

Carleton University
Fall 2013
Department of English
ENGL 2700A: American Literature I
Tu/Th 2:35-3:55
Location: Please confirm location on Carleton Central

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Office Hours: Thursday 11-1, and by appointment

UNITED STATES LITERATURE, 1776-1865

Course Description:

During the first hundred years of the nation's literary life, writers struggled to create national community in the face of conflict and diversity. Some imagined utopian solutions to the problems facing the young republic, while others told stories of exploitation, isolation, and insanity. Paying special attention to how writers grappled with slavery, economic and territorial expansion, and the advent of the Civil War, we will consider the role of literature in shaping public life.

Texts

Ed. Nina Baym, *The Norton Anthology of American Literature (Shorter Edition), Beginnings to 1865*
Charles Brockden Brown, *Wieland; or, The Transformation: An American Tale* (1798)

Books for the course will be available at *Octopus Books*, 116 Third Avenue.
Readings marked with a * on the syllabus will be found in the *Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Those marked with ** will be posted on CU Learn.

Laptops, Cell Phones, E-Readers

Please note that our classroom will be device-free. Each week two students will volunteer to take notes (on laptops) for the entire group. (They will receive extra credit for taking careful and accurate notes.) These notes will be posted on CU Learn. Otherwise, the only students allowed to use laptops in the classroom will be those with special permission from the Paul Menton Centre. Likewise, students will not be allowed to use cell phones or other devices for any purpose during class.

Evaluation

Half of your grade (50%) will be based on your work in the classroom: attendance; participation in class discussion and activities; in-class writing assignments. The other half will be based on three essays that you will write during the semester.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory, and you will not succeed in the course without coming to class regularly.

Assignments

In-Class Writing

Over the course of the semester, there will be five unannounced in-class writing assignments. These may take the form of brief responses to the reading, or of reading quizzes. They are designed to insure that you attend class, keep up with the reading, and give the reading some thought in advance of our class meetings. You will not be able to make up these assignments for any reason. They will be marked with a letter grade.

Essays

You will write three essays (3-5 pages) this semester. These assignments will be designed to teach you to analyze texts thoughtfully, and to express your ideas with clarity and poise. We will also devote time to the mechanics of writing clear sentences, and building an original and compelling argument.

Accommodations

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodation in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are

required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by the last official day to withdraw from classes in each term. For more details visit the PMC website:

http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/students/acad_accom.html

Plagiarism

The University Senate defines plagiarism as presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or the work of others as one's own.

This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else
- using ideas, quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts or ideas without appropriate acknowledgement in an essay or assignment
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works, and/or failing to use quotation marks
- handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. In cases of suspected plagiarism, the Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student. Penalties may include failure of the assignment, failure of the entire course, suspension from a program, suspension from the university, expulsion from the university. See the Section on Academic Integrity in the Student Conduct Portion of the Undergraduate Calendar.

CLASS SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER

5

Introduction

10

*Thomas Jefferson, "The Declaration of Independence" (1776)

12

*Publius, *The Federalist*, Nos. 1 and 10 (1787/88)

17

*Phillis Wheatley, selected poems (1767-1776)

*Thomas Jefferson, excerpt from *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785)

*David Walker, excerpt from *David Walker's Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* (1829)

19

Charles Brockden Brown, *Wieland*

24

Wieland

26

Wieland

OCTOBER

1

writing workshop

3

*William Lloyd Garrison, "Preface" to *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845)

FRIDAY OCTOBER 4: FIRST ESSAY (3 PAGES) DUE TO ENGLISH DEPARTMENT BY NOON

8

**Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

10

* *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

15

*Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government" (1849)

17

Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener" (1853)

22

writing workshop/draft of second essay due in class

24

writing workshop/peer editing

FALL BREAK

NOVEMBER

5

*Emily Dickinson, selected poems

SECOND ESSAY (5 PAGES) DUE IN CLASS

7

*Emily Dickinson, selected poems

12

*Walt Whitman, "Preface to *Leaves of Grass*" (1855), "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" (1856)

14

**John Brown, Courtroom Address and Last Words (1859)

**John Copeland, Last Letter (1859)

**Henry David Thoreau, "A Plea for Captain Brown"

**"John Brown's Body" (1861)

19

tba

21

NO CLASS

26

*Abraham Lincoln, "Address Delivered at the Dedication of the Cemetery at Gettysburg" (1863), "Second Inaugural Address" (1865)

** Julia Ward Howe, "Battle-Hymn of the Republic" (1862)

28

writing workshop

DECEMBER

3

*Walt Whitman, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" (1865-66)

*Melville, "A Utilitarian View of the Monitor's Fight" (1866)

FINAL ESSAY (5 PAGES) DUE IN CLASS

5

LAST CLASS