

American Studies 335
New England
M, TH 3:30 - 4:50
GHH 109
Roger Williams University
Spring Semester 2010

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Hours: M, W, F 1:00 - 2:00
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Week of February 1, 2010

For *Monday, February 1*

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 2010. 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 5*

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

- 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. Next week, we'll look at how Plymouth colony approached the physical reality of New England, and 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? 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 [Bing Maps](#) and [Google Maps](#) and bookmark them. You'll have occasion to play around with both of these programs during the semester.