

BRITISH LITERATURE: NARRATING NAVIGATION

SEMESTER
PROFESSOR: ERIN CHESLOW
DAY AND TIME
LOCATION
OFFICE HOURS
OFFICE LOCATION

Maps not only represent space; they also create it. The way we choose to structure a map – how we place different locations in relation to one another, which places are centered and which put on the margins – affects the ways we interact with and imagine the world. Many of us, for example, are accustomed to modern navigational maps, with lines of longitude and latitude used to mark specific locations. But, what happens if, instead, we use landmarks or itineraries or the paths of ocean currents? What makes a place empty, wild, civilized, or dangerous? What cultural indicators do maps give us? How do even the most objective maps orient us to space? In this class, we will follow a series of British novelists, poets, and travel writers around the world to explore the ways they imagined England, the British Isles, and the many places beyond Europe's borders. If we're lucky, we will also begin to understand how these historical accounts continue to affect our own ideas about ourselves and the world around us.

Our goal in this course will be to map the often fantastical spaces that British novels, poetry, and travel writing imagine, following the archipelagos of thought that link Britain with the rest of the world. Drawing on a diverse set of theoretical perspectives – from Gilroy's roots and routes to Diaz's archipelagic rethinking – we will recenter places that, in England, were considered peripheral—namely, the colonies and the Indigenous epistemologies that belong to those places. As we follow our many characters and travelers around the globe, we will think critically about the places he visits through other maps and narratives, as well as contemporary artwork, imagined by British writers and cartographers. In so doing, we will explore British writing from the long nineteenth century, as well as the British imagination and the world as it has been constructed by a history of British imperialism. We will also attempt to better understand issues of race, class, and gender through the ways in which maps invite us to imagine other people and places. Many of the political and social issues of the Romantic and Victorian periods resonate in our own, so we will address how, for instance, *Mansfield Park* contends with gender and finance or how *Kim* resituates British class dynamics in an Indian context. My hope is that, in doing so, we might come to recognize the ways of knowing that shape how we narrate and reimagine the evolving landscapes (and soundscapes) in which we live our lives.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

TEXTS

Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (Broadview: 978-1551110981)
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (Broadview: 978-1554813513)
Brian Friel, *Translations* (Faber: 978-0571117420)
R. Rider Haggard, *When the World Shook* (HiLoBooks: 978-1935869566)

Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* (Penguin: 978-0141442372)

Tina Makareti, *The Imaginary Lives of James Ponekē* (Lightning Publishing: 978-1785631528)

In addition to these texts, you will also need to purchase a **Composition Notebook** of your choosing. All other texts will be made available on Canvas as PDFs.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Annotation Notebook: For each day of reading assigned, you will be responsible for an entry in an Annotation Notebook, which you will share with me at the end of each week or when requested. In each entry, you will respond to a prompt and keep notes based on your reading. You can use the following questions to guide your notetaking:
 - a. Note down your initial reactions. How does the text make you feel? Does it affect the way you think about yourself and the world?
 - b. What are some cultural contexts you recognize? How might the reading help you better understand the period in time with which the text is associated?
 - c. How does the text portray space? Where do the characters go and how do they see those places?
 - d. What questions do you have? List at least one.
 - e. Pick one interesting passage to close read and bring it to class for discussion.

Your responses will be used for class discussion and to fuel your writing assignments. They should not take long, but they should be well thought out and relevant to the reading.

2. Group Mapping Project: This project will be due in three stages, with the final product due on Wednesday during Finals Week. For the first stage, you will work with your group to mark areas and routes followed by the writers or characters in your region on an ArcGIS StoryMap that I will share with you. You will also sign up for an Artwork Presentation to be delivered while we are reading the texts for your region, as outlined below. Finally, you will do a short research project in which you fill out the StoryMap with relevant images, an artwork gallery with information from your presentations, and a collaborative blog post analyzing the ways in which the region is portrayed in your text(s). This “blog post” should be approached with the same rigor as any research essay and contain citations to academic sources, as well as any other relevant sources you might find, and should say something about the framework the text(s) provide for looking at and experiencing the world.
 - a. Artwork Presentation: See sign-up sheet for individual due date. 3-8 minutes, with notes or script and sources demonstrating preparation. Throughout the semester, I will provide artwork, music, or a multimedia website related to the period, country, and culture we are studying. Choose one piece of art to research more thoroughly, providing background on the creator, their relationship to the period, and what the piece represents to you and to society more broadly. At the end of your presentation, provide a connection to our reading for that day that might help us start discussion.
3. Close Reading (Midterm): 2-3 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font. Using one of the novels or short stories we have already read, choose a word or key passage that

helps you to better understand the text, then make an argument about the text based on your reading. Be sure to quote directly from the text to provide evidence for your argument. This assignment requires no additional research.

When you turn in your Close Reading, I will ask you to annotate your draft according to the Peer Review Guidelines. You will then read a peer's draft and respond to their annotations. I will likewise respond to your annotations when grading the draft. This is your opportunity to ask me questions, explain your choices, and get detailed feedback from both me and your peers. You can use that feedback to develop your Final Research Paper.

4. Research Question & Bibliography: double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font. As we prepare for the final research paper, I will ask you to come up with a research question that you would like to explore. Based on one of our readings for the class, what would you like to explore further? How might that reading help you to better understand a larger issue? Specifically, think about fiction as a category and how the text helps you think about the role of the imaginary in literature. Also include a bibliography of 5 sources that might help you explore that question. We will spend some time talking about research and library resources before this assignment is due.
5. Close Reading (Final): 3-4 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font. This close reading will follow the same basic methods as the first one. However, it will also ask you to develop a more complex thesis statement and respond to feedback from the midterm. Based on your Research Question, incorporate the methods and skills you have practiced through the semester to answer the question you asked with close reading. While you do not need to do any outside research for this paper, you should consider your close reading to be a significant piece of evidence in answering a larger question. *Remember, your answer may be different than you expected when you wrote your question. That is a good thing! It means you are really engaging with the text.*

Each of you will schedule a meeting with me and the rest of your group *after* you have formulated your research question for the final research paper. At that time, we will discuss your final project and other work in the class so far. We can also discuss writing in general or anything else on your mind.

Please be conscientious about file type and file names. **You must submit files in Word format (.doc, .docx, or .rtf).** Other file types, such as .pages, .wps, and .pdfs, are **not** accepted **and will be marked as zeros**, unless needed accommodations are discussed with me in advance. UIUC students can download Microsoft Office 365 [here](#).

GRADING

This course will not employ a traditional alpha-numeric grading system. Instead, I use a grading contract, outlined below.

Instead of a grade for individual assignments or work in class, you will receive extensive feedback from me and your peers that should help you to think through your own language use and writing and develop skills for working with different texts. I will provide you with methods and examples to help you do this work, and we will continually discuss your expectations for the course and strategies for developing and meeting those expectations.

The idea here is that, unlike in a graded classroom, most of the feedback you will receive in your life will not be graded. If you wanted to learn to crochet, no one would give you an F for making a misshapen sock. Instead, they would show you how to do better and provide their responses to your process and any mistakes you might have made. It's the same in this class. Instead of providing a stick and carrot to get you to meet what you perceive my standards might be, I will instead continually provide you with my thoughts as a reader of your work and as a fellow reader of the other texts in the class. We will treat your texts just like we do the published texts we read, responding to them as part of a larger conversation about a given subject or contending with a particular issue.

Research in education and psychology over the past 30+ years has shown that the presence of grades in classrooms discourages risk taking and creativity. In this class, you are encouraged to take risks, to make creative choices that might not pan out in the end but will ultimately help you and others in the class think about writing differently. And you *won't* be punished for it. It is my hope that you will be creative and thoughtful in your work and bring your own interests to the table in your choices.

The following grading contract will only affect your final grade in the class. For all other assignments and readings, we will enter into conversation as a class about what the texts we write and read are doing, how we respond to them, and the choices you have made. When done properly, a shift away from grading is not a shift away from rigor. It is, in fact, quite the opposite.

THE GRADING CONTRACT:

You will receive an A for the term if you fulfill all the following expectations:

- meet due dates and criteria for all assignments and learning activities
 - as outlined in the “Late Assignments” section below, you are allowed an extension if you
 - communicate sufficiently with me (at least 48 hours before the deadline) and
 - submit the assignment within the mutually determined time frame
- attend all classes and participate in class discussion regularly, thoughtfully, and substantively
(See “Participation” below.)
- in a focused and specific manner, engage with my and your peers’ feedback throughout the term

You will receive a B for the term if you do any of the following:

- turn in an assignment late without communicating proactively with me (at least 48 hours before the deadline)
- turn in an assignment that is insufficiently developed or incomplete
- fail to turn in one or more assignment
- are absent for more than three classes without medical documentation
- participate sporadically in class discussion and activities (including collaborative group discussions)

- show cursory attention to my and your peers' feedback throughout the term

Your final grade will be lowered to a C if you do any of the following:

- turn in multiple assignments late without communicating proactively with me (at least 48 hours before the deadline)
- turn in multiple assignments that are insufficiently developed or incomplete
- engage insufficiently in class discussion and activities (including collaborative group discussions)
- fail to engage with my and your peers' feedback throughout the term

Your grade will be lowered to a D or F if you do any of the following:

- fail to turn in the majority of assignments
- submit assignments that are insufficiently developed, late, or incomplete
- consistently fail to participate in class discussion and activities (including collaborative group discussions)
- submit any work that is not your own
- miss six classes or more without medical documentation

DEADLINES AND LATE WORK

In this course, deadlines are considered motivation and accountability tools. They are designed to help you pace out your responsibilities. Since your work is assessed on the basis of the contract, there will be no deduction in your grade if you submit an assignment late. However, deadlines are not only a tool for you; *they are also an agreement with me and your peers*, a way to be considerate of the time of others. I will accept late work, but you will miss out on vital feedback from me and your peers, and continually missing deadlines shows disrespect for me and your peers. While mistakes and emergencies happen, please view all the work we do in this class in terms of the responsibilities you have to others and the responsibilities they have to you. That said, I am always happy to grant extensions if you ask in advance.

PARTICIPATION

In each class, contribute to class discussion with any thoughts or questions you might have throughout the class. Remember, **there are no wrong answers!** While you may not have something to say every single day, I expect you to contribute to class discussion often. Say what comes to mind and build off of what your peers say. For more information, see the Etiquette and Expectations section of this syllabus.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this class, students should be able to do the following:

- Engage critically and dialogically with primary and secondary texts
- Understand significant terms in literary studies and be able to discuss them in casual conversation and class discussions

- Think critically about mapping and the way it structures the way we see the world and other people
- Develop a working vocabulary of literary terms and close reading skills
- Collaborate with texts and peers through careful reading and discussion to produce effective and engaging writing

EXPECTATIONS

- You are required to bring the readings for class, along with your Annotation Notebook, to class, along with any other assigned materials, each day. It is important that you be able to refer back to the text and pull out key ideas directly in our discussions.
- I do allow laptops and tablets but only for school work. If I feel that you are not paying adequate attention and participating fully in class discussions, I will dock participation points.
- Cellphones must be turned off during class. Use of a cellphone for *any* purpose will result in a lower participation grade.
- You are expected to be *active listeners* in this class. Show your engagement with the course material and in class discussions by looking interested, taking notes, and asking questions.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (PLAGIARISM)

According to the Student Code, “It is the responsibility of each student to refrain from infractions of academic integrity, from conduct that may lead to suspicion of such infractions, and from conduct that aids others in such infractions.” Please know that it is my responsibility as an instructor to uphold the academic integrity policy of the University, which can be found Article 1, Part 4 of the University Student Code.

Often unintentional plagiarism happens when students are unclear about documentation expectations, so please see me when you are confused. Intentional plagiarism often happens when students feel desperate, so also contact me when you are confused or in a crunch, rather than resort to unethical measures that can severely impact your academic success.

A NOTE ON PLAGIARISM: Through imitation, you can learn the forms, methods, and conventions utilized by writers and their discourse communities. The words and phrases used by the writer, however, are their own. Any copied wording or phrasing or any repeated passages that are not properly quoted and cited will be considered plagiarism, resulting in a 0 on the paper in question. Do not hesitate to speak with me if you have any questions regarding this matter. Please keep in mind:

- Any source consulted must be included on your Works Cited page, even if you have not quoted it directly.
- All paraphrased and summarized information must be distinct from the material paraphrased or summarized and must be cited correctly, including an in-text citation.

- Most of what can be found directly online will not qualify as a reputable sources. We will discuss source viability further in class.

Please consult the university policy on academic dishonesty for more information.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Note: Homework and readings are listed for *the day they are due*. Please plan accordingly.

(C) = Find on Canvas

(A) = Artwork for Artwork Presentation

This calendar and syllabus are subject to change according to the progress of the course. Students will be notified in writing of any changes.

Week 1:

- I. Introduction and course overview
Introduce Mapping Presentation Prompt
Introduce Annotation Notebook Prompt
- II. Krotz, *Mapping with Words: Anglo-Canadian Literary Cartographies, 1789-1916* (C)
How to read complex texts
Sign up for Group Mapping Project
- III. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (C)

Week 2:

- I. Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*
- II. [James McNeill Whistler, *Nocturne in Black and Gold, the Falling Rocket, 1875*](#) (A)
Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*
- III. [John Singer Sargent, *Madame X, 1883-84*](#) (A)
Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*

Week 3:

- I. Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*
- II. [Claude Monet, *The Houses of Parliament \(Effect of Fog\), 1903-1904*](#) (A)
Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*
- III. [Sonia Boyce, *She Ain't Holding Them Up, She's Holding On \(Some English Rose\), 1986*](#) (A)
Mary Prince, *The History of Mary Prince* (C)

Week 4:

- I. Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of Islands" (C)
- II. Artwork TBD
Diaz, "Voyaging for Anti-Colonial Recovery"
Tina Makareti, *The Imaginary Lives of James Ponekē*
- III. Artwork TBD
Tina Makareti, *The Imaginary Lives of James Ponekē*

Week 5:

- I. Tina Makareti, *The Imaginary Lives of James Ponekē*
Introduce Close Reading Prompt
Introduce Peer Review Guidelines
- II. Artwork TBD
Tina Makareti, *The Imaginary Lives of James Ponekē*
- III. Artwork TBD
Tina Makareti, *The Imaginary Lives of James Ponekē*

Week 6:

- I. Oliveira, *Ancestral Places* (C)
- II. [Illumination from *The Book of Kells*, Folio 285r, 9th century](#) (A)
Brian Friel, *Translations*, Act I
Williams, "Hegemony," *Keywords*
- III. [Paul Henry, *The Connemara Village*, 1930-1933](#) (A)
Brian Friel, *Translations*, Acts II-III

Week 7:

- I. McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds* (C)
- II. [Edwin Longsdon Long, *Love's Labour Lost*, 1885](#) (A)
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*
Williams, "Western," *Keywords*
- III. [Mahmūd Sa'īd, *Marsa Matrouh – Towards Cleopatra's Bath*, 1924](#) (A)
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*

Week 8:

- I. **HW:** Close Reading (Midterm) due **in class, hard copy**
Wynter, "On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory" (C)
- II. [Illumination of an Elephant, *The Peterborough Psalter and Bestiary*, 1304-21](#) (A)
[Illumination of a Peridexion Tree, *Harley Manuscript*, 1236-50](#) (A)
Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*
- III. [Maqbool Fida Husain, *Traditional Indian Festivals*, 2008-11](#) (A)
Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*

Week 9:

- I. [Illumination of Blemmyae, *Mandeville's Travels* manuscript, 1400-50](#) (A)
Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*
Introduce Research Question and Bibliography
- II. [Sri Jonnalagadda Gurappa Chetty, *Kalamkari* tapestry, 1980](#) (A)

[James Atkinson, *A Sati or Widow-Burning*, 1831](#) (A)
Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*

III. [Hashim, *Aurangzeb Hunts Nilgais*, 1660](#) (A)
Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*

Week 10:

I. Peter Heylyn, "An Appendix to the Former Work, Endeavouring a Discovery of the Unknown Parts of the World," *Cosmographie in Four Books*, pp. 191-196
Peter Heylyn, Map of the Americas
Peter Heylyn, Map of Asia
Margaret Jolly, "Imagining Oceania: Indigenous and Foreign Representatives of a Sea of Islands" (C)

II. [Marshalllese navigation chart, 19th century](#) (A)
H. Rider Haggard, *When the World Shook*

III. [Mathias Kauage, *Dispela Em Sip Bilong Kiapten Kuk ikam Austrelia*, 1999](#) (A)
H. Rider Haggard, *When the World Shook*

Week 11:

I. **HW:** Research Question and Bibliography due **by 11:59 pm CT**
H. Rider Haggard, *When the World Shook*

II. [Gordon Syron, *Invasion I*, 1999](#) (A)
H. Rider Haggard, *When the World Shook*

III. [Jimmy Kenny Thaiday, *Lifu*, 2019](#) (A)
[Mary Jewett Pritchard, *Siapo* tapestry, 1970](#) (A)
H. Rider Haggard, *When the World Shook*

Week 12:

I. Simpson, *As We Have Always Done* (C)

II. [Lili'uokalani, "Imprisoned at Iolani Palace," 1895](#) (A)
Isabella Bird, *Six Months in Hawai'i* (C)

III. [William Hodges, *A View of Matavai Bay in the Island of Otaheite \[Tahiti\]*, 1776](#) (A)
Isabella Bird, *Six Months in Hawai'i* (C)

Week 13:

I. **HW:** Close Reading (Final) Draft due on Canvas **by 11:59 pm CT**
[Albert Bierstadt, *The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak*, 1863](#) (A)
Isabella Bird, *A Lady's Life in the Rockies* (C)

II. **HW:** Close Reading (Final) Draft Peer Review due on Canvas **by 11:59 pm CT**
[Jim Denomie, *Eminent Domain: a Brief History of America*, 2011](#) (A)
Isabella Bird, *A Lady's Life in the Rockies* (C)

- III. [Kent Monkman, *History Is Painted by the Victors*, 2013](#) (A)
[Sonia Boyce, *She Ain't Holding Them Up, She's Holding On* \(Some English Rose\), 1986](#) (A)
John Keats, "A Prophecy: To George Keats in America" (C)
William Blake, "America: A Prophecy" (C)
Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Pantisocracy" (C)
From Susanna Moodie, *Roughing It in the Bush* (C)

Week 14:

- I. **No class, Spring/Fall Break**

Week 15:

- I. Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*
- II. [Julie Buffalohead, *Blood and a Single Tree*, 2018](#) (A)
[Robert S. Duncanson, *Valley Pasture*, 1857](#) (A)
Elizabeth Gaskell, "Lois, the Witch" (C)
- III. Artwork TBD
Chaloner Alabaster, *A Young Englishman in Victorian Hong Kong* (C)

Week 16:

- I. A selection of poetry from 19thC Australia (C)
- II. Wrap-Up
- III. **No Class**

Wednesday, Finals Week, by 11:59 pm: Group Mapping Project due through ArcGIS.