

SRS 3139: Native People and Christianity

Winter 2020

Tuesdays, 11:30 am - 12:50 pm and

Fridays, 1:00 pm-2:20 Simard 227

Prof. Emma Anderson

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Course Description:

When Europeans and aboriginal peoples met for the first time, this momentous encounter had shattering consequences for the worldview and identity of both groups. It is difficult, in our own globalized world of the 21st century, to relate to the cognitive shock of first contact between peoples, cultures, and concepts that had previously been wholly unfamiliar to one another, except perhaps by comparing it to the paradigm of alien visitation. The existence and behaviour of these heretofore unknown strangers raised a host of existential questions which seemed to demonstrate the inadequacy of the traditional religious models of the world which the cultures of both continents had used to try to understand the world. These first, tentative, confusing, and sometimes violent contacts would shape centuries of religious encounter in New Spain, New England, and New France. This course explores the effects of these complex, unfolding religious encounters upon the lives and worldviews of both European and indigenous peoples in these three epicentres of religious contact.

Required texts:

The Course Pack of the required readings for this course is available for purchase at Rytek Printing (404 Dalhousie (613) 241-COPY). Please note that only those readings that are not available electronically, through the Morisset Library website, will be reproduced in the Course Pack (in order to save students money).

Throughout this Syllabus, Course Pack readings are indicated with (CP), electronic readings with (ER). Books excerpted in the Course Pack will also be put on Course Reserve at Morisset Library.

Students are responsible for acquiring the books for their "Fact or Fiction?" Assignment (for details, please see below). Students can borrow their selected books from Morisset Library (or from those of St. Paul or Carleton universities) access the copies on Morisset Reserve, or purchase their own copies of the books (Abe Books is a particularly good and cheap online used book store that students might want to consider).

Assignments and Evaluation:

1) Midterm Examination (February 25, 2020 20% of final grade)

Multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions will test student mastery of course material and concepts for the first half of the course. The Midterm will be held on **Tuesday, February 25, 2020**. The class prior to the exam (and to the winter break) on **Friday, February 14, 2020** will be spent in collective review, using pre-distributed Midterm Review Questions which will be posted on Brightspace.

2) Final Examination (Part I: April 3, 2020, Part II: April 20, 2020, 30% of the final grade in total)

The Final Exam will test student mastery of course material and concepts (from primarily the second half of the course, though some of the questions may require students to integrate earlier material). As with the Midterm Exam, the class meeting prior to Part I of the Final Exam (that is, on **Tuesday, March 31, 2020**) will be dedicated to collective review for the Final Exam using pre-distributed Final Exam Review Questions. Part I of will be held during the last class of the semester, **Friday, April 3, 2020**) and will be composed of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short essay questions. Part II will be constituted exclusively of long essay questions and is a take-home, open-book exam, to be submitted electronically by midnight of **April 20, 2020**.

3) Research Paper Proposal (January 31, 2020, 5% of final grade, please submit a hard copy in class)
Students must submit a Research Paper Proposal outlining their proposed topic, prospective thesis, and providing a provisional bibliography of at least five scholarly books/articles. Topics should deal with **some aspect of specifically religious encounter between European colonists and native peoples**. While political, demographic, or military information can be included, the main focus on the paper must be on religious exchange. More detailed information about this assignment (and the Research Paper itself) will be available on Brightspace.

4) Research Paper (March 17, 2020, 25% of the final grade, please submit a hard copy in class)
Following approval of their Research Paper Proposal, students will compose a twelve-page research paper (double-spaced, typed, exclusive of the scholarly apparatus, such as footnotes and bibliography).

5) Fact vs. Fiction: “Twinned” Book Reflection (February 14, 2020, 20% of final grade)
Novels can often provide an incredibly stimulating, imaginative, and accessible “in” to native experiences in the past and present. Fiction generally has a vividness and emotional vitality lacking in more academic writing. In this assignment, students will skim/read two books that address similar themes or eras of native people’s experiences of religious colonialism and to write an essay that analyzes and assesses them comparatively. Please pick one of the “twinned” titles below (alternatively, you may suggest your own idea for two related books to the instructor. Please note that both must address a subject relevant to the religious colonization of the native peoples of the Americas, and one must be fiction, the other non-fiction). Skim/read the books and compose a paper of **five to seven (5-7) double-spaced pages**. Your essay must: 1) (very briefly) overview the works, 2) analyze points of difference in presentation and interpretation of similar incidents, people, or events and 3) reflect on how differences in presentation between fiction and non-fiction effected your appreciation or understanding of the material covered.

Suggested “Twinned” Books:

1) On the violent encounter between native peoples and Jesuit missionaries in colonial New France:

Novel: Joseph Boyden, *The Orenda*

Non-fiction work: Emma Anderson, *The Death and Afterlife of the North American Martyrs*

2) On the experiences New England colonists captured and raised by native people in the seventeenth century:

Novel: John Putnam Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America*

Non-fiction work: James Axtell, “The White Indians of Colonial America,” in the *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 32, #1, 1975, p. 55-88.

3) On the experience of residential schools in 20th century Canada:

Novel: Thompson Highway, *The Kiss of the Fur Queen*

Non-fiction work: Roland D. Chrisjohn and Sherri L. Young, *The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada*

4) On the life and spirituality of Mohawk saint, Kateri Tekakwitha:

Novel: Louise Erdrich, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*

Non-fiction work: Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint*

Please note: All assignments are due on the dates indicated. **Work must be turned in during the class on which it is due, in hard copy form, stapled or paper clipped.** Late papers (without certified evidence of ill health or other compassionate consideration) will be penalized -2 points out of a possible 100 for each day they are late. Plagiarism (the unattributed use of the work of others) is absolutely unacceptable and, if engaged in, will result in failure of the assignment, if not the course. For more information on plagiarism and its consequences, see www.uottawa.ca/plagiarism. Please note that course attendance, while not mandatory, is essential for student success in the course. During course lectures, much of the material in the course readings will be explained and contextualized, facilitating student understanding of important concepts.

Course Map:

January 7, 2020

Introduction to the Course

Overview of the course's goals, requirements and structure. Question and answer session.

January 10, 14, 2020

Europe on the Eve of Contact

Exploration of what, for Europeans, was a “new world” took place in an intensely turbulent period in European history – a period which challenged what it was to be both “Christian” and “European.” The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were a time of geographical exploration, unprecedented scientific discoveries, and religious division and warfare, as Europeans soaked the soil of their respective countries with the blood of those who did not share their understanding of religious leadership, their interpretation of the Bible, or their conception of the Eucharist. To understand the behaviour of European colonists towards the aboriginal peoples of the colonial Americas, it is essential that we comprehend the contested religious beliefs and practices of European Christianity in both its Catholic and emergent Protestant forms, as colonists' spiritual commitments profoundly affected their encounter with native peoples and with neighbouring European colonists of other nations and confessions. This section will explore European “thought-worlds” and sketch in the political and historical context of the great colonial powers on the eve of contact.

Required Readings:

- Anderson, Emma. *The Betrayal of Faith: The Tragic Journey of a Colonial Native Convert*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007, “Prologue: Pierre-Anthoine Pastedechouan, Voyager Between Worlds,” p. 1-10 (CP).
- Greer, Allan and Mills, Kenneth, “A Catholic Atlantic” in Canizaries-Esguerra, Jorge, and Seeman, Eric, eds. *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500-2000*. Pearson/Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2007, p. 3-13 (ER).

January 17, 21, 2020

The Americas before Contact

Inhabiting vastly different geographical milieu, from the wintry wastes of Canada to the jungles of Peru, indigenous cultures in the Americas on the eve of contact were as internally diverse and complex – politically, militarily, culturally, and religiously – as those of the Europeans who would soon confront them. Yet, despite their diversity, native cultures in the Americas also shared some similar assumptions about human beings and the natural world surrounding them, a world which was generally seen as being rife with powerful and sacred forces. This section will explore the worldviews of native cultures of north-eastern North America, and comparatively examine Nahua (Aztec) and Inca cosmology. Readings and lectures will focus in particular upon each culture's conceptions of the gendered human being and the sacred forces that confronted him or her, as well as exploring the social structural and ritual means through which interplay between humans and the sacred was carefully controlled.

Required Readings:

- Anderson, Emma. *The Betrayal of Faith: The Tragic Journey of a Colonial Native Convert*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007, Chapter One, “Thy God has not come to our Country: Innu Childhood,” p. 11-45 (CP).
- Ramirez, Susan Elizabeth. *To Feed and Be Fed: The Cosmological Bases of Authority and Identity in the Andes*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005, Chapter 3, “Kingship and the Gods,” p. 59-84 (CP).
- Carrasco, David, and Sessions, Scott. *The Daily Life of the Aztecs: People of the Sun and Earth*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998. Chapter 4, “Education and the Aztec Life Cycle: From Birth to Death and Beyond,” p. 93-126 (ER).

January 24, 28, 2020

Contact in all three Cultural Arenas:

In the early modern period, the existence of previously unknown peoples or lands posed intense classificatory and existential challenges for both natives and Europeans, who struggled to square this evidence of a far broader world with their existing religious and cultural worldviews. This section will sketch in the historical, religious, military and demographic contours of the unfolding religious encounters in the three colonial theatres under consideration: New Spain, New France and New England, explore European and Indigenous motives in colonial encounters, and illumine the initial impressions which natives and newcomers had of one another within these three contrasting colonial milieu.

Required Readings:

- James Axtell, "Colonial America without the Indians: Counterfactual Reflections," in *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 73, #4, March, 1987, p. 981-996 (ER).
- Jaenen, Cornelius. "Amerindian Views of French Culture in the Seventeenth Century," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 55, #3, June 1974, p. 261-291 (ER).
- Rebecca Kugel, "Of Missionaries and their Cattle: Ojibwa Perceptions of a Missionary as Evil Shaman," in *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 41, #2, Spring, 1994, p. 227-44 (ER).
- Elliot, J. H. *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006, Chapter 3, "Confronting American Peoples," p. 57-87 (ER).

January 31, 2020

Conversion in Theory and Practice

Exposure to European Christianity precipitated unprecedented religious change among Indigenous cultures, even as this change often led in directions that were surprising to colonizers. While Christian missionaries, Protestant and Catholic alike, sought to inspire or compel native people's acceptance of Christianity (and rejection of native traditional spiritualities), indigenous peoples themselves often perceived a much broader range of religious options. Moreover, "conversion," broadly defined as religious, cultural, and technological adaption to the interfacing culture, was experienced by Europeans as well as Native Americans, particularly when colonial power was partial or mitigated, drawing both groups onto what Richard White has termed "the Middle Ground." This section will explore the narrow, Christian concept of conversion and how this ideal of a dramatic, one-way, and permanent religious change was sometimes accepted and sometimes challenged, both overtly and covertly, by native peoples, as well as exploring broader issues of mutual change and influence. Readings and lectures will explore issues such as the validity of religious choices under coercive circumstances, and the linguistic and conceptual difficulties in translating religious ideas from one culture to another (particularly in cultures with different base-line assumptions about the nature of reality). Please note that a **hard copy of your Research Paper Proposal is due in class today.**

Required Readings:

- Allan Greer, "Conversion and Identity: Iroquois Christianity in Seventeenth-Century New France," in Mills, Kenneth and Grafton, Anthony, eds. in *Conversion: Old Worlds and New*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2003, p. 175-192 (CP).
- Nicholas Griffiths, *The Cross and the Serpent: Religious Repression in Colonial Peru*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996, "Introduction," p. 3-28 (CP).
- James Axtell, "The White Indians of Colonial America," in the *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 32, #1, 1975, p. 55-88 (ER).

February 4, 2020

Targeting the Young

In all three contact zones, instruction of Indigenous children and youth was a favoured method of attaining new converts. Missionaries were convinced that, were they able to win the allegiance of a new generation, Indigenous cultures would start to change in and of themselves: a perception with often tragic consequences for both their students and for native societies in general.

Required Readings:

- Emma Anderson. *The Betrayal of Faith: The Tragic Journey of a Colonial Native Convert*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007, p. 63-121 (CP).
- James Axtell, "Dr. Wheelock's Little Red School," in his *The European and the Indian*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982, p. 87-108 (ER).
- Schneider, Tammy, "This Once Savage Heart of Mine:" Joseph Jonson, Wheelock's Indians, and the Construction of a Christian/Indian Identity" in Calloway, Colin and Salisbury, Neal. *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience*. Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 2003, p. 232-258 (CP).

February 7, 2020

Language Barriers and the Pervasive Role of Imagery in (Attempted) Religious Conversion

The struggle to implant Christianity into native hearts and minds took place not only through military force or the education of the young. It was also, often, a battle of imagery. Conquistadors like Hernan Cortes sought to dethrone, defame, and dishonour aboriginal icons and replace them with Christian religious art and relics. While destroying images or religious material culture was intended to display the impotence and falsity of the powers or deities worshipped by aboriginal peoples, in some cases these largely non-verbal acts of image destruction and replacement only facilitated the perception that Christian and aboriginal religious figures were functionally or symbolically equivalent. This section will explore the "war of images" which was repeatedly waged between colonial and aboriginal cultures, and explore why missionaries, particularly Catholics, so often employed religious imagery in their attempts to convert native populations. Moreover, it will analyze the psychological effects of this imagery on indigenous peoples, particularly children.

Required Readings:

- Serge Gruzinski. *Images at War: Mexico from Columbus to Bladerunner (1492-2019)*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001, Chapter Two, "War," p. 31-60, Chapter 5, "The Christianization of the Imaginaire," p. 184-200 (ER)
- George Fulford and Louis Bird: "Who is Breaking the First Commandment?" Oblate Teachings and Cree Responses in the Hudson Bay Lowlands in *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History*. Jennifer Brown and Elizabeth Vibert, eds. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2003, p. 293-318 (CP).
- John Steckley, *Des Religiones: Telling the 17th-century Jesuit Story in Huron to the Iroquois*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004, p. 55-61 (CP).

February 11, 2020

In-Class Field Trip to the "Àbadakone: Continuous Fire" Exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada

February 14, 2020

In-Class Collective Review for the Midterm Examination

This class will be spent in collective review for the Midterm, using pre-distributed Midterm Study Review Questions that will be posted in advance on Brightspace. Please note that a **hard copy of your "Fact or Fiction?" Assignment is due today in class**.

*******February 16-22, 2020 is Winter Reading Week: there will be no classes or office hours*******

February 25, 2020

Midterm Examination

Multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions will test student mastery of course material and concepts from the first half of the course.

February 28 and March 3, 6, 2020

The Devil in the New World: Missionary Perception of Native Spiritualities as Demonic

Perhaps the most powerful, fateful, and common colonial religious interpretation of native spiritual practices was the European perception of native religiosity as demonic. In New France, New Spain, and New England, European missionaries, both Protestant and Catholic, viewed native religious practices through the theological lens of demonism, often perceiving native peoples as the “slaves of Satan.” Such perceptions not only justified strong action against native peoples, but portrayed the Christianization of the New World as an apocalyptic (end of times) struggle between the forces of good and evil. In New France, Jesuit missionaries identified native shaman, their chief antagonists, with the Evil One. In New Spain, perception of native culture as essentially demonic resulted in a landscape peppered with crosses, and was used to justify a New World Inquisition to stamp out native beliefs. In New England, colonists perceived hostile native peoples as demon-like hordes unleashed by God to punish them for their sinfulness. In all colonial contexts, the category of diabolism highlights missionary ambivalence regarding the diabolical during the early modern period, as traditional medieval conceptions of the devil as a powerful, real entity vied with Enlightenment scepticism.

Required Readings:

- Peter Goddard, “The Devil in New France,” *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 78, #1, 1997, p. 40-62 (ER).
- Mary Beth Norton. *In the Devil’s Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692*. New York: Knopf, 2002, selections and “Conclusion: New Witch-land,” p. 295-304 (CP).
- Jorge Canizares-Esguerra. *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic: 1550-1700*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006, “Driving Out Demons with the Cross,” p. 110-119 (CP).

March 10, 13, 17, 2020

The Gendered Effects of Religious Colonialism

Religious colonialism did not affect all members of native society in the same way: it had deeply gendered implications. In attempting to impose European religiosity upon New World peoples, missionaries also sought to force native cultures to conform to their own, patriarchal conceptualizations of the proper relationship between the sexes. Missionaries sought to teach gender roles which were often quite different than those posited by aboriginal cultures, argued for male “headship” of their nuclear families, and insisted that sex be restricted to monogamous marriage. Where contact was violent, it often brought with it an onslaught of sexual intimidation and attacks against indigenous women. These facts have led some scholars to posit a straightforward, “declensionist” hypothesis, which suggests that contact with European Christianity brought with it an inevitable diminution of the social, political, and religious status of indigenous women. Other scholars, however, have suggested that this view might overlook instances in which aboriginal women were able to find novel means of empowerment through Christianity (or, alternatively, have used their opposition to Christianity’s influence to reaffirm their social status). Catholic missionaries in New France and New Spain soon remarked upon the intense popularity of their tradition’s more revered female saints. The Virgin Mary and her mother, St. Anne, proved very attractive to native peoples in both venues. Just as female Catholic saints were often to prove more relatable and more popular than their male counterparts, so too exemplary female native converts to Christianity, such as Catherine “Kateri” Tekakwitha, the “lily of the Mohawk,” and more recent figure, Rose Prince of mid-20th century British Columbia, have become powerful symbols of their cultures’ (purported) acceptance of Christianity. **Sharon Angnakak, our TA, will give a mini guest lecture featuring her research exploring the conversion of Inuit women to Christianity in the Arctic on March 10, 2020.** Please note that a **hard copy of your Research Paper is due in class on March 17, 2020.**

Required Readings:

- Karen Anderson. *Chain Her by One Foot: the Subjugation of Women in Seventeenth-century New France*. London: Routledge, 1991, Chapter One, “Proud, Disobedient and Ill-Tempered,” p. 1-12 (ER).
- Irene Silverblatt. *Moon, Sun, and Witches: Gender Ideologies and Class in Inca and Colonial Peru*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 138-147, “Sexual Abuse” and Chapter 10, “Women of the Puna,” p. 197-210 (ER).

- Laura Peers, "The Guardian of All: Jesuit Missionary and Salish Perceptions of the Virgin Mary," in *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History* (2nd ed). Jennifer Brown and Elizabeth Vibert, eds. New York: Broadview Press, 2003, p. 217-234 (CP).
- Charlene Villesenor Black, "St. Anne Imagery and Maternal archetypes in Spain and Mexico," in Allan Greer and Jodi Bilinkoff, eds. *Colonial Saints: Discovering the Holy in the Americas, 1500-1800*. New York, Routledge, 2003, p. 3-24 (ER)
- Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005, Chapter 6, "Catherine and her Sisters," p. 125-146, Epilogue, "Our Catherine," p. 193-205 (ER).
- Emma Anderson, "Residential School Saint: The Life, Death, and Turbulent Afterlife of Rose Prince of the Carrier Nation," *Church History*, forthcoming, 2020 (on our course website on Brightspace, ER).

March 20, 24, 27, 2020

War, Violence, Sacrifice, and Martyrdom in the Colonial Americas

In both pre-contact Indigenous societies and in Europe, religious conceptions of violence and sacrifice held a central place. European Christians brought with them to North America distinctive ideas about the righteousness of war against demonic enemies and the necessity of punishing heretics and apostates. They also believed in the redemptive power of martyrs' innocent suffering and (in the case of European Catholics) and perceived the Eucharist as a sacrificial feast in which celebrants ritually ingested the flesh and blood of Christ. These ideas were powerfully echoed in native cultures. The Nahua (Aztecs) and many nations of north-eastern North America also used torture and execution to serve social, political, and religious functions, including sacrifice, and perceived the chosen victim's courageous suffering under torture as noble. Pre-existing religious conceptions of violence on both sides of the colonial encounter thus led natives and Europeans to view the same violent events quite differently, even as structural similarities in their worldviews made violent encounters mutually comprehensible. This section will explore themes of war, torture, sacrifice, martyrdom, and cannibalism in colonial New Spain, New England, and New France as they were perceived both by native peoples and European colonizers. **Sharon Angnakak, our TA, will give a mini guest lecture exploring two twentieth-century cases involving religiously-motivated violence in the Arctic on March 24, 2020.**

Required Readings:

- Emma Anderson, *The Death and Afterlife of the North American Martyrs*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013, Chapter 1 (ER).
- Caroline Dodds Pennock. *Bonds of Blood: Gender, Lifecycle, and Sacrifice in Aztec Culture*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, Chapter 1, "Living with Death," p. 14-40 (CP).
- Jill Lepore. *The Name of War: King Phillip's War and the Origins of American Identity*. New York: Knopf, 1998, Chapter 4, "Where is your God?" p. 97-121 (CP).
- Inga Clendinnen, "Disciplining the Indians: Franciscan Ideology and Missionary violence in Sixteenth-Century Yucatan," in *Past and Present*, Number 94, February 1982, p. 25-48 (ER).

March 31, 2020

In-Class Review for the Final Examination

April 3, 2020

Part I of the Final Examination

Part I of the Final Exam will be composed of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short essay questions. Part II, a take home exam, will composed exclusively of long essay questions, and is due before midnight on **Monday, April 20, 2020** (by electronic submission).