

**English 738
Fall 2024**

**Seminar in Nineteenth-Century Literature:
Indigenous and Imperial Archives**

Professor Jason Rudy
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Thursdays 6:30-9:00pm
Tawes 3252

The primary goal of this course is to interweave Indigenous and imperial methodologies to examine Australian literature, culture, and history – with an especial focus on the nineteenth century. In part a course on the British Empire and in particular its presence in Australia, we will also work to unsettle methodologies that approach Indigenous histories and cultures in colonialist ways. The course aims to take account of new energy in nineteenth-century studies to confront the field's own racist and colonialist histories. We will be reading from a range of recent scholarship to challenge ourselves to think beyond established methodologies.

Primary materials will include English-language novels, essays, and poetry written from Australia, with particular focus on more recent Indigenous literary works that revise or undo earlier colonial texts. We will take seriously the “archives” of the course title, making extensive use, both in class discussion and written work, of the considerable digital archives available for scholars of these nineteenth-century spaces. Layered among records of British colonization, we will engage with Indigenous cultural accounts, including visual media and oral culture, to resituate ourselves and our thinking in relation to colonial power structures.

Students will be given the option to write an essay-length research paper or to work collaboratively on a research paper.



Photo by Jason Rudy (2019)

Schedule of Meetings

All readings available via the course Canvas site, except where otherwise noted.

❖ = Canvas Files
H = Handout

§ = Live Calendar link
A = Artwork (via Canvas)

Week 1 (August 29): Introductory

We will introduce ourselves and begin a conversation about Indigenous Studies and the ethics of conducting research in the field. We will also begin to consider the contested history of British invasion and Indigenous dispossession in the Australian context. In advance, please listen to the Boe Spearim podcast and read the two essays listed below. The Kendall poems will be provided in class.

Jane Anderson and James E. Francis Sr. “Decolonial Futures of Sharing: ‘Protecting Our Voice,’ Intellectual Property, and Penobscot Nation Language Materials” (2021) ❖
Robert Manne, “The History Wars” (2009) §

Henry Kendall, *Sonnets* (1863) (H)

Listen: Boe Spearim, *Frontier War Stories* podcast #3: “Julie Dowling – Warrior Art Exhibition” (2020) §

A: Julie Dowling, *Walyer* (2006) and *Black Madonna: Omega* (2004)

Week 2 (September 5): Theoretical Framings

This week we read from a range of theoretical perspectives on Indigenous and Imperial history, building a necessary framework for our future conversations. Our primary text is a three-part song cycle from Arnhem Land, the northernmost part of what is now called the Northern Territory on the Australian continent.

Three songs from the Moon-Bone cycle (n.d.) (H)

Gordon Bennett, *The Port Stephens Blacks: Recollections of William Scott* (1929) ❖

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, from *The Empire Writes Back*: “Theory at the Crossroads: Indigenous Theory and Post-Colonial Reading” (1989) ❖

Elleke Boehmer, “Imperialism and Textuality” (2005) ❖

Brendan Hokowhitu, “Monster: Post-Indigenous Studies” (2016) ❖

Daniel Heath Justice, “Stories that Wound, Stories that Heal” (2018) ❖

Linda Tuhiwai Smith, “Research through Imperial Eyes” (1999) ❖

Alice Te Punga Somerville, “‘I do still have a letter’: Our sea of archives” (2016) ❖

Haunani-Kay Trask, “From a Native Daughter” (1993) ❖

A: Emily Kam Ngwararray, *Untitled (Alhalker)* (1992)

Week 3 (September 12): Indigenous Language, Writing, and Sovereignty

The British policy of *terra nullius* (“nobody’s land”) imagined that Indigenous Australians did not own the land on which they had lived for thousands of years because they did not use it for agriculture. Recent scholars, including especially Bruce Pascoe, have shown the degree to which the British were mistaken. Indigenous oral tradition and visual arts offer further evidence of traditional land uses.

Paperbark: A Collection of Black Australian Writings, “The Year of Mourning” (1990) (H)

Cassie Lynch, “Split” (2018) ❖

Songs from the Djanggawul Cycle (n.d.) (H)

Bill Neidjie, “Gagadju Ways” (1985) (H)

Eliza Hamilton Dunlop, “Native Poetry” (1848) (H) §

Bob Hodge and Vijay Mishra, “Aboriginal Place” (1991) ❖

Mudrooroo, “White Forms, Aboriginal Content” (1985) ❖

Bruce Pascoe, from *Dark Emu* (2014) ❖

Lisa Ford, “Jurisdiction, Territory, and Sovereignty in Empire” (2010) ❖

Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, “Sovereignty” (2010) ❖

Jason Rudy, “Art of the Invasion” (2022) §

Listen: Awaye podcast, “The Legacy of Eddie Mabo” (2020) §

Watch: Kevin Rudd’s apology to Indigenous Australians (2008) §

A: Gordon Syron, *Terror Nullius – I* (1997)

A: *Yalangbara*, Queensland Art Gallery, c.1960



Karla Dickens, *To See or Not to See* (2022)

Week 4 (September 19): History, Language, Archive

Kim Scott’s extraordinary novel *That Deadman Dance* is a work of historical fiction interested in language reclamation and cultural engagement. Scott imagines a delicate historical moment (the 1820s-30s), drawn from the colonial archive and Indigenous oral histories, when English colonialists, American whalers, and Indigenous Australians first encountered each other in the southwestern region of the continent.

Kim Scott, *That Deadman Dance* (2010)

Tiffany Shellam, “Mediating Encounters through Bodies and Talk” (2015) ❖

Listen: “Kim Scott on Using Fragments of the Past to Create a Better Future”

Week 5 (September 26): Mediating Figures

We will follow our discussion of Scott's novel with a consideration of methodology: ways of navigating nineteenth-century archival materials alongside present-day Indigenous cultures.

Ali Cobby Eckermann, *Ruby Moonlight* (2012) ❖

George Grey, from *Journals of Two Expeditions of Discovery in North-West and Western Australia*: "Songs and Poetry" (1837-39) ❖

Len Collard and Dave Palmer, "Noogar and non-Aboriginal People Going Along Together" (2015) ❖

Martin Gibbs, "Nebinyan's Songs: an Aboriginal Whaler of South-West Western Australia" (2003) ❖

Graham Huggan, "Australian Literature, Race, and the Politics of Location" (2007) ❖

Tiffany Shellam, from *Meeting the Waylo*: "Encountering Archives" (2019) ❖

Penny van Toorn, from *Writing Never Arrives Naked*: "Bennelong's Letter" (2006) ❖

A: Lin Onus, "Fruit Bats" (1991)

Essay 1 due September 29 by midnight

Week 6 (October 3): Myall Creek

The 1838 massacre at Myall Creek stands out less for the events themselves – variations of which occurred across the Australian continent throughout the nineteenth century – and more for the responses to it, including the execution of seven white pastoralists found guilty of brutally murdering Indigenous men, women, and children. We will consider newspaper accounts of the massacre and trial. Larissa Behrendt's *Finding Eliza* is unrelated to Myall Creek, but will help us continue navigating between British and Indigenous accounts of violence.

Eliza Hamilton Dunlop, "The Aboriginal Mother" (1838) §

Articles from Sydney newspapers on the Myall Creek trials (via Trove) §

- "Law," *Australian* (29 November 1838)
- "Law Intelligence," *Sydney Morning Herald* (3 December 1838)

Larissa Behrendt, *Finding Eliza: Power and Colonial Storytelling* (2015)

Letters from Aboriginal Women of Victoria, 1867-1926 ❖

The Killing Times – a massacre map of Australia §

Ann Curthoys and Jessie Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*: "A Colonial Conundrum: Settler Rights versus Indigenous Rights, 1837-1842" (2018) ❖

Anna Johnston, "The Poetry of the Archive: Locating Eliza Hamilton Dunlop" (2021) ❖

Aileen Moreton-Robinson, from *The White Possessive* (2015) ❖

A: Bronwyn Bancroft, *Night Pulse* (2004)

Week 7 (October 10): Carpentaria I

Alexis Wright's epic *Carpentaria* (2006) is perhaps the most significant Australian novel of the twenty-first century. Set in a fictional town on the Gulf of Carpentaria, Wright interweaves race, the environment, and colonial history in a distinct narrative style. Warwick Thornton's tragic film *Samson and Delilah* will help contextualize some of Wright's narrative.

Alexis Wright, *Carpentaria* – Chapters 1-8
Warwick Thornton, dir. *Samson and Delilah* (2009)

Week 8 (October 17): Bringing Them Home

From the late-nineteenth century until the early 1970s, more than 100,000 Indigenous children were separated from their families and raised in missions supported by the Australian government. Our materials for today consider the trauma of the Stolen Generations. In addition to this week's essays, music, and film, we will each listen to different interviews conducted for the *Bringing Them Home Oral History Project*, then report back in class on what we've heard. Part of our goal is methodological: learning how to use oral testimony in our scholarship.

Bringing Them Home, Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families (1997) ❖
Bringing Them Home Oral History Project, National Library of Australia §

Alan Lester and Fae Dussart, *Colonization and the Origins of Humanitarian Government*: from "Humane Colonization in Practice" – read from page 145 (2014) ❖
Sara Ahmed, "The Politics of Bad Feeling" (2005) ❖

Listen: *Mission Songs Project* (2017) ❖
Listen: Archie Roach, "Took the Children Away" (1990) ❖

View: *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, dir. Phillip Noyce (2002)

Week 9 (October 24): Carpentaria II

Alexis Wright, *Carpentaria* – completed

A: Samuel Calvert and John Gilfillan, *Captain Cook taking possession of the Australian continent on behalf of the British Crown AD 1770* (1865)
A: Gordon Bennett, *Possession Island* (1991)



Uluru, Northern Territory; photo by Jason Rudy (2024)

Term paper proposal due October 27th

Week 10 (October 31): Imperial Sexology

Our discussion this week will center on sex, sexuality, and kinship structures in the context of Indigenous Australia. We will explore how sexology reflected a larger project of framing Indigenous cultures with Western knowledge systems.

Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*: Chapter 3, “Certain Ceremonies Concerned with Marriage” ❖
Sigmund Freud, from *Totem and Taboo* ❖

Elizabeth Povinelli, *The Cunning of Recognition*: “The Vulva Thieves” (2002) ❖
Kim TallBear, “Disrupting Settlement, Sex, and Nature” (2017) ❖

A: Albert Namatjira, *Catherine Creek, Northern Territory* (ca. 1950)

Week 11 (November 7): Midcentury Invasion

Francis Ellen [Thorpe] Talbot’s novel *Philiberta: An Australian Tale* opens in the colony of Victoria and situates settler colonial culture in relation to violence against Indigenous Australians. We will examine how the novel accounts for Indigenous life, and how it constructs a settler colonial identity in relation to Indigenous peoples.

Thorpe Talbot, *Philiberta* (1882) ❖

Richard Broome, from *Aboriginal Victorians*:
“Negotiating Two Worlds” (2005) ❖

A: Tracey Moffatt, “Up in the Sky #1” (1997)

Week 12 (November 14): Workshopping

Students will present on their term papers, and then workshop 5-page drafts in small groups.

5-Page Drafts due in class today

Daintree Rainforest,
Northern Queensland
Photo by Jason Rudy (2024)



Week 13 (November 21): National Mythologies

Australia became an independent nation in 1901, following a period of increased nationalist sentiment. The policy known as “White Australia,” which limited immigration primarily to people identified as white, also went into effect that year. We will read literary works from the decade leading up to that moment to think through how white Australia imagined a national mythology for itself distinct from its Indigenous peoples. Leah Purcell’s *The Drover’s Wife* is a brilliant contemporary rewriting of Henry Lawson’s canonical short story. Be aware the Purcell text and the film contain scenes of graphic sexual violence.

Barbara Baynton, “The Chosen Vessel” (1896) ❖

Henry Lawson, “The Drover’s Wife” (1892) ❖

Banjo Paterson, “The Man from Snowy River,” “Clancy of the Overflow” (1895) (H)

Leah Purcell, *The Drover’s Wife* (2016) ❖

Humphrey McQueen, from *The New Britannia* (1970) ❖

Saidiya Hartman, “Venus in Two Acts” (2008) ❖

Jason Rudy, from *Imagined Homelands: “The Poetry of Greater Britain: Race and Nationhood at Century’s End”* (2017) ❖

View: *The Legend of Molly Johnson*, dir. Leah Purcell (2021)

A: Michael Riley, “Maria” (1985)

Week 14 (December 12): Postcolonial Australia?

Our final discussion will consider *The Yield*, a prize-winning recent novel divided among three modes of storytelling: a present-day narrative about Indigenous dispossession; a journal narrated by an early-twentieth century missionary; and an Indigenous-language dictionary. Winch’s novel suggests innovative ways of making sense of history, and turning past traumas into present-day political action. Be aware that Winch’s novel contains scenes of graphic sexual violence.

Tara June Winch, *The Yield* (2019)

Listen: Yothu Yindi, “Treaty” (1991) §

View: Tara June Winch in conversation with Sisonke Msimang §

Course Requirements

Texts

Larissa Behrendt, *Finding Eliza: Power and Colonial Storytelling* (Queensland UP 9780702253904)
Kim Scott, *That Deadman Dance* (Bloomsbury: 9781608197798)
Tara June Winch, *The Yield* (HarperVia: 9780063003477)
Alexis Wright, *Carpentaria* (New Directions: 9780811238038)

Grading

Professionalism	25%	Artwork Presentation	5%
Final Project	30%	Conference Proposal	5%
Essay 1	10%	Show-and-Tell	5%
Draft Paper & Bibliography	5%	Reading Journals	15%

Final letter grades for the course will be assigned according to the following table, rounding applied:

A	469-500 points	B-	397-416 points	D+	334-348 points
A-	449-468 points	C+	384-396 points	D	319-333 points
B+	434-448 points	C	366-383 points	D-	299-318 points
B	417-433 points	C-	349-368 points	F	0-298 points

Writing Assignments

1. The first essay (between 900 and 1200 words) will be a close reading exercise due September 29th.
2. The final project will be due on December 17th. You may choose to write a term paper (4000-5000 words), or to complete an alternative project mutually agreed upon no later than October 11th. Collaborative projects (two students working together) are welcome: please come speak to me in advance (collaborative papers will have a higher wordcount and other expectations). A project proposal (in the form of a conference proposal) is due October 27th and a 5-page revised thesis statement, close reading, and bibliography is due November 14th (on this day you will present your ideas to each other and workshop your arguments). The details of these assignments will be elaborated separately.

Each of you will schedule a one-on-one meeting with me *after* you have submitted the October 27th proposal. In our meeting, we will discuss your project; we also might take time to look at your first essay, and to strategize for doing well on the final project. You will sign up for this meeting early in the semester.

Submitting Your Work

Written work is to be submitted via Canvas. On the assignment page, look for the place to upload your Word doc or docx file. Late papers will be downgraded by 25% for each 24-hour period following the deadline. Papers are due by 11:59pm on the due date; since it often takes a little while to upload, I recommend submitting no later than 11:50pm on the due date.

For students unable to turn in papers because of illness or dire emergency, a written note is required, and essays must be turned in as soon as possible. *Extensions must be requested in advance of the deadline.*

Presentation

You will each sign up for a five-minute presentation on a work of art. The aim of the presentation will be to introduce the work of art to the class: who created it, how we might understand the composition, and how we might begin to understand its meanings. You may use notes for your presentation, but you should not read from a script. Practice your presentation to make sure you stay within the five-minute window.

- Wikipedia cannot be the primary source for your knowledge and thoughts. I expect you to explore other sources (a minimum of three in all), even if the painting and/or artist is not well known. If you need help with this research, please come ask for it!
- **Important:** on the day of your presentation, you will submit on Canvas (on the assignment page for the Artwork Presentation) a bibliography of your sources. This bibliography must include at least one scholarly source found through a peer-reviewed journal. Please remember to upload your bibliography by the end of the day on which you give your presentation.
- See Canvas assignment page for a detailed rubric and construct your presentation accordingly.

Reading Journals

Before most classes you will post to our online Reading Journal. These short entries, no more than 500 words, will usually entail pointing to a specific moment from the reading that you found compelling, and offering an interpretation of that moment. Some entries will ask you to share contextual material relevant to the texts we're reading: for example, a newspaper article from the time. The Reading Journal will be a collaborative space, where you'll see your classmates' posts and have the option of responding to them. Consider the Reading Journal an opportunity to engage with classmates in advance of our in-class conversations. The links to all Reading Journal assignments will be available on the homepage of our course Canvas site.

Show-and-Tell

Each student will sign up for one show-and-tell date. You will find an archival object to share with the class: an article or other printed item from a nineteenth-century Australian newspaper; or an artefact of some relevance to our course materials. Please either make photocopies of the item or be prepared to show the item via our classroom projector. You will speak briefly (no more than five minutes) about the item's significance. Aim to select something odd, provocative, surprising, etc. rather than something that confirms what we think we already know. The choices are limitless. Please come speak with me if you're having trouble finding an object. The presentation should 1.) explain how you found the object; 2.) communicate to the class what you find especially compelling about your choice; and 3.) suggest the relevance of the object to our course materials.

Excused Absences

Students will on *rare* occasion miss class for good reasons. It is your responsibility to inform me of any intended excused absences, including religious observations, in advance of those absences. *In graduate coursework, the expectation is that all students will attend all classes.*

Special needs

If you have a registered disability that will require accommodation, please talk to me immediately. If you have a disability and have not yet registered it with Disability Support Services in the Shoemaker Building (4-7682 or 5-7683 TTY/TDD), you should do so immediately.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this class, students will be able to:

- understand the political and cultural work of written texts, oral culture, and other artistic forms in the context of nineteenth-century Australia and the present day;
- navigate a range of archival media;
- think critically about the intersection of Indigenous and Imperial methodologies;
- and communicate these ideas both orally and in writing.

Etiquette and Expectations

- Readings for each class must be brought with you.
- Laptop computers are to be used minimally in class, and not for notetaking. You may refer to your screens for course PDFs, but not for browsing the internet or transcribing class conversation. When we are not discussing the course PDFs, laptop computers must be closed; please come speak with me if you have a special need that requires use of technology in the classroom.
- Digital texts may *not* be used as substitutes for any of the novels on the syllabus (except *Philiberta*, which we will be reading via Google Books). If you are unable to purchase the novels for this class, please find a copy at McKeldin Library or, if necessary, recall a copy through Interlibrary Loan (this will require advance planning). Please come speak to me if you are having difficulty locating any of the course materials.
- Cellphones must be turned off for class; smart watches must be silenced and placed out of sight. Text messaging and any other use of electronic devices is prohibited.
- You are expected to be *active listeners* and engaged participants in this class. Show your engagement with the course material by *contributing regularly to the conversation, looking interested, taking notes, and asking questions*. Even if you are not completely interested in the material, it is never acceptable to show your disinterest.
- Please use our Canvas messaging system – in place of email – to contact me. I will always respond to messages sent via Canvas. Messages sent via email may get lost.

Professionalism

Expectations are high that you will conduct yourselves professionally in all aspects of this course, taking care of responsibilities independently and contributing meaningfully to the overall project of the class. This includes but is not limited to: turning in work on time; arriving to class punctually; participating in class discussion in a way that demonstrates engagement with the materials and respect for everyone in the classroom; bringing the required books to class discussion; taking notes; practicing active listening while others are speaking (paying attention and generally looking interested); limiting disruptions to class by using the restroom in advance, or at a minimum when necessary; keeping electronic communications with Professor Rudy professional in their composition and tone, not informal like a text to a friend; and keeping mobile phones silenced and all digital interfaces (phones, computers, smart watches) out of sight

for the duration of class, except when permitted. For more details, please see the rubric on the Canvas assignment page under Professionalism.

If you cannot make a class discussion, or if you're having trouble of any sort with an assignment deadline, please notify Professor Rudy *in advance* so that alternate plans may be made. Please also contact Professor Rudy if any of the above items are a cause for concern: for example, if you have a registered disability that requires the use of technology in the classroom.

Health

You are encouraged to stay home from class if you are feeling under the weather. In such cases, I will happily work with you to make up anything you've missed. If you notify me in advance, I can record our class discussion and share it with you, or possibly livestream the course. We have lots of options to work with, and I'm willing to be flexible if it means keeping our classroom safer for everyone.

Diversity and Inclusion

UMD English considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be critical to its educational mission and expects every member of the community to contribute to an inclusive and respectful culture in the classroom, work environment, and at campus events. It is my intent that students from diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and learning needs will be well served by this course and that the diversity students bring to class will be viewed as a resource and strength. Dimensions of diversity include intersections of sex, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, intellectual and physical ability, primary language, faith and non-faith perspectives, income, political affiliation, marital or family status, education, and any other legally protected class. I endeavor to present materials and activities that foster a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Please let me know of ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or other students or student groups.

If you experience issues related to diversity and inclusion in your English courses or as part of the English department community—or if you have suggestions for improving diversity, inclusion, equity, and access in the department—please contact our Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Committee at: englishidea@umd.edu.

Plagiarism

I will adhere strictly to University policy with respect to plagiarism. Students who plagiarize will be referred directly to the University's Honor Council. Follow MLA guidelines for citation when quoting passages and when paraphrasing ideas. Do not hesitate to speak with me if you have any questions regarding this matter. Please also keep in mind:

- Any source consulted must be included in a “works consulted” list at the end of your written work. This includes Wikipedia or any other online site, even if you have not quoted it directly.
- Paraphrased ideas must be cited, even if you have not quoted directly from the source.
- Most of what can be found easily online will not qualify as a reputable source for an academic essay. If you have questions about the validity of a source, please ask me directly.
- **Use of artificial intelligence to assist you with your coursework, such as ChatGPT, will be considered a violation of the academic integrity.**

The University Code of Academic Integrity may be found here:

<https://policies.umd.edu/academic-affairs/university-of-maryland-code-of-academic-integrity>

Course Related Policies

I will adhere to University of Maryland policies with regard to excused absences, registered disabilities, incidents of plagiarism and academic dishonesty, and student conduct. Please refer to this website for more detailed information (these are policies through Undergraduate Studies, but they apply to our graduate classroom as well): <https://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>

Really, please do click over and review the university's guidelines. Our course policies will rigorously follow those outlined on the linked page.

Caveat Participes

This course's readings and discussion will deal regularly with graphic material regarding race, colonialism, gender, sexuality, and various forms of violence. If you have particular concerns with any of these topics, please let Professor Rudy know in advance.



Central Australian desert east of Alice Springs, view from an airplane (2019); photo by Jason Rudy