

**Carleton University
Fall 2010
Department of English**

**ENGL 2701A : American Literatures II 1865-1965
Writing the Idea of a Nation**

Mon/Wed 18.05-19.25

Location: TBA

Please confirm location on Carleton Central

**Instructor: Dr Alison Buchanan
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Office: 1915 Dunton Tower**

Course Description: This course follows the development of American Literature from 1865-1965. This takes us from the country's emergence from the trauma of the Civil War, through its growth as a nation to the cusp of its dominance as a superpower. It takes us from the war over slavery to the dawn of the civil rights movement. It takes us from before women had the vote to the early feminist movement. It takes us from frontier nation to global presence. In this century of American Literature, 1865-1965 we are able to observe the cultural struggles and debates of a country emerging from adolescence headed towards maturity. We will look at the patterns and fixations of American cultural production, the formulation of a cultural consciousness and the fragmentation and coalescence of whatever it is that constitutes a national tradition in literature. How does literature shape a nation and how does a nation shape its literature? We will discuss this, as well as the intriguing factors that determine how American literature is so profoundly dominated by disillusion and escapism while national consciousness seems to articulate optimism and involvement.

Texts:

Mark Twain, Huckleberry Finn
Ernest Hemingway, Farewell to Arms
Gertrude Stein, The Autobiography of Alice B Toklas
Dorothy Parker 3 short stories (possibly)
Edgar Rice Burroughs, Tarzan
Rex Stout, Over my Dead Body (Nero Wolfe)
Tennessee Williams, A Streetcar Named Desire
Langston Hughes, Not Without Laughter
Joseph Heller, Catch-22
Selection of Poetry

Course requirements:

This course is composed of essays and a final exam. Attendance is expected at lectures and will comprise 5% of your final mark.

There is a written component of 45% and your final exam is worth 50%.

You may write a single essay or you may write 2—the first to be worth 20% and the second to be worth 25%.

The first essay will be due the sixth week of the course and the second essay will be due the final week. If you choose only to write one essay it will be due the final week.

Lectures (roughly)

Week One-Two Introduction, Huckleberry Finn

Week Three Farewell to Arms

Week Four-Five Tarzan

Week Five-Six Gertrude Stein

Week Seven Rex Stout, Tennessee Williams

Week Eight Williams, Dorothy Parker

Week Nine-Ten Langston Hughes

Week Eleven Joseph Heller

Week Twelve Poetry

Week Thirteen Review

Academic Accommodations

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and 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.

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations 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 your Instructor receives 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.

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>