



In this course, we will consider a broad range of literary and cultural texts that emerge out of the long history of the French in North America and of Americans in France. Our readings will include novels, poetry, and short stories—such as the earliest known work of African American fiction, written in French and published in Paris in 1837. Alongside these literary texts produced by French writers in America and American expatriates in France, we will consider travel narratives and missionary accounts describing interactions between European and Native American populations; historical, ethnographic, and political writings; as well as popular cultural forms such as music, comic strips, and films.

Throughout the semester, our discussions will focus on the politics of representation—which is to say that we will work to understand the processes through which categories of race are shaped over time through the interplay between Anglo- and Franco-American cultures and ideologies, even as these categories are challenged from the perspectives of minority populations. As we trace these processes of racialization, we will be particularly attentive to intersections between race and class, gender, and sexuality; at the same time, we will consider the ways in which all of these categories of identity are inflected by language, by regional and national forms of belonging and exclusion, and by the presence of “mixed-race” communities. No French proficiency required. Readings, lectures, and writing assignments in French and English. **Email mayaas@uw.edu with questions.**