

ENGL 4384: Senior Seminar  
“And Savoury it Was to My Taste”:  
The American Captivity Narrative as Usable Past  
CRN 11399, SECT 01W MW 2:00-3:15, Paff 309

Professor: Dr. Rebecca Harrison  
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Office Hours: M/W 12:30-1:30  
& by appt.

**Class Description:** A highly politicized genre produced most often with propagandistic, theological, and racist agendas, the American captivity narrative has been an immensely popular tradition permeating the American cultural imaginary from the colonial era to the present day.

These foundational texts of early American contact with the cultural Other are dominated by the experiences of women as captives, writers, and readers. This course will closely examine the characteristics, historical roots, and nationalist impulses of this distinct genre and its employment of the female body, along with its evolution in the American literary and cultural landscape. Beginning with the early factual accounts, we will follow the genre’s development alongside the sentimental and historical novel where these narratives of captive women gained the status of national myths. In short, the class will interrogate their function as a “usable” past for authors seeking to cement or undo different cultural agendas in preparation of the final robust research project on a facet of this genre.



#### Required Texts & Materials:

- Champion, Jane. *The Piano*. New York: Miramax, 1993. (Available on Amazon prime and via UWG Course Reserves).
- Derounian-Stodola, Kathryn Z., ed., *Women’s Indian Captivity Narratives* (ISBN 9780140436716)
- Scott, Evelyn. *Escapade*. Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1995 (ISBN 9780813916415).
- Welty, Eudora. *The Robber Bridegroom*. New York: Harcourt, 1970 (ISBN 978-0156768078).
- All other materials (poetry, short fiction, and non-fiction essays) will be provided electronically via CourseDen. Students are expected to print the material and bring hardcopies to class.
- A bound notebook (spiral or journal style) for your reading journal if you are handwriting, and a folder or plastic sleeve if you are typing it.
- A two-pocket class portfolio folder for keeping up with assigned/graded work.

#### Recommended Texts & Materials:

- Burnham, Michelle. *Captivity and Sentiment: Cultural Exchange in American Literature 1682-1861* (ISBN 978-1584650164).
- Castiglia, Christopher. *Bound and Determined: Captivity, Culture-Crossing, and White Womanhood from Mary Rowlandson to Patty Hearst* (ISBN 978-0226096520).
- Derounian-Stodola & Levernier, *The Indian Captivity Narrative, 1550-1900* (ISBN 978-0805716238).

**Course Learning Outcomes:** Students will

1. Understand and apply section-specific theoretical and practical questions in the discipline of literary studies.
2. Investigate the section's selected theme and representative texts with an eye to how to integrate the student's full course of study in the major with the course content.
3. Develop and deliver section-relevant oral presentations.
4. Critique and edit peer essays in the process of assembling the course anthology.
5. Create polished, well-researched compositions appropriate for inclusion in the course anthology.

**Assignments & Grade Distribution:** In-class writing, group work, and other activities will complement class discussions on a regular basis. As the semester progresses, I will discuss and/or distribute specific guidelines for each written assignment. Please Note: You must complete all assignments, including the exit interview, in order to pass this course.

- (15%) Class participation & collaboration. (Learning Outcomes 1 & 2.)
- (15 %) Criticism VLOG, oral presentation, and reading/project journal. (Learning Outcomes 1, 2, & 3.)
- (30%) Essay I and II: 15% each. (Learning Outcomes 1 & 2.)
- (40%) Research Project (Prospectus, annotated bibliography, drafts, and final anthology submission. FYI—Papers below a “C” will not be included in the course anthology.) (Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5.)

**Grading Scale:**

A+ = 98	B+ = 88	C+ = 78	D+ = 68	F = 50
A = 95	B = 85	C = 75	D = 65	
A- = 92	B- = 82	C- = 72	D- = 62	

**Outside Reading:** One of the best strategies for improving your writing and analytical skills in a discipline is to read widely and critically. In addition to the assigned texts, I strongly suggest that at least once every week you read selections in national/international discipline-based publications. The West Georgia library has a number of interesting publications available on the shelves and/or on-line, including *Early American Literature*, *Southern Review*, *Eudora Welty Review*, and the *William and Mary Quarterly*. FYI—There are also a number of critical collections and monographs on our course theme that would both advance your discipline skills while furthering your knowledge base in this specialized area.



FYI—The English program mission statement and outcomes are available at <https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/english/english-program-assessment.php>.

### Reading Schedule

This schedule provides a tentative layout of in-class and out-of-class activities and assignments. As it is based on the estimated progress of our class, some modification (including additions, postponements, or deletions) will be necessary as we move through the semester. In the event West Georgia closes due to inclement weather, you should continue your out-of-class assignments according to this schedule and check your email regularly for class updates.

Class Date	Assignments	Due Dates & Notes.
M 1/6	Introductions, syllabus, and discussion of seminar topic.	
W 1/8	<p><b>Origins and the Genre:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stodola &amp; Levernier Ch I “The Captivity Tradition in Fact and Fiction” (e-copy).</li> <li>Ch VI “The Captivity Narrative as Usable Past” (e-copy).</li> </ul>	
M 1/13	<p><b>Images of Women—The Victim:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mary Rowlandson “A True History” (in Stodola).</li> </ul>	<b>Due:</b> Your reading journal checks start today. Bring them to class daily.
W 1/15	<p><b>Opening Critical Contexts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finish Rowlandson.</li> <li>Castiglia “Introduction” (e-copy).</li> <li>Burnham Ch 1 “Captivity, Cultural Contact, and Commodification” (e-copy).</li> </ul>	
M 1/20	<b>MLK Day; No Class.</b>	
W 1/22	<p><b>Comparative Contexts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erdrich “Captivity” (e-copy).</li> <li>Alexie “Captivity” (e-copy).</li> </ul>	
M 1/27	<p><b>Adaptation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Angela Carter “Our Lady of the Massacre” (e-copy).</li> <li>Castiglia Ch 1 “A More Interesting Adventure” (e-copy).</li> </ul>	
W 1/29	<p><b>Images of Women—The Victor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hannah Dustan “A Notable Exploit” (in Stodola) &amp; “Judges” Chs IV &amp; V (the <i>Bible</i>, KJ).</li> </ul> <p>Also read Dustan (Duston/Dustin) in other contexts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hawthorne “The Duston Family.”</li> <li>Whittier “The Mother’s Revenge.”</li> <li>Thoreau “Retelling” from <i>A Week on the Concord</i>.</li> </ul> <p>FYI—These three <i>brief</i> readings are available at this link:</p> <p><a href="http://www.hawthorneinsalem.org/Literature/NativeAmericans&amp;Blacks/HannahDuston/Literature.html">http://www.hawthorneinsalem.org/Literature/NativeAmericans&amp;Blacks/HannahDuston/Literature.html</a></p>	

M 2/3	<b>Images of Women—The Transcultured:</b> Mary Jemison “A Narrative of the Life” (in Stodola).	
W 2/5	Jemison (continued).	<b>Due:</b> Essay 1 & Reading Journal.
M 2/10	<b>The Frontier &amp; Fictive Narratives:</b> “Panther Captivity” (in Stodola).	
W 2/12	<b>Adaptations and Competing Narratives:</b> Gordon’s “The Captive” and Connelley’s “Eastern Kentucky Papers” (e-copy).  FYI—Read only the sections from Connelley on Jennie Wiley.	
M 2/17	<b>Modern Captivities:</b> Scott’s <i>Escapade</i> (1-132).	
W 2/19	Scott’s <i>Escapade</i> (133-end).	
M 2/24	<b>The Research Project:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions and Sound DTQs.</li> <li>• Effective Research.</li> <li>• The Prospectus.</li> </ul>	
W 2/26	<b>Fairy Tales and the Captivity Tradition:</b> Welty’s <i>The Robber Bridegroom</i> (1-88).	FYI—Friday, 2/28 is the last day to withdraw with a grade of W from Full Term (non-eCore) 16 week courses.
M 3/2	Welty’s <i>The Robber Bridegroom</i> (89 to end).	
W 3/4	<b>Captivity &amp; Film:</b> Jane Campion’s <i>The Piano</i> . FYI—Screen film <i>before</i> class.	
M 3/9	<i>The Piano</i> (continued).	
W 3/11	<b>Research Project Conferences. We will meet in my office during your scheduled time.</b>  FYI—The final prospectus packet is due to me by 8:00 a.m. the day of your conference.	<b>Due:</b> Essay II and Reading Journal.
M 3/16	<b>Spring Break; No Class.</b>	
W 3/18	<b>Spring Break; No Class.</b>	
M 3/23	Writing workshop I: Thesis, Idea Development, and Introductions.	<b>Due:</b> Outline.
W 3/25	Editorial Board Roundtable I (assignments TBD).	

M 3/30	Writing workshop II: Paragraph Development and Forward Moving Arguments.	<b>Due:</b> First two (full) to three pages (3 copies).
W 4/1	<b>SSSL Conference; No Class.</b> Use this time to work ahead.	
M 4/6	Online Writing Workshop III; No Class. (See CourseDen for Instructions.)	<b>Due:</b> First four (full) to six pages.
W 4/8	Online Writing Workshop III (continued); No Class.	
M 4/13	Catch Up Day; Assignments TBD.	
W 4/15	Writing Workshop IV: Strong Language.	<b>Due:</b> First six (full) to eight pages.
M 4/20	Editorial Board Roundtable II.	
W 4/22	Full Draft Workshop.	<b>Due:</b> Full draft (3 Copies).
M 4/27	Presentations & Evaluations.	
W 4/29	<b>Final Examine Schedule Begins; No Class.</b>	
M 5/4	Presentations. <b>FYI—We will meet during the full final exam block 2:00 to 4:00. Attendance is required.</b>	<b>Due:</b> Optional Revisions. See specific requirements.
Th 5/7	<b>Final paper packets are due in my office by 3:00 p.m.</b>	
<i>Reading schedule updated on 1/6/2020.</i>		

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*As you consider the following policies, keep in mind that this class is significantly different from other upper-division English courses that you have completed. It is the capstone course for the major and is, therefore, your **top** academic priority this semester.*

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**Attendance:** Attendance and punctuality are mandatory and key to your success in this course. Arrive to class on time having completed any reading/writing assignments and be prepared to participate in class discussions and group work. As this class meets twice per week, a student is allowed **three (3) absences** over the course of the semester. Upon the fourth absence, the student **will no longer be able to pass the class**. Be aware that no distinction exists between excused and unexcused absences. In addition, should a student choose to withdraw, she/he will receive a “W,” if the withdrawal date falls before the midpoint. If the withdrawal date falls after the midpoint, the student will receive a “WF.” Please note that tardiness counts against your two allotted absences at a rate of 0.25 per day late. In other words, if you are late to class four times, it will count as one missed class period. Tardiness may also negatively affect your class participation grade and may result in missed in-class work that cannot be made up. FYI—Official decisions about campus closings and/or examination cancellations due to severe weather or emergency will be made by the university President and posted on the UWG homepage.

**Breaks:** There are none. Our class meets for only seventy-five minutes. As such, I expect that you go to the restroom, get tissues, and grab coffee *before* class starts. If you have emergency situations that may require you to leave and return during my class, you must make prior arrangement with me.

**Participation:** Arrive to class on time having *thoughtfully* completed any reading/writing assignments and be prepared to participate in class discussions and group work. Senior seminar is a pre-professional course that requires daily intellectual rigor. Reading in this course means moving beyond a thorough understanding of the texts themselves; you must actively engage, reflect on, question, and be ready to discuss the many implications of each text in the context of the theoretical and generic focus of our course. I expect and will insist upon full class participation; there is no hiding in senior seminar.

**Collaboration:** Responding to, critiquing, and editing others' work thoughtfully with sound discipline skills is a requirement taken seriously in this course. Your feedback will be graded in terms of its rigor balanced with respect for other individual's ideas.

**Late Assignments:** The assignments are carefully choreographed in order to make the production of the course anthology possible. As such, deadlines are firm. All assignments are due at the start of class on the date specified in the course schedule. If you must miss a class on a date when an assignment is due, you need to make prior arrangements with me to submit your work on time. Late written work will *not* be accepted unless under dire (and documented) emergency situations. Collaborative work and oral presentations may not be made up.

**Recycled Papers:** You may not submit a paper for this course that you completed for another professor. Should you wish to work up an idea or text that you have completed previous research on, please schedule an appointment with me to discuss an appropriate angle for growing the project appropriately. I will need to see the final (preferably graded) copy of this work before the meeting.

**Paper Format:** All work for this class must be typed, use Times New Roman 12 point font, be double-spaced, use standard 1 inch margins, and conform to standard MLA guidelines as outlined in the *MLA Handbook* (8<sup>th</sup> edition). Papers must be submitted in a clearly labeled two pocket folder.

**Plagiarism:** The Department of English and Philosophy defines plagiarism as taking personal credit for the words and ideas of others as they are presented in electronic, print, and verbal sources. The use of another individual's words, phrases, or ideas without proper citation will result in the following at my discretion (no questions):

- a zero on the assignment.
- possible failure of this course.
- an official academic dishonesty report filed with UWG, which could lead to suspension from the university.

In short, as members of the UWG community, I expect you to fully abide by the university honor code, which can be found at <http://www.westga.edu/handbook/59.php>

**Optional Revision Policy:** You may revise either of the first two essays for resubmission. If the revised assignment receives a higher grade, it will be used in your final grade calculation in place of the original. The revision *must be meaningful* and submitted *along with the original, graded*

**assignment** in order to be considered. Revised papers are due no later than the start of the final exam period; however, you may turn them in at any point before that date as well.

**Conferences:** Each student is required to attend at least two conferences with me during the course of the semester about the anthology project. Having that said, my office door is always open to you. Please come by during the hours noted on this syllabus whenever you have questions concerning class discussions, need advice or help with reading/writing assignments, etc. If you cannot attend my scheduled office hours, email me for an appointment.

**Controversial Content:** As the title of this course suggests, we will often examine texts containing content for a mature audience. This means that some of our texts contain offensive language, violence, a host of adult themes, and even nudity. It is my expectation that you approach and discuss the content of each piece in class with intellectual maturity and professionalism.

**Class Decorum:** Everyone in this class has both the right and the responsibility to express his or her critical reads of the texts in class discussions and to treat one another's ideas respectfully and seriously, even if – or especially if – you disagree. Consequently, ill-spirited discussions, unmerited comments, and intolerance are not permitted in the classroom. Also, please raise your hand when you would like to have the floor. This format facilitates structured discussion and equal participation.

**Disruptive Behavior:** Students may be dismissed from any class meeting at which they exhibit behavior that disrupts the learning environment of others. Such behavior includes—but is not limited to—arriving late for class, sleeping (or the appearance of it) in class, allowing cell phones to ring, text-messaging, frequently leaving class, and speaking disrespectfully to the instructor and/or to other students. Each dismissal of this kind will count as an absence and will be applied toward the attendance requirements policy above.

**Email:** In accordance with university policy, all email correspondence must take place through the UWG email system. Please keep in mind that email is professional correspondence; thus, remember to properly address your audience, use the same standards of writing that you would in any paper you write, and sign your email. FYI—For the fastest response, please email me through my westga.edu account listed on this syllabus (and not through CourseDen). While I normally respond to student emails within 48 hours during the work week, please note that I do not regularly answer emails sent after noon on Friday until Monday morning.

**CourseDen:** In addition to keeping all our class materials housed in one location, I use the CourseDen announcement function regularly to keep the class abreast of any course updates, notes about assignments, etc.; thus, check our page regularly.

**Exit Interview:** All students enrolled in ENGL 4384 must complete an on-line exit interview for their assigned section of the course before the end of the final exam period. It is a required element for passing the class. Toward the end of the semester, each student will receive an email from the on-line system prompting completion of the survey. The information provided will be kept confidential and used to assist the department with program assessment.



**Writing Center:** The Writing Center (TLC 1201) is a valuable student resource and, while, consultants will not proofread, they will question, respond to, offer choices, and encourage revision in student essays. This is a free university service for you to take advantage of as often as you need. To schedule an appointment call the center at 678-839-6513. See <http://www.westga.edu/~writing/> for more information.

**Student Support:** The UWG community cares deeply about student welfare and is committed to providing a variety of support mechanisms for those who need additional academic support or who are experiencing distressing situations. The following resources may be helpful if you have specific needs that arise:

- Center for Academic Success—<http://www.westga.edu/cas/>
- Counseling Center—<https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php>
- UWG Cares—<http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/>

FYI—If I identify a service that may be helpful to your success, I may ask that office to contact you to discuss it.

**Special Accommodations:** Students in the UWG community have a right to equal access to classes and materials, regardless of special needs, whether temporary or permanent. Students with needs on file with Accessibility Services will be accommodated in this class per West Georgia regulations. Please send me your packet and meet with me immediately for arrangements. Accessibility services may be reached at (770) 839-6428 or see <https://www.westga.edu/accessibility/>

*Students should review the full common syllabus policies for UWG at*

<https://www.westga.edu/UWGSyllabusPolicies/>

*Information about the regulations governing campus carry at UWG can be found at*

<https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php>