

AMST 335
New England
Roger Williams University
2:00-3:20
CAS 228
Fall Semester, 2006

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Week of September 5, 2006

This week we begin to look at the first encounters of Anglo-European settlers with the territory which would come to be known as New England. Our sources are primarily Wood's *New England Prospect*, and *Mourt's Relation*, which you will find on the Internet

For *Tuesday, September 5*

We'll begin the class by finishing up On Golden Pond. We'll discuss it some, and then proceed to a discussion of the introduction to New England's Prospect, assigned below. The idea is to anticipate some of the problems we may have as we read through the book itself, and minimize them through that understanding.

Read, in *New England's Prospect*,

The Introduction by Alden Vaughan, pp. 1-14.

New England's Prospect is a primary source. It was written in 1634 for William Wood's contemporaries, not for Roger Williams University's students in 2006. From this introduction come away with an understanding of

- (a) why this is an important book in the history of American Ideas... locate it as an example of a particular literary genre.
- (b) Understand the editorial principles which Vaughan used to create this particular version of the book.
 - What kinds of choices did he make, and why?
 - What work is left for modern readers when it comes to developing a thorough understanding of this work conceptually.

For Friday, September 8

Read, in *Wood*, part I, chapters 1-9, pp. 15-57

Download and Read

Mourt's Relation: A Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth .Part I.

Caleb Johnson is a descendant of the pilgrims who came over on the Mayflower, and he has provided a mammoth website of materials related to the first New England Settlement. He describes *Mourt's Relation* as "This journal, written by several Pilgrims--namely William Bradford and Edward Winslow--records events at Plymouth from the Mayflower's arrival in November 1620 through the First Thanksgiving in October 1621, and everything in between" You will need to download all sections of this text eventually.

- Regarding Wood, the *sequence* of subjects in these short chapters is as significant as the materials discussed. See if you can begin to come to an understanding of the logic of his presentation, keeping in mind what his purposes were and also how he personally encountered New England. If we get to *Mourt* in any detail this period, we'll see that the approach to New England of the Pilgrims at Plymouth was different from that of the Puritans at Boston--sometimes in subtle ways, at other times in ways not so subtle.
- We still personally encounter the environments in which we live. Visit Barbara R. Money's website, *Wildflowers of Rhode Island*. In what ways is her purpose different from either the purposes of William Wood or the authors of Mourt's Relation? It is worth a look to provide an example of how contemporary New Englanders encounter their environment. Does the site suggest that we use our locale in similar or different ways? We'll continue this discussion next week

I'm pushing us a little at the outset, and I recognize this. You have this material in your hands earlier than you normally will have it. If you get started right away you should have no particular problems finishing it by Friday. We may not get through discussing this much material, but it is in all of our interests to test our endurance early in the semester. Read this material and record how much time the reading of it takes. I'll ask you for a reading diary, and I'll use that to determine the length of reading assignments in the future.

ADDITIONAL Internet work.

- If you haven't downloaded and installed *Google Earth* on your computer do so now. Find it at <http://earth.google.com/> You might also consider joining a user's group you'll find by clicking [here](#).

Also go to **Windows Live Local** and bookmark it. You'll have occasion to play around with both of these programs during the semester.