

# *Literary Oceans, Economic Currents*

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Texts and Contexts, Engl. 2000, R 37  
Fall 2017

**Class Location:**  
4:00- 5:15pm | Mon. Thur.  
FMH 308

**Office Hours:**  
Dealy 543  
Mon. 3:30-4:00, 5:15-5:45  
Thur. 3:30-4:00, 5:15-5:45  
Or by appointment

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## Course Overview

This course will explore ways in which literature about the ocean has evolved out of, and in response to, evolving trans-oceanic economic relationships and their social repercussions. These include such issues as piracy, the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the hunting of whales, and nuclear testing in the Pacific (among others). Texts will include literary prose, poetry, and critical texts, and our discussions will range from ca. 900 AD to today. Notably, our conversations will not be limited to economics, but will include a wide variety of issues (such as gender, race, class, etc).

## Course Goals

Texts & Contexts is an introduction to the art of literary interpretation; it develops techniques of close reading, an appreciation of the relations among literary works and the contexts in which they are written and read, and an ability to construct and support an argument out of your own observations about the texts.

## EP 2

In addition to the Course Goals, all sections of T&C are *Eloquentia Perfecta* seminars. Core Curriculum documents specify that EP courses be capped at 19 students and that at least 20% of class time be devoted to student writing and oral expression. In other words, this course will both writing- and discussion- intensive. Each student will complete 20+ pages of polished written work, with opportunities for discussion of student writing.

## Required Texts

It's your prerogative whether your books are new or used, from the University book store, or from Amazon or Abebooks, but it *is important* that you buy these editions (paying particular attention to the ISBN #s). Our class discussions, Essays, Forum and HW responses will require that we refer to particular page #s, and it's necessary that everyone be on the same page. Also, I don't know if any of these books are available to "rent," but since annotating texts is an important part of the work we'll be doing, I ask that you be sure to purchase the books (again, used is fine), so that you'll feel free to mark up the texts as much as you desire.

I will also provide you with a range of additional readings via *Blackboard* (under the sidebar heading "PDF Readings").

*The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings* (Penguin Classics Edition)  
By Olaudah Equiano  
ISBN-13: 978-0142437162

*Zong!* (Wesleyan Poetry Series)  
by M. NourbeSe Philip  
ISBN-13: 978-0819571694

*The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* (Penguin Classics Edition)  
By Edgar Allen Poe  
ISBN-13: 978-0140437485

*Billy Budd, Bartleby, and Other Stories* (Penguin Classics Edition)  
Herman Melville  
ISBN-13: 978-0143107606

*The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* (Vintage; Reissue edition)  
By Gabriel Garcia Marquez  
ISBN-13: 978-0679722052

*Iep Jaltok: Poems from a Marshallese Daughter* (University of Arizona Press)  
By Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner  
ISBN-13: 978-0816534029

### **Reading Schedule**

**Mon. Sep 4**  
Labor Day, **No Class**

**Wed. Sep 6**  
School on  
Monday Schedule)  
“The Seafarer”

**Thur. Aug 31**  
Introductions,  
Diagnostic Essay

**Thur. Sep 7**  
Class. Add/Drop Ends  
Mare Nostrum, Mare  
Clausem.

**Mon. Sep 11**  
Pirates!

**Thur. Sep 14**  
*No Class*

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***The Interesting Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African. Written by Himself.***

**Mon. Sep 18**  
*Equiano*  
pgs 1- 93, Chap 1, 2, 3, 4  
(Chap. 1 begins on 31, but look over  
first 30 pages.)  
Present on Article 1:

**Thur. Sep 21**  
*Equiano*  
pgs. 95-160, Chap. 5, 6, 7,8  
  
Present on Article 2:

Article 1: Marcus Rediker -“Chapter 2: The Evolution of the Slave Ship” from *The Slave Ship*.

Article 2: Matthew Brown- “Olaudah Equiano and the Sailor’s Telegraph: The Interesting Narrative and the Source of Black Abolitionism.”

**Mon. Sep 25**

*Equiano*

pgs. 160-236, Chap. 9, 10, 11, 12

**Thur. Sep 28**

Workshop Essay 1

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***Zong!***

**Mon. Oct 2**

*Zong!*

pgs. 183-210

Chap. Glossary, Manifest, Notanda,

*Gregson v. Gilbert*

Present on Article 3:

**Thur. Oct 5**

*Zong!*

pgs. 1-56

Chap. Os, Dicta,

Present on Article 4:

Article 3: Marcus Rediker- “Chapter 1: Life, Death, and Terror in the Slave Trade” from *The Slave Ship*.

Article 4: Marcus Rediker- “Chapter 8: The Sailor’s Vast Machine” from *The Slave Ship*.

**Mon. Oct. 9**

*Columbus Day, No Class*

**Thur. Oct 12**

*Zong!*

pgs. 57-182

Chap. Sal, Ventus, Ferrum,

Ebora

Present on Article 5:

**Mon. Oct 16**

Kara Walker *After the Deluge*

**Thur. Oct 19**

Workshop Essay 2

Article 5: Erin Fehskens- “Accounts Unpaid, Accounts Untold: M. NourbeSe Philip’s *Zong!* and the Catalogue.”

Article 6: Veronica Austen- “*Zong!*’s ‘Should we?’: Questioning the Ethical Representation of Trauma.”

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***The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket***

**Mon. Oct 23**

*Pym*

pgs. ix- 79

Chap. Introduction, Preface, 1-7

**Thur. Oct 26**

*Pym*

pgs. 80-143

Chap. 8-14

Present on Article 8:

**Mon. Oct 30**

**Thur. Nov 2**

*Pym*  
pgs. 144-221  
Present on Article 9:

Workshop Essay 3

Article 8 Katherine Montwieler, Mark E. Boren- "Hybridity, Anxiety, and Wombs of Destruction in Edgar Allan Poe's Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket"  
Article 9: Adriana Craciu- "The Frozen Ocean"

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*The Encantadas, or Enchanted Isles*

**Mon. Nov 6**

*The Encantadas*  
pgs. 146-201  
Present on Article 10:

**Thur. Nov 9**

*The Galapagos Affair: Satan Came to Eden*  
Present on Article 11:

**Mon. Nov 13**

*Suddenly Last Summer*  
Present on Article 12

**Thur. Nov 16**

Workshop Essay 4

Article 10: Hester Blum- "Chapter 5: The Galapagos and the Evolution of the Maritime Imagination" from *The View from the Masthead*.

Article 11: Denise Tanyol- "The Alternative Taxonomies of Melville's 'The Encantadas.'"

Article 12: James Hurt- "*Suddenly Last Summer: Williams and Melville.*"

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*Iep Jāltok: Poems From a Marshallese Daughter*  
*The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor*  
*"Children of the Sea"*

**Mon. Nov 20**

*Iep Jāltok*  
"A Ground Zero Forgotten"  
Present on Article 13:  
Present on Article 14:

**Thur. Nov 23**

Thanksgiving Recess, *No Class*

**Mon. Nov 27**

*The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor*  
Begin discussion of Final Papers

**Thur. Nov 30**

"Children of the Sea"  
Present on Article 15

Article 13 - Epli Hau'ofa- "Our Sea of Islands"

Article 14- Elizabeth DeLoughery- "Heliotropes: Solar Ecologies and Pacific Radiations" (excerpted)

Article 15- Kelehan Paravisin-Gerbert- "The Children of the Sea"

**Mon. Dec 4**

Discuss Abstracts

**Thur. Dec 7**

Conferences

### **Additional Readings, Essays, Homework, Forum Discussions & Blackboard**

All of your homework and essays will be submitted via *Blackboard*, and will be due at a predetermined time (if you're signed up for the class you should already have access to our class's *Blackboard* site). Each assignment will have its own submission entry to which you can upload your work (EX- HW 1, Essay 3, etc.). I ask that you submit your work either as a .doc or .pdf, since my computer can't open .pages. Secondary readings, and primary readings which I've scanned, will be made available to download as pdfs. Please let me know immediately via email if you're having trouble with *Blackboard*, and we can figure out an alternative. With that being said, it's your responsibility to keep up with class submissions, readings, etc., and late work is generally not accepted.

### **Late Work**

For **Essays**, late submissions will result in a letter grade reduction for every 12 hours after due time. I am willing to consider extenuating circumstances, but ultimately the decision to accept or decline without repercussions remains my prerogative. Regarding **Homework**, I may or may not respond to late homework, but generally speaking late homework receives a zero grade. You are responsible for submitting work for days that you're absent (generally via *Blackboard*, but by all means feel free to contact me via email).

### **Homework**

All homework will be submitted via *BlackBoard*, and will be graded on a pass/ fail scale. Poor quality work, in which it's obvious you have not read the text, or fulfilled the expectations of the prompt, will be given a failing mark. I'll mention to you if I see a trend of poor quality homework, but I won't comment on each piece of homework (in other words, if you don't hear from me, you're probably doing fine).

### **Presentations**

You'll be responsible for 2 class presentations, each expected to be about 10-15 minutes long. These will be graded on the clarity and depth of information and claims presented, and how well you teach your peers. I'll pass around a sign-up sheet on the second day of class.

Handouts and Slides (for instance Google Slides or Prezi) are welcome additions to your presentation, but I ask that you share digital presentations with my Fordham email address ([apinnix@fordham.edu](mailto:apinnix@fordham.edu)) so we don't have to go through the process of signing out and signing in on multiple accounts.

- In your presentation you'll be expected to "teach" the class a piece of secondary literature (by which I mean a published academic article or chapter) which provides insight into the text(s) we'll be reading that day. It'll be your task to provide an overview of the author's claims and support, to clearly show the ways in which the argument put forth in this secondary piece of literature relates to the text, perhaps pointing to specific sections in the primary text which are particularly good examples of the secondary text's argument, or places in which this argument might alter our understanding of the primary text, etc. It'll be important to quote both the primary and secondary texts, and to provide this material to your peers via slides or handouts, and to provide enough context that

your peers will have a substantive understanding of the broader implications of these examples. Similarly, you may want to include any outside information/ research which might assist you in explaining this secondary piece of literature and/or its relation to the primary text.

Depending on the breadth of critical material available on a text, I may suggest/ provide you with a piece of secondary literature, or may leave it up to you to discover a text you find interesting/ appropriate/ insightful and helpful to the class as a whole. Probably I'll provide you with an academically appropriate text for your first presentation, and leave the second up to your own research. *With that being said*, if you are selecting your own text, I expect you to provide me with a brief outline/ overview of the text, and what you plan to do with it, by at least the class before your presentation (if you have the text available as a pdf send this to me too). I'll look over your overview, and the text itself (if possible), and respond with a few comments to assist you in your efforts, and to ensure that the text is sufficiently rigorous.

### **Forum Posts**

Once a week you'll be expected to post on our class's *BlackBoard* forum, and respond to someone else's post. Posts are due on class days at 2 pm (so I'll have adequate time to look over them and bring some of your insights/ questions up in class). Both types of assignments will be graded on a scale from 0-5. Forum Posts posted after 2 pm on Thursday will not be given credit, though you can post Forum Responses until Friday at midnight and have it count for that given week. All posts are expected to include some amount of quoting and quote analysis.

- **Forum Posts**- Each week you'll need to write a forum post that will be posted in the appropriate forum (usually arranged by texts) on *BlackBoard*. Your response need not be longer than a (well developed and grammatically correct) paragraph or two (though longer is fine), but it *must* quote and analyze a passage from the text (include page #s or line #s in your work!) that you think is important, or puzzling, or relevant for some reason. It'll be your task to address how you think this passage fits into the work as a whole— for example, where else in the work do you see the author addressing a similar issue? Where are some places where the author seems to contradict or challenge the ideas present in your selected quote? Are there particular terms or phrases which you find intriguing? If so unpack them and provide some insight into why these terms are important. You may also compare your chosen passage to something you've found in another work we've read and discussed.

Forum posts are a good place to begin developing concepts you may want to address in more depth in a later essay. As such, feel free to revisit concepts that you find intriguing. For instance, you may find yourself frequently considering what the term "cargo" means in different contexts. Considering this term's usage in a few different texts may ultimately lead to a productive final paper topic.

Similarly, forum posts are a good place to begin transitioning from annotations (initial ideas) to arguments.

- **Responses to Forum Posts**- Every week you'll need to write a short response to someone else's post. You'll need to use textual evidence (again quote and include page #s) from elsewhere in the text to challenge, confirm, build on, expand, or piggyback off what another student wrote. You may also want to use this space to expand on ideas which came up in class discussion, however don't simply repeat ideas that you or other students said during class, but offer new insights (in other words, move the conversation forward).

### **Essay Expectations and Formatting**

All Essays must be submitted via **Blackboard** by the time indicated on the prompt.

#### **Essay Formatting**

- The usual 1" margins
- Double spaced
- Justified left
- A size 12 font (generally Times New Roman)
- Pages should be numbered
- Include your name in the Header or Footer
- If required on the prompt, include a Works Cited page, on its own page, in MLA format.
- Digital Submissions should include your last name in the file name.

#### **Class Participation**

- **You must bring copies of the day's readings to class**— This means students are expected to have primary texts available for class usage (in *hard copy*), and secondary texts printed out or readily available on a tablet or laptop— indeed our class discussions will frequently require referring to these texts, so it's *very important* that you bring the texts to class. Failing to do so may lead to you being counted as absent for that class.
- **Keep A Folder**— It is recommended that you carry your class materials in a binder or folder. This includes notes from previous classes, the class syllabus, material to write on, etc.
- **Annotate!**— It is *strongly* recommended (in the strongest manner of recommendation possible) that students take notes on all texts read/viewed (in other words, annotate your readings, including this document). This will ensure that you retain, and are more easily able to develop, interesting insights, both for your own work, and to share with the class. Annotating can be as simple as jotting down a few ideas or questions in the margins as they occur to you, looking up words you're unfamiliar with and jotting down a brief definition, circling words or phrases which catch your eye, etc. Annotating, however, is the easiest way to take note of, and develop, your own observations *into* sustained and well supported arguments.
- **Class Participation**— Your attendance, your preparedness for class, and your engaged and thoughtful contribution to class discussion, are all factored into this portion of your grade.

### **Grades Breakdown**

Homework: 5% of grade

Presentations: 10% of grade

Class Participation: 10% of grade

Forum Posts: 15% of grade

Essay Assignments: 40% of grade (the expectation is 3-4 essays total, each worth 10-13%)

Final Essay: 20% of grade

### **Attendance Policy**

Class attendance is fundamental to performing well in this class. A recursive process of writing, discussion, and developing ideas, is core to this class, not only for your own work, but also for the benefit of your peers. Attendance will be taken every day, and will be an important consideration when figuring grades at the end of the semester. **Three absences are allowable without penalty. Any further absences will result in a full letter grade reduction for each absence.**

If you are absent from class, I recommend contacting a peer for their class notes/overview.

If you know you will be late in advance, you are expected to contact the professor and make appropriate arrangements beforehand. Similarly, leaving class early must be discussed via email, or in person, with the professor *prior* to class. Chronic or extreme tardiness, leaving the class early without prior discussion with the professor, or being substantially unprepared for class, may result in an absence.

If you have an emergency, a death in your family, etc. there is the possibility of receiving an excused absence which will not count against you. These often require at least 2 week advanced notification and/or verification from a doctor, or the Fordham nurse, etc. (*EX.*- “In case of personal illness, verification will be accepted from a physician writing on official letterhead or prescription pad”— You can find this information online in the Undergraduate Faculty Handbook, On Classes and Exams, section 2.4 Student Attendance).

Also, *always* be sure to bring your class texts and notes to class. Consistently failing to arrive prepared for class may result in you receiving an absence for that day.

### **Course Conduct**

Students are expected to cooperate in maintaining a classroom environment that fosters the learning experience of fellow students and faculty.

**Academic dishonesty of any kind— cheating, plagiarism, etc.— will not be tolerated.** Any instance of such action will result in an immediate and irrevocable failing grade on the assignment, the possibility of failing the course, and a report to your dean. If any student has questions as to what plagiarism is, I am available for all questions the student might have (Indeed, if you have *any* doubts or questions, send me an email).

- Snack foods and drinks are allowed, but not full meals, unless the student brings something for the whole class. Alcohol is strictly prohibited.

- Laptops are allowed; however, technology should enhance your learning experience, not detract from it. I reserve the right to ask students not to use computers. If I see that you are not taking part in the conversation, and are instead perusing Facebook, the internet, etc., you'll be counted as absent for that class.
- **Phones must be placed on SILENT.** If you must use your phone (for instance a family emergency), please step out of the room. Otherwise *put your phones away*-they mitigate your ability to be an engaged student and disrupt the class more broadly.
- Students are expected to respect both the professor and fellow colleagues in all venues of lecture and discussion. This includes refraining from personal attacks during discussion. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner fitting of a university classroom.
- Students who feel the need to nap during class will be excused from the classroom, and marked absent for the day.
- Students with unique needs should identify themselves at the beginning of the term. Fordham University is dedicated to providing all students with the necessary academic and auxiliary aids to facilitate their participation and performance in the classroom.

### Grading

The most common grades, given by instructors, are letter grades representing levels of academic achievement. These letter grades, their description, and their quality points, are indicated below. This information comes from the Fordham Undergraduate Handbook.

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	Excellent; Honors-level work, outstanding	95%+
A-	Still Excellent	90-94%
B+	Very Good; High Level of Performance	87-89%
B	Good; Solid & Above Average Performance	84-86%
B-	Good; Still Above Average	80-83%
C+	Average Level of Performance	77-79%
C	Satisfactory; Acceptable Level of Performance	74-76%
C-	Minimally Acceptable	70-73%
D	Passing, but Unsatisfactory	60-69%
F	Failure; Inferior Performance	<60%