

American Studies 335
New England
Roger Williams University
CAS 228
M, W, & F 11:00-12:00
Fall Semester, 2008

Michael R. H. Swanson, Ph. D.
Office: CAS 110
Hours: M, F, 9:00-10:00
T, Th 11:00-12:30 or by appointment
Phone: 254 3230
E-mail: amst335@gmail.com

Take-home Final Exam and Project Instructions.

- I. The final exam.
Due, by Blackboard, on the last day of the final exam period
Friday, 12 December

Instructions.

This course is one of the most integrated I teach. We began with a look at the way English men and women encountered the new world and its indigenous population. We noted that this encounter began to change them, from Englishmen (and women) to *New Englishmen (and women)*, through the shaping of villages, towns, and cities (Wood) and then, through the way these towns village and cities shaped them socially and psychologically (Hansen). We're in the process of looking now at the legends and folklore they created to explain and make sense of the experiences they and their forebears had. Out of all of this has come a national icon...the New England Village, and a National character, perhaps stereotypical, the New Englander.

For your Final examination, I'd like to have you write a personal essay, *incorporating insights from your reading, your "treasure hunting" and your reflection*, on the general topic, *What is New England and What are New Englanders?* In other words, How would you explain and identify the characteristics and character of this region and its residents to person who haven't interacted much with either?

I'm going to resist proposing a fixed length for this. Let the time you have to work on it and your knowledge and research into the subject shape that.

II. **Project Presentations.**

I would like to start these immediately upon our return from Thanksgiving break, perhaps, if someone is ready to present, we may start the Monday before Thanksgiving. Any not completed during the final week of class will be scheduled for the class final exam period: Thursday, December 11.

Project Objectives.

The general purpose of this project is to broaden our understanding of New England by learning about specific New England Places and Specific New England Institutions. I want to let you follow your own interests and instincts as much as possible here, which is why I'm keeping the instructions as general as possible.

- I. The project should include at least some visual elements, using resources I've made available through blackboard, or one that you find on your own. *The illustrations should represent some aspect of New England we've studied, and not just be pretty pictures.* Remember how extensively the pictures in our texts were captioned. I'd like to have you do the same thing. You can't count on an observer seeing what you want them to see without some direction on your part.
- II. If you wish to integrate your project with your final examination, please feel free to do so, if it is an easy fit. You don't have to do this, however.
- III. **If you can, try to be *chronologically inclusive***—exploring the topic of choice in both historic and contemporary terms.
- V. You may focus *either* on a single town, *or* do a comparison across several towns. For example, you might look at some single institution (the church, the school, the town hall) and the role it plays in several towns.
- VI. If you're working in a group, make sure each group member has a unique responsibility. Make sure I can identify what that is.
- VII. I encourage you to consult with me at any mutually convenient time. I keep office hours and they're posted on the web. I'm around a *lot* more than those times. Drop by CAS110 and Chat when you can.