

# ENGL 02-530-01 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in US Literature



**Who:** Dr. Yvonne Hammond

**Where:** Remote via Google Meet and Canvas

**When:** Mondays, 5pm-7:45pm

**Registration Details:** CRN 21762

What do literary texts teach us about how to actively support a diverse, equitable, and inclusive society (and what's the difference between each of these approaches/perspectives)?

From John Winthrop's beacon shining atop the "city upon a hill" to the Statue of Liberty and beyond, US-American identity thrives on the symbolic representation of refuge, acceptance, and hope. Yet, while projecting these messages of equal opportunity, individual liberty, and democratic idealism, the US offers contradictory structures maintaining (sometimes) deceptively rigid socio-political, ethnic, economic, gender, sex, and cultural hierarchies. This course will survey fields of theoretical study related to diversity, equity, and inclusion alongside literary texts chosen for their elevation of under-represented US cultures and voices.

## A Few of Our Topics:

- Coming-of-Age in 1776: Nationalism & the Emergent American Identity
- The Legacy of the Colonial Experience: Native American Voices
- The 'Peculiar' Institution: Race, Slavery, & the Birth of Prison
- Remembering the Ladies: Feminism in the US
- 'Bodies that Matter': A Conversation about Ableism

## We will read selections from these and other texts:

- Vine Deloria's *Playing Indian*
- Bryan Stevenson's *Just Mercy*
- Ta-Nehesi Coates' *Between the World and Me*
- Dorothy Allison's *Skin* and *Trash*

## Potential Literary Texts:

- Suzan Lori Parks, *The America Play*
- Jesmyn Ward, *Men We Reaped*
- Janet Campbell Hale, *The Jailing of Cecelia Capture*
- Jenny Torres Sanchez, *We Are Not From Here*
- Viet Thahn Nguyen, *The Refugees*
- Allison Bechdel, *Fun Home*
- Anne Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You, and You Fall Down*
- Selections from Phil Klay's *Redeployment*
- And others: James Baldwin, Richard Wright, Louise Erdrich, Octavia Butler, Toni Morrison, Roxanne Gay, Dorothy Allison, Sherman Alexie