“Uncovering Early American Indian Literary History”
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We will study more or less recently uncovered early American Indian literature, the research styles, questions, and strategies that propel its uncovering, and prospects for future research. We will ask such questions as: What happens when we read the emerging new American Indian literary history? What do we make of what it uncovers? What does it change or not change? What might we want it to change or not change? As we study American Indian literary history and invent new ways to study it, how can historical and literary scholarship speak to and from American Indian studies, history, and literary criticism? How does history matter to literary history and criticism, and how do literary history and criticism matter to history? How does literary history matter for American Indian studies beyond history and literary studies? What do historians and literary critics typically misunderstand, overlook, or underestimate about each other’s questions, assumptions, research methods, and knowledges? What are the boundaries of research in American Indian literary history literally, historically, epistemologically, and ethically? How does research in literary history vary regionally and nationally? In practical terms, how do we determine what we wish to recover? Where and how do we look? What technologies do we use?

Workshop Schedule

Thursday, March 10

9:00-11:00  Welcome, introductions of people and issues
11:15-12:30 Orientation to research at the Newberry
12:30-1:30  Lunch break
1:30- 3:00  Practicalities: how to recover early American Indian literary history
3:00-5:00  Independent research time
Friday, March 11

9:00-11:00 Communities, sovereignties, challenges, opportunities, boundaries, and ethics: considerations of rhetorical, intellectual, and cultural sovereignty. (See readings by Scott Richard Lyons and Linda Tuhiwai Smith.) Presentations and discussion from seminar participants

11:00-1:00 Lunch break

1:00-3:00 Presentations and discussion from seminar participants (continued)

3:30-5:00 Presentations and discussion from seminar participants (continued)

Saturday, March 12

9:00-9:30 Library open for paging materials

9:30-10:30/11:00 Cross-disciplinary conversations and issues

10:30/11:00-1:00 Independent research time

Presentations

Each member of the seminar will make three brief presentations to the seminar. A key part of the seminar will be our discussion of Presentations 2 and 3 after we have heard all of the presentations.

Presentation 1 2-5 minutes:
Briefly introduce yourself. Include your areas of interest; relevant experience; methodological interests (if you like); actual, potential, or prospective research and research questions.

Presentations 2 and 3 3-5 minutes each:

For each presentation, choose one work (or group of works) from *Changing Is Not Vanishing* or *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky*. Discuss anything you see as specifically interesting about the work, its historical position, its literary role, its connections to historical, cultural, biographical, political, or literary issues or questions and/or to the problems, possibilities, or consequences of recovering early American Indian literature. I have chosen these books for several reasons. (I have not chosen them to earn the instructor royalties; the instructor will receive no royalties on these books.) To begin with, these books inspired the seminar in the first place. Also, the breadth of *Changing* historically and in region, people, topic, style, underlying research, and so on can speak to the breadth of interests that will likely be represented among seminar participants, including participants from multiple disciplines, histories, and areas of interest. *The Sound the Stars Make* can complement the breadth of *Changing* with greater specificity and in some ways greater depth or focus, and it has a number of additional interests in its relative earliness, large scale of works from one writer, range of genres, and multi-lingual writing and cultural setting. Familiarity with these books can also help provide the seminar participants a usefully informed—and critical—perspective on the biases, experiences, and limits that the instructor brings to the workshop and to the recovery of early American Indian literature.
**Option:** For Presentation 3, if you like, you may choose something not in *Changing Is Not Vanishing* or *The Sound the Stars Make*, such as a work by an early prose writer of fiction or nonfiction and/or perhaps writings from—just to name examples—Canada or Hawaii. Among the many possibilities are Hendrick Aupaumut, Elias Boudinot, David Cusick, Francis La Flesche, Hen-toh (his poetry is in *Changing Is Not Vanishing*, but not his fiction), John Norton, John Oskison, Lucy Thompson, Susette La Flesche Tibbles, and Too-qua-stee (his poetry is in *Changing Is Not Vanishing*, but not his still hard-to-find political prose). The work of some of these writers is available in single books or full-scale editions, but the work of others is hard to locate. This option may take research or previous experience if you go outside the anthologies; feel welcome to consult with the instructor (rpaderno1@illinois.edu). Please do not choose an already well-known writer such as William Apess, Gertrude Bonnin/Zitkala Sa, or Samson Occom. If in doubt, go with your druthers.

**Background Reading** (to be completed before the seminar; how intensively you read all these materials is up to you and your schedule)

**Recovery projects:**


**Indigenous issues and contexts:**


**Literary recovery; aesthetic taste; literature and history:**


Barbara Herrnstein Smith, “Value/Evaluation,” from *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, 2nd ed., ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin, 1995. Following her *Contingencies of Value: Alternative Perspectives for Critical Theory*, 1988, in this article Smith provides an overview of the thinking about aesthetic taste that came from and contributed to changing the literary canon, though members of this seminar might want to give more heed than Smith gives to issues of cultural identity, race, ethnicity, nationality, indigeneity, and so on.

Bibliography (for reference—this is not assigned reading)