

Colonialism

Foundations and Encounters

Pre-Columbian-1750

Literature of Exploration

Columbus, Balboa, and the Usual Suspects

- Extremely Euro-Centric
- Three Purposes
 1. **Familiarization:** What is this place?
 2. **Economic:** Does it have any cool stuff?
 3. **Conquest:** Can we take it?
- In the end, it's all about the money
- This Euro-Centric view has led to some significant misunderstandings and conflict

Native Voices

- “American” and “Indian”
 - Historical inaccuracies prescribed by early Europeans
 - Native “Americans” had their own languages, traditions, beliefs, and laws for hundreds of different tribes and millions of people

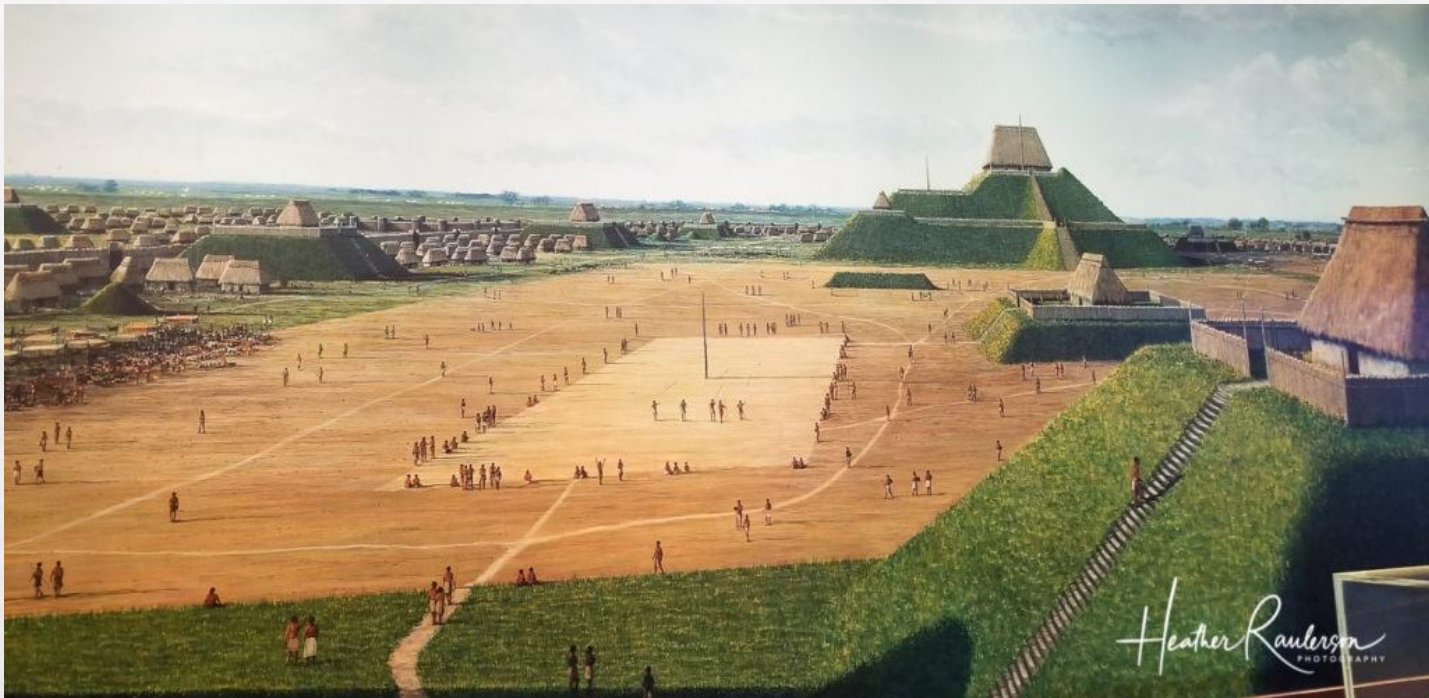
Example: Cahokia

- As many as 100,000 citizens at its peak
- Largest Western city until Renaissance London
- Canals, irrigation, sports, gov't, even suburbs
- One of the great cities of the Western world

—*So why don't we think of it as such?*

- History is written by the winners
- Native American history is almost entirely oral

Cahokia



Cahokia



Cahokia



Oral Traditions

- Knowledge, ideas, and cultural material transmitted verbally from one generation to the next
- All cultures have them
- Help us understand our relationship to the world
 - Culture—Fairy and Folk Tales
 - History—Greek Epics and Family Histories
 - Laws—Torah, Bible, even Constitutional Democracies
 - Customs—Marriage, Manners, Religion



Stories of Origin

- Often Performance-Based: Poems, Songs, Dance
- Common Features
 1. Explains origins of the natural world
 2. Demonstrates a natural order and balance
 3. Non-Hierarchical
 - Animals and humans equal
 4. Non-Dualistic
 - Good and Evil exist not as opposing forces but as complementary halves necessary to make a whole

Walam Olum

Delaware Tribe

- Bundle of wooden plaques, engraved and painted
 - Pictograph: picture representing a word or idea
 - Manito: power, mystery, magic, spirit
- Discovered in 1822 by Constantine Rafinesque
- Tells the origin story of the Delaware people, who entered the New World, overcame a Midwestern mound building people, and continued eastward, giving rise to the Algonquian-speaking tribes

“Walam Olum Hokum”

Unknown Sources

- Plaques received from Dr. Ward (untraceable)
- Ward got them from a Delaware patient (unnamed)

Inconsistent Timelines

- 1822 received plaques
- 1834 published essay—no mention of plaques
- 1836 published plaques

“Walam Olum Hokum”

Borrowed Words

- Aztec
- Chinese
- Other “Indian” languages

Borrowed Symbols

- Egyptian
- Chinese
- Mayan

Competing Theories

- Joseph Smith and the Lost Tribes of Israel
- Asian origin and the Bering Strait

Cultural Consequences

- The European view of this “New” World comes to shape and dominate our cultural landscape... often at the expense of others
- Other voices are limited, some silenced, some lost entirely
 - Native Americans and African Americans
 - Women and Immigrants
 - Non-Christians and the Working Class

Cultural Consequences

- Though white, Christian men will dominate literature for the next 300 years, their experience is not the only experience
- This is important to understand not only because it omits so many others but also because it gives us better insight into these men, the institutions they create, the nation they build, and the world in which we now live
 - Beliefs—both right and wrong
 - Fears—both founded and unfounded
 - Motives—both genuine and self-serving

English Settlement

Pilgrims, Prisoners, and Puritans

- England in 1600
 - Religious Intolerance = Persecution
 - Rigid Class System = Limited Opportunity
 - Limited Land = Limited Wealth
- America in 1600
 - New World = New Opportunity
 - Land = Wealth
 - Literally a “Land of Opportunity”

Pilgrims

- Jamestown, VA (1607): a *secular* settlement
- Expectation: land, lumber—and gold!
- Reality: unfamiliar climate, unfamiliar soil—no gold
- Seven out of every ten settlers die within a year
- Tobacco saves them and becomes the nation's largest export for the next 150 years

Prisoners

- 12,000,000
 - Africans transported across the Atlantic 1450-1850
 - Many were treated as indentured servants—until the introduction of the first official “slave laws” in 1641
- 1619
 - Pirate ship by the name of White Lion sails into a Virginia bay looking for supplies—and trades 20-30 Africans
- 13
 - Colonies that practiced slavery at time of independence

Puritans

- Plymouth, MA (1620): a *religious* settlement
- Only 28 of 100 passengers on Mayflower are Puritans
- Arrive during a mini-ice age
- More than half die in first three months
- Pokanoket tribe (devastated by disease) broker a peace and teach agriculture in exchange for military support
- The first Thanksgiving is as much a recognition of their alliance after a joint ambush of another tribe as it is a celebration of the harvest

“Puritans”

- Separatists: Led by William Bradford
 - Want to separate completely from the Church
- Non-Separatists: Led by John Winthrop
 - Want to purify the Church from within
- Once here, differences become insignificant
 - Both groups struggle to survive
 - Both groups feel pressure to succeed



“The Great Migration”

1630s-1640s

- Mass migration of Puritan families to New England
- Nonetheless, Puritans are *never* in the majority
- Great Irony: Puritans are *not* in favor of religious freedom and are *intolerant* of other beliefs
- So why do we focus on them?
 1. They wrote a ton!
 2. They were vocal and influential: Puritan Work Ethic
 - *hard work, discipline, and frugality*

Features of Puritan Theology

1. Bible as Literal Truth
2. God's Hand in Everything
3. Total Depravity
 - *Humans are by nature completely sinful*
4. Predestination
 - *Only two realms: the Elect and the Damned*
5. Salvation Only by Grace
 - *You cannot earn your way into Heaven*

Features of Puritan Literature

1. Utilitarian

- *Sole purpose of literature is instruction—generally moral*

2. Plain Language

- *They are not decorative or showy*

3. Intellectual and Rational yet Consumed by Symbolism

- *They look for divine meaning behind every-day things*

4. Full of Self-Examination and Self-Doubt

5. Nature as Wild and Chaotic—something to fear

William Bradford

1590-1657

- Believes the New World is not a Garden of Eden but a savage wilderness to be feared
- Elected leader of the Plymouth settlement 30 times
- Creates first system of self-gov't
 - Mayflower Compact
 - No separation between Church and State



Of Plymouth Plantation



- God's Favor or Disfavor Marks Everything
 - Dangerous Journey Over
 - Illness and Starvation Once There
 - Arrival of Squanto
- Plain and Unemotional Style
 - Death of Bradford's Wife
- Focus on Common Life
 - Straightforward Chronology of Events

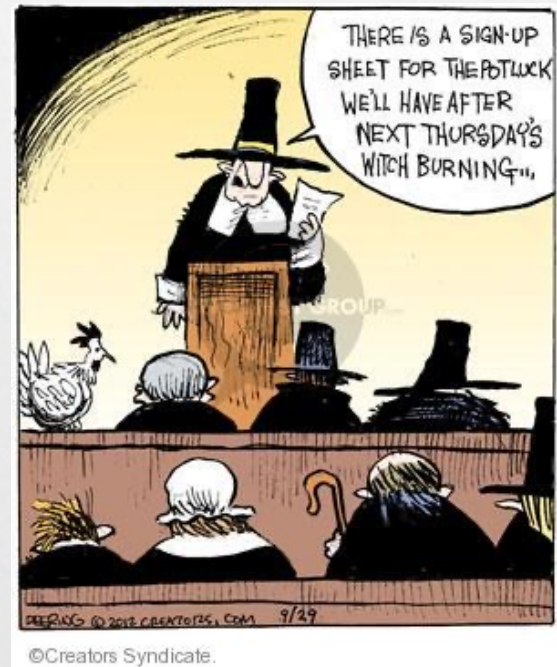
Anne Bradstreet

1612-1672

- A Puritan and the first noted female poet in America
- Early poems focus largely on Puritan concerns or instructive subjects (God, hardship, physics, etc.)
- However, her later work is at times surprisingly expressive and passionate for a Puritan
- “Upon the Burning of Our House”
- “To My Dear and Loving Husband”

Decline of Puritanism

- Rigid faith is both a strength and a weakness
- Internal disputes
 - Some begin to question its inflexibility
- External factors
 - Increasingly diverse population
 - Rise of the merchant class/general prosperity
 - Some leave to pursue worldly goods
- Pressure from England to be more tolerant
 - Salem Witch Trials of 1692



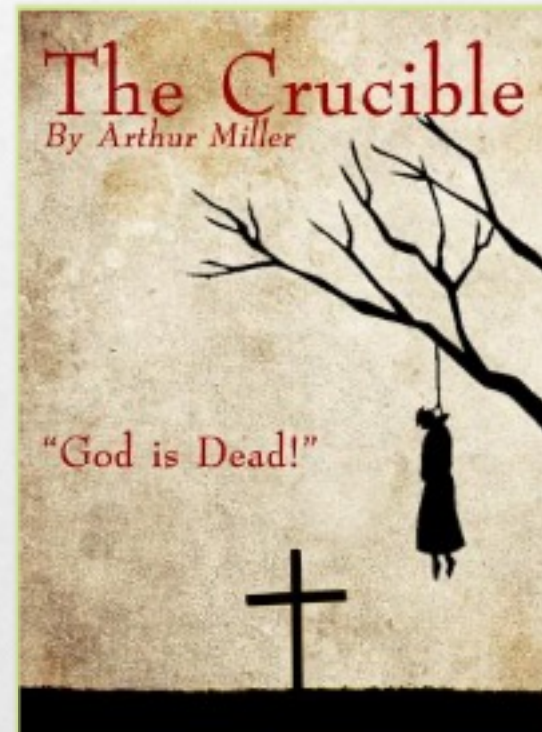
“The Great Awakening”

1730s-1740s

- Series of religious revivals that sweep through colonies
- Effort to return to the simplicity and orthodoxy of the Puritan past as a way of preserving its future
- Led by preachers like Jonathan Edwards who travel among the colonies delivering sermons designed to persuade—often through fervor and fear
- This last gasp of Puritanism does not last long and by the Revolutionary period, Puritanism has entirely died out

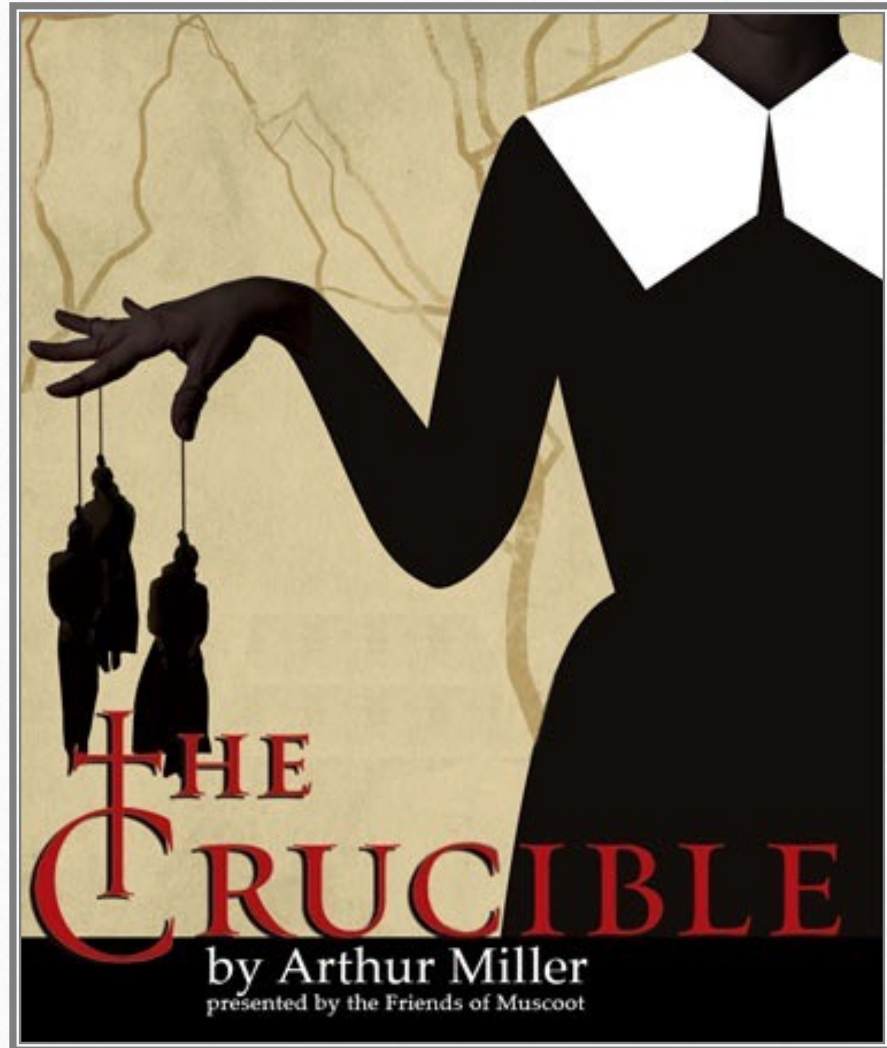
The Crucible

- Produced as a play in 1953
- Written by Arthur Miller
- Setting: Salem, Mass, 1692
 - Near the beginning of the hysteria that leads to the infamous trials, in which hundreds are accused, dozens go to jail, and 19 are hanged before it all comes to an end



Themes

- Fear and suspicion are infectious and destroy reason
- Piety and virtue often go hand-in-hand with hypocrisy
- Is it nobler to die with integrity than live without it?



Cast

- **John Proctor:** Local farmer and Elizabeth's husband; he is a serious man, who hates hypocrisy, but nevertheless has a hidden sin—his affair with Abigail
- **Elizabeth Proctor:** John's wife, virtuous but often cold
- **Rev. Parris:** Salem's minister, paranoid, selfish, weak
- **Abigail Williams:** Parris's niece and onetime servant for the Proctors, until she was fired after Elizabeth discovered her affair; Abigail is smart, sly, a good liar, and vengeful
- **Rev. Hale:** Young minister and expert on witchcraft

A Window into Puritan Life

- Though written in response to McCarthyism of the 1950s, the play is set in 1692 and provides a window into the lives of those early American Puritans
- Recognize the features of Puritan theology
- Notice how their faith provides strength to many and yet also leads to the downfall of the community
- In the end, what destroys Salem is what destroys the Puritan movement—inflexibility and intolerance

Definitions to Reconcile

- Witch
 - Girl or woman believed to have magic power
 - Charming or alluring girl or woman
- Magic
 - Extraordinary power of influence from the supernatural
 - Sleight of hand
- Morality
 - Conforming to standards of right behavior
 - Relating to principles of right and wrong