

ENGLISH 497H
Special Topics, Honors: American Literature, History, and Culture
Fall 2024
Dr. Roggenkamp

Office 315 DTH
Hours: M/W/F 1:00-2:00 and by appointment
Email Karen.Roggenkamp@tamuc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>This course will use a “case study” approach to explore the intertwined disciplines of American literature and history, and to question how writers have reimagined the past creatively. Through investigation of four instances in which actual historical events are reimagined through fiction, we will consider where the boundaries between history and literature lie—or if we can even locate those boundaries—and examine what these cases suggest about how authors and audiences reframe the past, and why.</p> <p>Our four case studies are 1) the Salem Witchcraft trials of 1692-93, accompanied by Arthur Miller’s 1953 play <i>The Crucible</i>; 2) Nat Turner’s rebellion and the revolt of enslaved people in 1831, partnered with William Styron’s controversial 1967 novel <i>The Confessions of Nat Turner</i>; 3) Lizzie Borden’s trial for the murders of her father and stepmother in 1892, alongside with short stories that attempt to answer the central mysteries of the murders, and 4) the trial of two men eventually convicted for murdering an entire family in Kansas in 1959, along with the “nonfiction novel” <i>In Cold Blood</i>, by Truman Capote. As you see, the word “case” has another meaning in the context of this class since all four of these historical incidents also involved legal cases.</p> <p>For each historical event, we will be looking at digitized archival documents and scholarly commentary, paired with the corresponding literary “document.” We will also be viewing some documentary films associated with each incident, to provide further context.</p>
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	<p>For the sake of accreditation purposes, Student Learning Outcomes will be measured by a final paper that demonstrates ability to construct a bibliographic essay, as measured by a rubric item that measures accomplishment of this outcome at 80% of students accomplishing at least 80% of the points used to assess this element of the course.</p>
REQUIRED TEXTS	<p>Arthur Miller, <i>The Crucible</i> (ISBN 9780142437339) William Styron, <i>The Confessions of Nat Turner</i> (ISBN 9780679736639) Truman Capote, <i>In Cold Blood</i> (ISBN 9780679745587) Additional readings will be available for download on D2L</p> <p>You will also need to pay to watch a docudrama about the Salem Witch Trials, <i>Three Sovereigns for Sarah</i>. It is available for about \$6 at youtube (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=ELuOi9KzXFcbjX2y2CHY4VBQ) and for \$4 in iTunes (https://itunes.apple.com/us/tv-season/three-sovereigns-for-sarah/id960829939). I also have a DVD that I can lend to people, but please allow</p>

	<p>time for me to arrange to get it to you on campus, since I will not be there every day.</p> <p>Additionally, you will need a free Zoom account, which you can create at http://zoom.us</p> <p>Note: ISBNs refer to the books ordered through the bookstore, but you may use other editions of the book.</p>
GRADING	<p>Your final grade for this course will be weighted as such:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paper 1, 15% of final grade ▪ Paper 2, 20% of final grade ▪ Paper 3, 30% of final grade ▪ Class participation, 35% of final grade <p>The Department of Literature and Languages does not, as a rule, allow an Incomplete (X) on the transcript; incompletes are only awarded under extraordinary circumstances, pending Department Head and Dean approval. If personal issues or conflicts arise that lead to your missing a substantial amount of class, you should consider withdrawing from the class. As a rough guideline, for what A-F grades mean, I award A for truly outstanding work, B for work significantly above the level necessary to meet basic requirements, C for work that meets basic requirements, D for work that meets only some of the requirements, and F for work that is not completed or that fails to meet the requirements of the assignment.</p>
LATE WORK	<p>I grant extensions on assignments only under the most exceptional of circumstances. I will only accept late papers if you make explicit prior arrangements with me and provide proof of your inability to complete that paper on time due to extenuating circumstances (severe illness, death in immediate family, etc.)</p>
COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY	<p>I tend to send several emails over the semester, and I will use your university email account (myLeo), so be sure to check it every day.</p> <p>This course will be implemented using myLeo Online (D2L Brightspace), the Learning Management system used by TAMU-Commerce. You will need your CWID and password to log into the course page via the myLeo portal. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 902-468-6000 or helpdesk@online.tamu.org. To complete this course successfully, you will need a computer with internet access (high speed recommended) and a word processor equipped with Microsoft Word. Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system and a recent version of a browser like Internet Explorer or Google Chrome. Your course will also work with Macintosh OS along with a recent version of Safari or Firefox.</p> <p>TAMU-Commerce provides students with technical support in the use of D2L. Technology problems are not generally an excuse for a late assignment--make sure you submit your work in time to allow for any problems accessing the Dropbox. You may reach the help desk by the following means, 24 hours a day, seven days a</p>

	<p>week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Phone 866-656-5511 ➤ Email helpdesk@online.tamuc.org ➤ Click on “Help” button for information regarding working with D2L Brightspace
<p>MORE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</p>	<p>Additional policies and procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You are responsible for reading and understanding all items included on this syllabus and on any additional materials you receive from me during the course ▪ The Department of Literature and Languages will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students who are found guilty of academic dishonesty include failure of the assignment and/or course, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. Refer to the TAMU-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 13.99.99.R0.10 for details: http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf. Examples of plagiarism include but are not restricted to: turning in an essay written entirely or partly by someone else; copying any portion of someone else’s words and presenting those words as your own (i.e. without quotation or citation); copying paragraphs, sentences, or parts of sentences from another source without citation; using the same ideas that you have found in another writer’s essay and presenting those ideas as your own (again, without quotation or citation). If you are not clear about how to avoid any of these acts, it is up to you to clarify, either via online information or our own Writing Center on the first floor of DTH. Unintentional plagiarism is still plagiarism, and we expect all students to understand what constitutes an act of academic dishonesty. ▪ All students enrolled in the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. TAMU-C will comply in the classroom and online courses with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained. ▪ The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services Texas A&M University-Commerce

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Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

- Texas Senate Bill 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in TAMU-C buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas license to carry a handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the state of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all TAMU-C campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 911.
- Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, DTH 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head or Assistant Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities (CHSSA) after following the steps outlined above. If the instructor in question is the Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where applicable, students should also consult University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 (“Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation”).