

LIT 499-06

# *Women on the Road: Travel Writing in Early America*

*Spring 2021 Tuesday/Friday 9:30-10:50am*

*Dr. Michele Tarter*

*In this time of "Covid Confinement," we seek nothing more than stories of travel and adventure. This research-intensive seminar will explore the literary tradition of early American women who dared to break out of domestic confinement and travel, against all odds. A woman on the road—be it a dusty dirt path through the forest or a treacherous mountain cliff trail—faced enormous obstacles and challenges on the American frontier. Writing about their adventures, these authors sealed the final "transgression": they shared their daring feats publicly for all the world to see. We will look at a variety of women's autobiographies to analyze the genre of women's travel writing in early America: tales of Indian captivity and rescue, Quaker traveling ministers' journals, cross-dressed women's Revolutionary war thrillers, slave narratives from the Underground Railroad, and indigenous and white women's memoirs of westward expansion. We will conclude the course by reading an American woman's contemporary memoir of solo travel, considering how this literary tradition has evolved over the centuries.*

