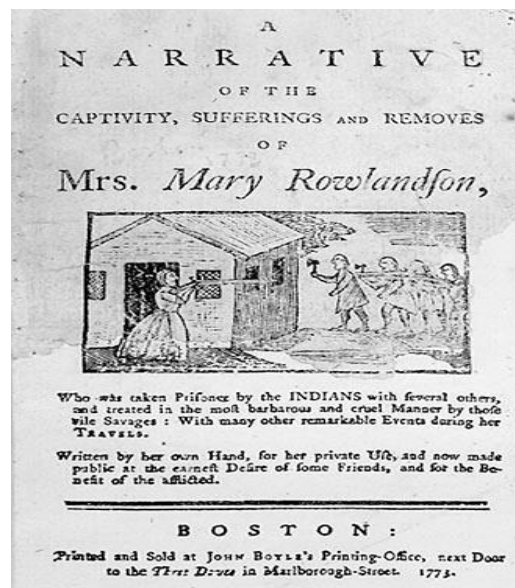
TR 2:30-3:45 PM

Dr. Cari Carpenter

“Perhaps American literature can best be described not as the literature that continually tested itself until it found a voice against the literature of England but as the literature that was multi-vocal from the start. And perhaps its key resides not in any particular interpretation of world events so much as in the necessity of the artist-creator to formulate and thus form experience amidst a multitude of possibilities.”

-Introduction to *Heath Anthology of American Literature (Volume 1, 2nd edition)*

This survey of early American literature considers the relationship between such multi-vocal texts and the nation with which they are associated. We will approach this literature from a number of questions: who, for instance, has historically counted as “American”? Why are certain texts designated as canonical American literature while others are overlooked? By pairing conventional texts with those that are lesser known, we will consider the “multitude of possibilities” that exist within American literature. Throughout the semester, we will engage in lively class discussions that challenge and broaden our perceptions of the early literature of the United States.



Mary Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity, Sufferings and Removes of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson...*
Boston: John Boyle, 1773.

<http://www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/rbm/kislak/colonial/rowlandson1.html>

Environmental Criticism