

## Pedagogy of the Suppressed: Teaching Hemispheric Recovery

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### **Abstract**

In this essay Joe and Todd will bring together three separate strands: (1) the hemispheric turn in American studies, (2) the practice of literary recovery: that is, finding and reframing long out-of-print texts, and (3) teacher training, specifically in emphasizing the pedagogical opportunities inherent in (1) and (2). Working through the theoretical underpinnings that place recovery and archival work as central to the hemispheric turn in literary studies, Joe and Todd's trace a narrative progression in which the teacher training work done in one of Todd's graduate course, titled "Early American Literatures: The Hemispheric Turn," transfers into graduate student pedagogy for an undergraduate introduction to literature course. Both authors work to create pedagogical environments in which literary recovery is a useful tool not only for research within the field of hemispheric studies, but also for developing research, analysis, and critical thinking skills in graduate and undergraduate students. The classroom projects that Joe and Todd describe are meant to help students to "de-hegemonize the canon" (Laist 12) by questioning its creation and by participating in conditional reconstructions of it.

If the literary canon is indeed nothing more or less than what English instructors choose to teach, it follows that, in training the next generation of teachers, we should discuss openly and self-consciously the politics of canon-making.<sup>1</sup> "[I]t is the intellectually honest thing to do," Randy Laist argues in "The Self-Deconstructing Canon: Teaching the Survey Course without Perpetuating Hegemony," "to bring canonicity into the thematic foreground of the class itself. The explicit interrogation of how canonicity has taken shape keeps the syllabus from taking on an aura of self-evidence" (52). Working from Gerald Graff's directive to "teach the conflicts themselves, making them part of our object of study" (12), Laist goes on to offer specific strategies to

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<sup>1</sup> Joe and Todd would like to thank the members of Todd's doctoral seminar, *Early American Literatures: The Hemispheric Turn*, in Fall 2011 and Summer 2012, for shaping and challenging our thinking on this topic. Special thanks to Jessica Showalter, who also pointed us to several useful critical works and resources and offered helpful comments on a draft of this essay.

"de-hegemonize" his teaching. In what follows, Joe and Todd offer another such strategy. But, in immersing students in the canon debates through their own recoveries of neglected texts from the early Americas, we take Graff's approach a step further, empowering students to define and teach canonical conflicts to each other and to us as peers in a community of learners.

In this essay Joe and Todd will bring together three separate strands: (1) the hemispheric turn in American studies, (2) the practice of literary recovery: finding and reframing long-out-of-print texts, and (3) teacher training, specifically in emphasizing the pedagogical opportunities inherent in (1) and (2). We see a homology between key tenets of hemispheric studies, recovery, and critical pedagogy. That is, both hemispheric approaches and recovery projects take as their work the rethinking and recasting of canons based on previously ignored or under-theorized content or categories such as geography, identity, contact, etc.; similarly, through critical pedagogy we question master narratives as we look to de-center authority in our own classrooms. In fact, Joe and Todd consider their collaboration on this project—an equal scholarly partnership between a professor and a graduate student—as a result of and further contribution to this de-hierarchalizing spirit.

### **Teaching the Hemispheric Turn**

Our thinking about the connectivity of these terms sprang from a doctoral seminar that Todd taught and Joe took in Fall 2011 at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. The course title—"Early American Literatures: The Hemispheric Turn"—was intended, first, in the plural "literatures," to indicate a multiplicity of overlapping cultural productions as opposed to the bill of goods of classic "American Literature" that we are normally sold (or sell) in undergraduate survey courses as a kind of shared heritage. As Caroline F. Levander articulates the problem of situating colonial literature as pre-national and early U.S. literature as nationalist, "when we project current ideas of the U.S. nation backward in time, we unwittingly present the creation of nation as a clear, unbroken, transhistorical phenomenon rather than as a concept that was

contingent, contested, and uncertain well into the late nineteenth century" ("Bad Neighbor" 32-33). Second, the phrase "Hemispheric Turn" meant to highlight the field's shift in the last decade towards reading colonial and early American work not merely as prefiguring representations of nation-state-formations that would come to be, but rather to deal more explicitly with the transnational and transcultural contexts and structures that inform these works. Todd's initial thinking behind this course was guided by a series of questions that Caroline F. Levander and Robert S. Levine pose in the introduction to their 2008 essay collection *Hemispheric American Studies*:

What happens to U.S. and American literary and cultural studies if we recognize the asymmetry and interdependency of nation-state development throughout the hemisphere? What happens if we let this recognition of the nation as historically evolving and contingent—rather than already formed—revise our conceptions of literary and cultural genealogies? Finally, what happens if the "fixed" borders of a nation are recognized not only as historically produced political constructs that can be ignored, imaginatively reconfigured, and variously contested but also as component parts of a deeper, more multilayered series of national and indigenous histories? (6-7)

In short, the hemispheric turn moves away from a teleological narrative of U.S. nation-making and nation-building and towards a focus on boundaries and borders, transnational interstices that show "America" to be a rhetorical creation, a hemispheric constellation of overlapping and competing cultural relations. This view of nation as a shifting historical construction rather than an incarnation of some fictional "essence" (Levander and Levine 5) shifts critical focus from national difference or U.S. exceptionalism to "*hubs and borders*" that "link distant parts of the Americas to one another and other parts of the world" (Fox 643). Such an emphasis on what Mary Louise Pratt labels "contact zones" brings together in revealing ways "subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures" (6). The "decentering"

of the U.S. nation-state thus allows both scholars and students to identify and consider "the intricate and complex politics, histories, and discourses of spatial encounter that occur throughout the hemisphere but tend to be obscured in U.S. nation-based inquiries" (Levander and Levine 3). The methodologies in hemispheric studies are comparativist and interdisciplinary, and they promote a critical attitude about which literatures have been celebrated and which erased, and, importantly, why.

The stakes of this approach reach beyond the classroom. Melissa Bailar, for instance, contends that a shift in pedagogical and research methodologies has become necessary "as violence in border towns has increased, epidemics have caused governments to periodically shut down travel among nations, immigration regulations have tightened, and acts of terrorism have reinforced fears of hostility about otherness" (219). But hemispheric studies does not stem from nor does it offer a particular political program, and there is no one doctrinaire way to "do" the hemispheric turn. According, again, to Levander and Levine, "hemispheric studies can be regarded as a heuristic rather than a content- or theory- driven method; it allows for discovery of new configurations rather than confirmation of what we think we already know" (9). This is, of course, empowering instead of delimiting for students as well as scholars. Undertaking critical recovery projects is, Joe and Todd think, one way for students to engage in such acts of discovery. The insights and encounters that hemispheric recovery projects may generate could also lead students and teachers to further question U.S. exceptionalism—which, as Ralph Bauer notes, "has burdened American studies since its beginnings" (242)—specifically as it has been represented and fostered through the literary canon. Our larger hope is that hemispheric approaches can move us closer to what some scholars see as the field's larger "payoff": "a state of affairs where multiple national political cultures and plural national collectivities might suggestively interact as communities of shared fate" (Moya and Saldívar 17). As we will see below, one way to imagine and foster such communities in the present is to reconstruct the past by recovering cultural productions that assumed, invoked, or complicated ideas of "shared fate."

### **Recovery, Recursion, and the Hemispheric Project**

Among the approaches advocated by hemispheric scholars is a turn towards archival research, which, according to Rodrigo Lazo, is essential to deconstructing nation-based ideologies that are potentially dangerous to some social groups. Lazo maintains that, although archives were often built in the wake of revolutions in an effort to assert the "authority and credibility" (199) of new nations freshly separated from monarchical or colonial rule, advances in accessibility, including online archives, now offer "new routes [that] allow for a way to move in and out of the nation rather than privileging national study as the defining point of the field" (200). Joe and Todd, too, see vital connections between recovery movements and hemispheric studies, as both fields question the received canon and are invested in issues of diversity and alternate modes of political agency. Cary Nelson, in *Repression and Recovery*, writes that, in constructing a digestible narrative-historical arc for anthologies and literature courses, "literary history is generally addicted to narrative presentations that ignore diversity when it cannot be fitted into a coherent historical sequence" (7). Recovery movements offer counter-narratives through texts that were present to contemporaneous readers but have since been erased from the historical record. As Nelson reminds us, "literary history is often implicitly construed as a centuries-long competition to enter the official canon and be taught in literature classes, a concern that was not central to writers or to their audiences" (7). Recovery can provide a corrective to canon-making not just by expanding canons but also by surfacing the historical criteria by which we construct them. Recovery re-historicizes literary production instead of appealing to a sense of "timelessness" that likely did not interest most authors (and turns out to be tied up in the cultural assumptions of particular historical moments in which canons were created).

Literary recovery is, of course, most often associated with Feminism and African American Studies but is certainly applicable to other fields in which cultural productions and their authors have been elided. (Nelson, for instance, recovered leftist and working-class poetry from the early 1900s.) Joe and Todd want to argue that, to be true to itself

as an emergent field, hemispheric studies *must* engage in recovery. That is, using a hemispheric lens to re-read well-known texts in order to highlight issues of cultural hybridity, contact, and shifting power relations is important, but it is not enough. If the canon-making critics undervalued these qualities in the texts we do know, it stands to reason that they ignored, forgot, or willfully erased a myriad of texts that dealt more directly with these issues.

Hemispheric recovery projects can offer students and professors alike a new, ready-made set of canon-making evaluative criteria for identifying, recovering, and studying representative texts. Hemispheric recovery seeks to reverse a historical privileging of texts that fit a particular teleological narrative of nation-formation and development. Instead, in performing hemispheric recovery we seek texts that feature borders and contact zones, competing loci of power, transculturation, historical imaginings of alternative futures for the Americas, and racial and cultural hybridity. These are not the elements that F.O. Matthiessen, most anthology editors, or even the leading scholars of the women's recovery moment were looking for. And, of course, in valuing different criteria, we identify different texts. The more texts that we recover, write about, and teach that demonstrate the interconnectedness of the Americas, the more nails we pound into the coffin of the ever-tantalizing myth of U.S. exceptionalism.

In his "Early American Literatures: The Hemispheric Turn" course, Todd asked colleagues to find and present on an "unrecovered" text (specifically, one not re-published in a new edition in the past 100 years) referenced in Eric J. Sundquist's *Empire and Slavery in American Literature, 1820-1865*.<sup>2</sup> This was guided recovery, in the sense that students had a source text from which to work (Sundquist's book, which is a reprint of his essays in the *Cambridge History of American Literature*, was required reading as literary-historical context throughout the semester). The relative ease of locating and securing out-of-print works through such online resources as Google Books and WorldCat allowed colleagues to complete these projects independently and

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<sup>2</sup> We use the term "colleagues" because, in his doctoral seminars, Todd tries to avoid referring to classmates as "students" in order to encourage them to see themselves as peers working collaboratively towards a common goal.

within a relatively short time period. Todd trusted colleagues to determine which class session's content their presentations would best complement in fostering a useful inter-textual dialogue.<sup>3</sup> (See appendix A for a full description of the assignment.) The presentations—which were, without exception, fascinating—forced us to ask why these texts have been forgotten or ignored and led us to conversations about how canon construction is dictated by each generation of scholars' cultural and ideological commitments.<sup>4</sup> Unmasking the social constructed-ness and historical contingency of canons through considerations of specific examples of long-forgotten texts in conversation with our required readings (e.g. Lydia Maria Child's *Hobomok* and Black Hawk's autobiography) as well as more canonical works not on our reading list (e.g. James Fenimore Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans*) freed us in important ways to engage in our own revisionist canon-making. To this end, we also engaged in useful debates about whether, why, and how particular texts should be recovered, contextualized, and taught.

These recovery projects played important roles in our work throughout the rest of the course. One colleague, in fact, has built on her recovery project to articulate a fascinating dissertation topic on hemispheric minstrelsies. Joe's project, which stemmed from his continued interest in evolutionary theory in the nineteenth century, was sparked by a brief reference by Sundquist to popular sensational writer Osgood Bradbury. Sundquist's take on Bradbury's works is largely dismissive; he writes, "Like the theme of captivity, the theme of mixed blood became a mechanical device, a means of generating the horror of transgressed or collapsed boundaries in the body comparable to boundaries violated and crossed by actual Indian warfare and Removal" (121). Accordingly, for Sundquist, Bradbury's novella *Lucelle; or, The Young Iroquois* does little more than support "Bradbury's manifesto in favor of intermarriage as a way to 'purify' the Native American 'stock'" (121). But, upon locating and reading the novel, Joe

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<sup>3</sup> This was a luxury because it was a very small class; with 20 or more students, such interest-based scheduling could quickly become problematic.

<sup>4</sup> See Jane Tompkins's *Sensational Designs*, pp.186-20, for a seminal treatment of the historical contingency and ideological bias of literary canons.

found something more complex in the fiction of this sensationalist "hack." Sundquist's description of intermarriage as a "mechanical device" used as "a means of generating the horror of transgressed or collapsed boundaries" (121) contrasts sharply with the "manifesto" that he describes as central Bradbury's text, a point that is most clearly articulated in last ending chapter of *Lucelle*, when his narrator argues "that the crossing of the breeds improves the stock" (74). The apparent political commentary in the text presented an opportunity to investigate potential social impacts Bradbury may have intended.

Specifically, our colleagues found it useful to consider *Lucelle* through Annette Kolodny's hemispheric reconsideration of frontier theory, which urges scholars to "let go our grand obsessions with narrowly geographic or strictly chronological frameworks and instead recognize 'frontier' as a locus of first cultural contact. . . all of it inscribed by the collisions and interpenetrations of language" (3). Kolodny argues that it is necessary to reinterpret history to include a definition of frontier as a cultural instead of an imperial space, wherein the analysis of both primary texts (those derived directly from the initial encounter) and secondary texts (those which have reinterpreted the frontier in retrospective fashion) help reformulate our understanding of history and power (5). *Lucelle*, as a historical romance, is accordingly a secondary text. Written in 1845, the novella is set at Fort Ticonderoga in Quebec and in a small hut on the shore of Lake Champlain during the French-Indian War in 1759. Using Kolodny's theory, Joe presented the text to his colleagues as a curious piece of writing that reached a wide audience and countered prevailing ideas about Indians and miscegenation as propagated by more prominent literary figures such as Cooper and Robert Montgomery Byrd.

Joe developed his recovery project into a seminar paper that focused on Bradbury's narrative use of intermarriage to "[improve] the stock." That is, Bradbury's text does not simply agitate the reader by crossing social and racial lines. In allowing a young white woman with the "graceful fullness and beauty of motion which might have become the most fashionable salons of Paris better than the humble and sequestered

dwelling she occupied" (9) to marry and have children with an Iroquois man, it justifies a political argument that engages numerous evolutionary discussions of his period. Importantly, this novel appeared more than a decade after the initial steps in Indian Removal policy and long after the development and cultural dissemination of prevailing theories positing that Indians were a vanishing race. The literary trope of the vanishing Indian, of course, has been recognized widely in canonized Anglo-American fiction about Indians, including Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans* and Child's *Hobomok*. In contrast to the thwarted or unsuccessful unions staged in these novels, in the case of *Lucelle* intermarriage becomes a potential solution to the Indian problem. When Bradbury marries Turok to Lucelle, Turok effectively becomes white, as he assumes the cultural function of a white man, carrying on the name of a noble European gentleman, Lucelle's father Monsieur de le Motte. Moreover, the children produced in the marriage, regardless of their advanced abilities, do not have to assimilate into Western culture, but rather blend in through their bloodlines. The Indian does, indeed, vanish, but not because of murder or extinction, but because of biological absorption, a method that the text clearly advocates not only because of its regenerative potential, but also because it demands less violence than removal and war.

Joe and several other students also incorporated their recovered texts into another end-of-semester project: their own version of a course syllabus (for any level of college class) with a hemispheric approach to American literatures. This assignment allowed colleagues to put into concrete practice their own canon-making, having been liberated by our theoretical readings and recovery projects from accepting unquestioningly—and thus repeating in their own teaching—the same old selections of texts. Additionally, asking current and future teachers to construct syllabi with hemispheric topics and lenses increases the likelihood that these approaches and concerns will filter into more and more undergraduate classrooms, thus recursively implementing challenges to canons, and, hopefully, encouraging the next generation of students to question and alter their own received canons (even, the thinking goes, the newly devised hemispheric canons that constructed through recovery).

### **Hemiperic Recovery in the Undergraduate Classroom**

Teacher-scholars have only begun to consider the potential benefits and pitfalls of including archival and recovery research in the undergraduate literature classroom. But for some educators seeking to subvert or augment traditional canons advocated through anthologies, recovery has become a central concept. For example, in her article "Teaching Mary Darby Robinson's Reading List: Romanticism, Recovery Work, and Reconsidering Anthologies," Dawn M. Vernooy-Epp writes, "Teaching from an expanded or otherwise revised canon allies pedagogical practice with current theoretical and critical trends, such that course curricula reflect advancements in scholarship" (14). Vernooy-Epp uses recovery materials in class to help students understand the processes of textual selection and anthologizing. An in-class recovery exercise, she writes, "inspires students. . . to begin addressing the dilemma of the contemporary debates surrounding the definition of a canonical text, the purpose of canonical texts in literary studies, the process by which those texts are deemed canonical, and the vehicle by which those texts are provided to students" (28). The ability to question canons and the qualities that define canonicity, she argues, is a transferable skill that can enable students to engage multiple canons more critically; as such, recovery activities provide "insight will fundamentally help students become more self-aware, critical thinkers no matter what body of literature they encounter" (15).

Vernooy-Epp is certainly not alone in challenging the traditional, anthology-driven undergraduate literature survey. Bridget Marshall uses recovery texts not only to expand the canon, but also to make undergraduate literature courses more intriguing. Marshall admits that, because her own undergraduate survey courses had become uninteresting, even boring experiences, "I had to find texts and methods that would interest me (not to mention my students) in a way that the texts that I had read in my own undergraduate Early American survey had not" (17). Using online archives, Marshall sends her students in search of documents pertaining to the Salem witchcraft trials. She comments not on what they find, but on the process of finding and contextualizing materials. "When they discover a document," she writes, "they must also

figure out its value in relation to other texts—they must do the same kind of work compilers of anthologies and creators of American literature syllabi do" (24). As Marshall's experiences show, making archival work part of the classroom experience foregrounds the process of textual selection in addition to connecting to (even building on and augmenting) recent critical developments in literary studies.

If, as we argue above, recovery is essential to the field of hemispheric studies, it certainly follows that educators who teach hemispheric topics and approaches can and should implement similar archival activities in their courses. Edward Watts, for example, uses "Lost and Found" assignments in his graduate courses, in which the students look for unrecovered texts and must answer, "should this be recovered?" The activity, he argues, leads students to realize that many of the recovered texts "often self-consciously comment on the role of literature in the construction and articulation of the cultural contradictions in which they find themselves enmeshed" (452). Watts's recovery assignment also encourages students to make contextualizing connections between the canonized and the forgotten, thus unveiling the intertextuality of literary production. Similarly, the educational modules developed by students involved in the *Our Americas Archive Partnership* (OAAP) can also help students negotiate processes of inclusion and exclusion within critical canons, a central practice in hemispheric studies.<sup>5</sup> These teaching materials connect to specific material within the OAAP archive and offer suggestions for ways to make connections between works of literature and historical sources ("Educational Materials"). The materials presented demonstrate various uses for archival materials under the principles of the hemispheric turn. One module, titled "Introducing Hemispheric Studies," designed by AnaMaria Seglie, posits that the archival materials of the OAAP can be used to encourage students' critical thinking. Seglie writes, "considering how texts, people, ideas, and concepts circulate throughout the hemisphere provides a way to read the Americas as intertwined systems of circulation." Accordingly, the materials made available through the archive can foster

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<sup>5</sup> The Our Americas Archive Partnership can be found at <http://oaap.rice.edu>. The website links to the Americas Archive at Rice University, the Early Americas Digital Archive and University of Maryland, and Fondo Antiguo Biblioteca Ernesto de la Torre Villar at Instituto Mora.

both the availability and the teachability of hemispheric texts as well a new approach to literary and American studies in the classroom at both undergraduate and graduate levels, highlighting recovery and archival work as a central tenet of hemispherism. Using such resources can also foster basic research skills and interdisciplinary critical thinking in the students who work with them.

Though, as we mentioned above, several colleagues in Todd's doctoral seminar chose to include in their syllabi their own recovered texts, Joe took this line of thinking to its next logical step, and also included a recovery project related to the one that we had undertaken but adapted for undergraduate learners. The course, titled "What on Earth is Literature?: An Introduction to Literature Around the Hemisphere," serves as an initial introduction to literature for undergraduate English majors. To integrate hemispherism and recovery work, Joe and his students first recreate a standard teleological narrative of literary history and then challenge this narrative by working towards a recovery project by establishing alternative narratives of literary history. (See appendix B for assignment descriptions.) Joe constructed his syllabus to trace narratives of nation-formation and nation-building prevalent in some anthologies and canon-driven literary study. The students initially complete a map activity, charting the gender, religion, and location of a few early American authors on a map of the United States. Students use the first page of the table of contents from an older anthology, the third edition of W.W. Norton's *The American Tradition in Literature*, published in 1967, a recognized teaching tool from another generation of literary studies, to identify who was allowed entry into the educational and literary realms. Of course, these authors are mostly white, male, and from Massachusetts. The anthology's introduction, in fact, claims that Colonial American literatures provide today's readers with "an understanding of those bedrock American experiences which developed the national character and our peculiarly American institutions" (3). Effectively, this activity initiates student thought on the teleological narrative that foregrounds these colonial writers as having proto-nationalistic intentions, the same narrative that hemispherism hopes to disrupt. Joe then discusses *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*, Volume A, as a comparative

tool that reveals a progression in literary studies, specifically as a way of comparing what qualities constitute inclusion into the former canon and into the newer hemispheric canon. The remaining course readings build on the divide established between the traditional canon and reconstructed canons and ways in which the selection of even those new texts creates ideological groupings.

Students encounter both traditional texts, such as selections from J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, among others, and texts added in response to the hemispheric turn, including selections from Native American oral histories, Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's narrative, and Olaudah Equiano's narrative. In discussing texts previously excluded from traditional canons of American literature, students consider the process through each of the new texts came to be included in the *Heath Anthology*. The texts are presented to students as pieces of literature that were in some way recovered, and the class considers what values these texts represent in order to fit within a hemispheric canon.

Because hemispherism involves a diversity of research methodologies, undergraduates will need assistance in their reading and thinking on canon formation. For the sake of revealing the depth of hemispheric studies, the reading schedule provides opportunities to encounter a variety of approaches to hemispheric literature, drawn from snippets of theoretical pieces included in the "Cultural Encounters—A Critical Survey" section of the *Heath Anthology*. Yet, because following all of these critical methods would likely overtax undergraduate students in the beginning of their academic careers, Joe uses these readings merely to reveal the depth of the field, and focuses on tracing how literature works to create fictive notions of national identity. This theoretical approach becomes the driving critical methodology for the remainder of the course, as the last two projects center on constructions of nation in literature and serves as a critical touchstone for students to return to in completing the assigned readings and recovery project.

With nation as a critical focus, students work on a recovery project that highlights the importance of archival materials in interrogating how concepts of nation are

constructed through textual groupings. The recovery project involves students reading two pre-selected texts that the instructor has read so as to direct students towards nuances of composition and important moments in the text, as well as a third text that the instructor is just discovering as well, and works alongside students collaboratively to interpret. (Pre-selecting texts shields students from some of the more laborious aspects of the archival work of finding texts.) The project then requires a research project simply called "Archive Day," a reflective essay on this archival experience, and a critical essay designed to tie recovered texts into canonical works. For this project, Joe selected two recovered texts that are rich in sensationalism and geared towards the subject of nation: George Lippard's *Legends of Mexico* and Osgood Bradbury's *Lucelle; or, the Young Iroquois* (only Lippard's has been reprinted). For the third text, Joe selected Ned Buntline's *Matanzas*, another sensationalist novel.

One of Joe's goals in creating this reading order is to engage these texts in order of decreasing instructor familiarity. That is, though Joe has read Lippard's and Bradbury's texts, he has not read Buntline's *Matanzas* or encountered any critical readings about it. The objective of this plan is to provide—through work on the first two texts—a directed mode of interrogation for students to follow when recovering texts, then to put the students to work in considering recovering a text. Joe's familiarity with the first two recovered texts enables him to point to specific themes connected to national identity and to make a justified argument for the recovery of these texts as useful in the hemispheric canon. As a supplemental reading to Lippard's novel, students read the introduction to Jesse Alemán and Shelley Streeby's collection of recovered U.S.-Mexico War fiction, *Empire and the Literature of Sensation: An Anthology of Nineteenth-Century Popular Fiction*, which provides a rationale describing the necessity of recovery. Such texts, they argue, "document the intimate, ambivalent relationships between popular literature and the culture of imperialism from the 1830's through the early 1860's" (xiii). Based on this rationale from Alemán and Streeby's study of once-popular fiction, students can identify and question different versions of national identities

and agendas within the National period, with a potential space for reflection on political and national interactions between the United States and Mexico.

When working with the third text, *Matanzas*, responsibility for those points of discussion shifts onto students. More precisely, Joe explicitly informs students that this text, as far as he is aware, has not been recovered, and that the goal in reading it is to question whether it is worth recovering, using the methods discussed with the other texts and throughout the course. Though students are inevitably unaware of the existence of the text, Joe's intention in treating the text as unrecovered, even to himself, is to make the project as real as possible in order to lend students authority as literary scholars. Students are free to question why Joe selected this particular text, and the problems inherent to that selection. For the sake of this course, what students should notice is that the instructor has selected texts written by white authors who reside in the Northeastern United States, writing within similar genres; this is a point which students must consider in deciding the benefits and pitfalls of recovering a text. This model allows for pre-teaching about the act of recovery, considering questions about recovery processes and rationale through work on the first two texts, and, finally, with the final text, applying what students have learned independently and as colleagues. The recovery project stresses both interaction with recovered materials and understanding the processes involved in archiving and textual selection for pedagogical canons, anthologies, and other objects of study. In considering these texts and their presence in (and absence from) American literary history, students gain some experience in one of the important tasks involved in recovering literature.

One class period in the reading schedule is fully dedicated to student access of online archival resources. Rather than having an assigned goal of finding a specific object, the students focus on the act of working through the layers of materials available in archives. One of the goals of the archival experience is to demystify the process of recovery that leads to anthologizing texts and creating canons; therefore it is essential to allow students freedom in the archival experience. The same process that enabled older anthologies to idealize a certain set of texts as representing a specific narrative of

American-ness can also occur with recovered texts (consider, for example, the similarities in style, themes, and genre of the three texts Joe selected for his undergraduate recovery project). Critiquing why texts become included within canons and why certain types of texts are targeted for recovery is thus a necessary element of recovery pedagogy. The objective, then, is to increase the transparency of the processes involved in recovery and anthologizing through practice. That is, whereas students engage in highly regulated directed recovery with the pre-readings, greater autonomy during the research process challenges them to more fully consider methods of searching for texts and, more importantly, how to decide what kinds of texts they want to find.

Prior to this next step in the recovery project, students read the article "Rummaging / In and Out of the Holds" by Susan Scott Parrish. Describing her experience in sorting through endless archived materials, Parrish's article highlights the difficulties and possibilities of such research, from physical symptoms of nausea resulting from reading for hours on end to the thrill of actually making connections between texts. The article serves as a primer for students, as "Archive Day" may be a merciless activity in itself; it is designed as immersion for the sake of experience, and students may not find the experience an easy one. During their own rummaging, students have a number of resources available to them, including the Our Americas Archive Partnership and Google Books. There is no requirement that students spend their research time at these resources, as they are free to search the internet to uncover whatever they can. The activity is not intended to serve as a demonstrative guide on the process of finding texts, but rather an experience of immersion within a complex network of information. Assessment for this activity stems from the composition of a reflective narrative that documents several aspects of the students' experiences in the archive. This writing assignment requires that students focus on the sensations and benefits of the experience rather than what they found. (See Appendix B for a list of prompt questions meant to guide students' responses.)

A second day, following the archiving experience, is allotted for reflection. Students are free to discuss what they found, with an additional opportunity to debate some of the complications and practicalities of the process of recovery research, and a brief discussion on the intricacies of using Google Books and the internet in general as literary research tools. During his own recovery research, Joe came to the realization that contextualizing recovered material can be a difficult task, though persistence and the wealth of information available on Google Books proved useful. As some of the students will have had experience with Google Books, discussion may focus on the potential dangers and paradoxes involved in using that resource for recovery. The editions on Google Books are by definition un-historicized, living as they do alongside a multitude of other out-of-copyright books from different eras. Because these are old editions, they do not have explanatory footnotes or contextualizing introductions. Ironically, it is thus tempting when reading these editions to perform merely formal, a-historicized readings of these texts, which in most cases will relegate them right back to the cyber-dustbin. On the other hand, Google Books can also be a useful repository for finding lost historical context: if treatments of unrecovered authors are difficult to locate in scholarly journals and library stacks, students may uncover useful material in the searchable, digitized archive.

Rounding out Joe's recovery project is the requirement that students include an aspect of recovery in an essay on literature and nationalism. Comparing a canonical and a recovered piece, students use this essay to discuss the how a sense of nationness is generated in each text and, further, to debate the rationale for including or not including each of those texts within a national narrative. This assignment necessitates that students perform an inquiry into the politics of textual inclusion and those ideologies present in the various textual encounters they have had. Importantly, the final project does not require further recovery work, though it is permitted. (See Appendix B for details on this assignment.)

In bringing guided hemispheric recovery to the undergraduate classroom, teachers might also consider building on these projects through another learning activity

that would help students to further "de-hegemonize the canon" (Laist 12) by participating in conditional reconstructions of it. Specifically, students could choose representative excerpts of the texts they have recovered, combine them with other students' excerpts and other texts they had read, and construct a collaborative hemispheric mini-anthology. They would arrive at their final selections and organization through conversations with each other and the instructor about what fit together and why. The instructor could ask each student to research and write a brief headnote for his or her text, and the class would work together on an explanatory introduction to the anthology. The class would review extant anthologies as models to determine their criteria for inclusion, their organizational methods, and their ways of introducing texts. Such projects, in the undergraduate classroom, actively facilitate the very rethinking, revisiting, and questioning of canon that is the central work of hemispheric studies. It can foster in undergraduates a vital critical approach that gives them the same agency as critical thinkers that Todd sought to engender in his graduate students as scholars in training.

In general, introducing undergraduates to recovery work through actual recovery and archiving projects strengthens their ability to engage with hemispheric studies on a pragmatic level. The creation of digital archives, for example, has led to a recursive process that encourages teachers and students alike to engage with recovered texts while seeking out new objects of study. Working with the OAAP, Bailar noted that the inclusion of students in the archiving process helped foster a set of skills essential to the changing dimensions of American and literary studies:

As humanities research and teaching become increasingly digital, the ability to think critically through the many questions on the treatment of texts available online and on the construction of the new research tools they require provides students with experience that translates into enhanced teaching, archival research, and technological skills. Such projects also allow them to understand other digital humanities projects, including the level of labor that they require,

their pedagogical benefits, how they facilitate research, and their limitations.  
("The Humanities Student" 82-83)

Essentially, the incorporating students into the archiving project served as a professional skills-development activity, requiring that they think about the complex methods and politics involved in textual selection and use. This project's reliance on undergraduate participation is evidence that opportunities for building archives and teaching tools as useful research opportunities are growing more common.

### **Conclusion: Recovery, Teaching, and Scholarship**

In the above discussion Joe and Todd have worked to tie together hemispheric studies, recovery work, and classroom projects. But, in thus limiting our scope to teaching and teacher training, we have bracketed an important element of hemispheric recovery: scholarship. Hemispheric studies scholars would be wise to heed lessons learned from the women's recovery movement of the 1980s and 1990s. Judith Fetterly, in "Nineteenth-Century Women Writers and the Politics of Recovery," bemoans that more critical work did not proceed from the recovery efforts that she and others had performed. She writes, "recovery must precede the writing of literary history, biography, and criticism" (600); but that is only the first step. Fetterly continues,

It is almost if our very success in the recovery of primary texts has created the illusion of nonmarginality and has thus become an obstacle to the writing of literary history about these texts. Yet if this generation of critics does not write the literary history of these writers, it will be all too easy for the texts we have recovered to disappear again from memory. I would argue, then, that we need to find ways to solve the problems of doing literary history because we cannot do without it; it represents an essential stage in the process of integrating women writers into the field of nineteenth-century American literature. (604-5)

Fetterly's worries about an arrested process in the recovery of women writers certainly apply to hemispheric recovery. Recovering and teaching neglected hemispheric texts (and guiding students to recover and teach them on down the line) are important both to our revisions of literary history and to the salience of hemispheric studies. But, as Fetterly's account of her experience reminds us, we must not underestimate the importance of scholarship in solidifying a recovered text's (or groups of texts') place in contemporary discourse. Fetterly's lament also implies the inextricability of all the things that we as scholars do: teaching, digging in archives, weighing and talking through theoretical and pedagogical approaches, and writing literary history and criticism. All inform each other, all are ideological, and all shape the lives of texts, of our students, of our disciplines, of our scholarly communities.

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## APPENDIX A: RECOVERY PROJECT ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION FOR "EARLY AMERICAN LITERATURES: THE HEMISPHERIC TURN"

**ENGL 983**

**Summer 2012**

**Hemispheric Recovery Project**

### **Overview**

You will select an "unrecovered" text mentioned in Eric J. Sundquist's *Empire and Slavery in American Literature, 1820-1865*. You will find, read, and report to the class on your text's significance or usefulness as an object of literary-historical study (specifically through a hemispheric lens). You must select a text that has **not been republished** in a new edition in the last 100 years.

### **Methods**

After you have found a long-out-of-print text that you would like to recover, consider following IUP librarian Blaine Knupp's advice:

As far as determining the print history of a title, I would go to WorldCat first. Since it is a union catalog of just about every major library, it will record almost every edition of title that has ever been issued. The database can be a little funky to search, but I would go with an author and title combination search. Then I would sort the results by publication date (descending). That will tell you pretty quickly if there has been a 'recent' edition. You'll still probably have to scan the entire list because reprints may still sort with the original edition. Cataloging librarians are REALLY picky about what constitutes a new edition and they might use the original date as the first date (there are two fields in cataloging records) and the reprint date as the second. I think it is the first date that determines the sort order.

If you really want to be thorough in checking previous editions, you should probably also check the National Union Catalog, (pre-1956 imprints) for material release in the 1st half of the 20th century. Many of the items in the NUC are also in WorldCat, but I've seen studies that show as many as 25% of the items in the NUC are NOT in WorldCat.

You can also search through the PILOT and ILIAD catalogues for recent titles. Amazon will also list some titles; check to see if the edition listed is merely a facsimile reprint edition (which does not count as republication for our purposes). Once you have identified your text, look through PILOT (to find a very old copy or microform) or Google books to see if you can find a suitable version to read.

### **Due Date**

You will make a determination, based on the topics listed for each class session on our syllabus, as to the day for which your presentation is most appropriate.

## **APPENDIX B: ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS E FROM JOE'S RECOVERY PROJECTS**

**Canonical Writers Map Activity:** Because the majority of students in the course will not have much prior knowledge of the literary canon, we must reconstruct it. Rather than have you read all of it, however, we will take another approach. Working in pairs, students will select a writer from an older anthology of American literature (provided). Using the internet, students will gather the following information:

1. The writer's birthplace (be able to identify it on a map)
2. The writer's religion
3. The language the writer spoke/wrote in
4. The writer's gender

Completion of this assignment means you will receive full credit.

**Archive Day/Reflection Essay:** For this activity, participation is the key. We will meet in a linked classroom and use internet to research several aspects of archives. You can do this activity individually or in pairs. Instead of assigning you specific objects to locate or locations to search, I would rather you attempt to address these thoughts: How does it feel to dive into archival research? What drew you to certain resources? Did you notice any trends in archives that might entice you to follow those leads? What methods did you use to search and which were the most effective? As this type of research is becoming an important mode of study in literary studies, would you like to continue with this method? How easy was it to find resources that have not already been used?

Follow up your archival research outside of class (a few hours will do) to get a sense of working without directed assistance. To complete this assignment, you do not need to find anything interesting or groundbreaking; rather, the task is to gain the experience of using some of the archiving tools and resources available to you. Write a 2-page essay that considers the questions listed above. In the process, think about Susan Scott Parrish's article and her archiving experience. Treat this assignment as a narrative about your archive experience.

You may find something you are very interested in using for your final project. I encourage this, BUT you must consult with me before continuing with using this resource. Special credit cannot be given to students who choose to follow up in using an archive or recovering a resource, but, on the other hand, using these materials might make for a compelling final project.

**Nationalism Essay:** You will compose a 2-3 page essay considering at least 2 texts from the national period. One of these texts must be chosen from our recovery selections. You will analyze how the authors from this section of the course rely on, construct, or reject notions of nation. Discuss how the recovery texts, those that did not merit inclusion in the canon or even our cultural memory, are similar to or different from

the other text you select. This essay will require full documentation of resources and will include a Works Cited page.