

Chaminade University of Honolulu
Summer 2000 Evening Program
July 5 - September 13, 2000
Naval Station, Pearl Harbor

COURSE: English 33160 - Early American Writers to the Civil War

TIME, DAY: 1645-2055 Tuesday

INSTRUCTOR: Debra Nauyokas, M.A., Literature in English, Rhetoric & Composition
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OFFICE HOURS: Class day, 1615-1640, in our classroom

TEXT: Norton Anthology of American Literature (Fifth Edition) Volume 1

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS: To be announced

ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL READINGS: I will distribute various selections covering the historical, cultural, and artistic background of early American literature at key points throughout the term. These selections will come from a variety of texts and critical journals. You may choose selected appropriate excerpts or quotations from them to insert (properly documented, of course, in the text and in the *Works Cited* page) in your papers.

VIDEOS: A Video will be shown, on the first day of class, of Arthur Miller's play *The Crucible*. There is also available, I understand, an excellent version of *The Scarlet Letter* starring John Hurt, and a centennial year production of the life and works of Walt Whitman entitled *Black Robe*. I will try to fit into the class schedule if at all possible, although I consider class discussion and your interpretations of the works more important. What I may end up doing is bringing the videos to Pearl Harbor and making them available for group viewings at your convenience. In other words, get together as a class and decide on a day and time during which you can all view a certain video, then get together at someone's home for the purpose of doing this. What I don't want to happen is that individuals monopolize the videos for days or weeks at a time, so that they are unavailable to others. Blockbuster may also have copies of the videos available; I'll be checking into that option, as well.

IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS: I will supply an additional list of novels and other works from which each student shall make a selection for reading and in-class presentation.

PROJECTS: There will be 2 cultural research assignments. There will be a class project based on Thoreau's *Walden*. Separate handouts will clarify the nature of these assignments.

PAPERS: There will be three four-to-five-page papers required, each one on a different phase of

our reading from the course. You may do: (1) a close reading of a poem; (2) a close reading or interpretation of a prose work, such as Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative or one of Emerson's essays. (3) You could do a comparison/contrast treatment comparing and contrasting the work of an author from one phase of our reading with the work of an author from another phase. Outside sources are not required for two of the papers, but the third should incorporate secondary sources—criticism, biographies, etc., and of course should include a Works Cited page and in-text MLA-style citations to your sources. Some of those sources may be from the internet, but the majority should be from the library, and can be some of the sources I hand out in class. **E-mailed papers will NOT be accepted.** I would suggest you get a draft to me of your third (and most challenging) paper at least by mid-term so you can get some comments and suggestions on improvement. The way you can get a "jump" on papers is to do the reading early, come up with a thesis and support, then check with me for secondary sources. I'd be happy to loan you sources, for example, on Emily Dickinson or Herman Melville.

EXAMS: There will be a mid-term and a final exam with multiple-choice, matching, and essay questions included.

I. General Objectives of Literature and this course:

Literature helps us to understand and respond to the major realities of human existence: life, death, love, good, evil, the spiritual life. Writers speak to us in many ways: poetry, drama, short prose, and novels. Some authors succeed in reaching us, through the generations, while others do not. On the other hand, some works by women have been excluded from the "canon" because they were considered not to have reached readers—that is, male readers—on closer examination, they have been seen as "speaking to" female readers, as well as male readers. For this reason, it is important that we as students and teachers reassess the canon from time to time, making our own judgments as to who should be included in our syllabi and who should not.

Further, we study literature to learn about life and to grow emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. We also study literature to acquire a sense of quality and taste. Why, for example, is one author widely regarded as a master or a genius and another not? Why do the works of one writer withstand "the test of time" and become classics while others' works are set aside and virtually forgotten soon after they are published? On the other hand, why are some authors' works (*particularly female authors' works, but also that of males) "rediscovered" after a period of neglect? What do all these things tell us about ourselves and our society, and how our ideas evolve and change over time?

We will explore these issues and more. Our references will be drawn primarily from the pre-history of the U.S. through the Civil War. The writers we will be studying are all, in one way or another, American. Our study will be conducted in a way that will cover as much territory as possible without attempting overly ambitious goals. Most of the things we will read and discuss are relatively short works. Our studies will be most beneficial if we keep a few things in mind:

- I. Read actively, pen or pencil in hand, challenging the writer, noting key passages, and asking questions, either in the margins of your text or on a separate page;
- II. Get ahead and stay ahead with your reading assignments. The earlier in the

- semester you read a work, the more time you will have to reflect upon it;
- III. Look for key themes and motifs and try to establish ways of linking or differentiating between the works and their creators through these themes and motifs, though you should understand that biographical criticism is not in vogue right now, and is seen by most literary critics as an invalid way of talking about an author's work.
 - IV. Keep your mind open, your creativity free, and your sense of humor operative at all times.
 - V. Above all, be ready to think and have fun.

IN CLASS PRESENTATION IDEAS

Any novel or extended narrative by the following writers, but check with me first.*

Native American Stories

Madison

Jefferson

Paine

Franklin

C.B. Brown

Irving

Cooper

Emerson

Thoreau

W.G. Simms

Poe

Stowe

Hawthorne

Melville

Whitman

Jacobs

NOTE: There are a few others from which to choose. See me for additional options. The main caveat is to keep your selection within the time span of the course ("American Literature through 1865").

General Guidelines for Presentation Format:

Title

Year of Publication

Author

Quick biographical sketch

Plot

Key Themes

Artistic Interest; Symbolism, imagery, language, style.

Critical Evaluation: Does it work? Is it good? Why/Why not?

II Relationship of this course to the general objectives of the university:

To develop in the student approaches to the creative and analytical understanding and appreciation of fiction, more specifically through the study of representative American writers of the period.

To open to the student the wealth of American cultural artistic and intellectual heritage.

To encourage a search for truth through literature and to assist him or her in forming a value system or philosophy of life.

III Format of Course:

Presentation of key points in literary works and in-depth supplements by the instructor.

Class discussion of key issues and themes within the novels. Student involvement will be emphasized in all aspects of the learning experience. Active reading of the assigned material is absolutely key to a complete understanding of class discussion and successful completion of all graded requirements.

Student-led responses to various concerns found within the works--both to encourage student critical thinking and research and to afford an opportunity to demonstrate effective oral communication.

Note: Prior to each class meeting, each student will submit two questions (with answers) dealing with assigned readings. (The questions will consist of one t/f or fill-in-the-blank style and one short-answer style.) This is an essential component of your class-participation grade.

IV Grading:

Background material through Irving	4 to 5-page paper	10%
Cooper through Stowe	4 to 5-page paper	10%
Thoreau, Douglas, Melville, Dickinson, Whitman, and Alcott	4 to 5-page paper	15%
Class Project, Thoreau 3 to 4-page journal entry: observations of nature, Thoreau-Style, and reflection on the class project (picnic)	Picnic	5% 10%
Reading and Research	In-Class Presentation	10%
Mid-Term Exam		15%
Attendance, Class participation	ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT	10%

NOTE: CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PROMPTNESS are essential, especially since we meet for a total of only ten sessions. Unless particularly unusual circumstances can be demonstrated by you, more than two absences will result in a failing grade. PLEASE give me advance notice any time you must miss a class. Each student shall obtain the names, telephone numbers, and e-mail numbers of at least two other classmates for the purpose of exchanging information about class notes, syllabus changes, and assignments in the event of an absence.

READING SCHEDULE:

July 11 Introduction/Historical Framework/Video (The Crucible). See reading & instructions for submitting questions and answers for next time (earlier in syllabus)

Submission of Student Q/A (I will call on selected students to lead some portion of the class discussion based on these questions and answers. Try to hold back on the answers as long as possible in order to let other students in the class form their own opinions.)

July 18	The Iroquois Creation Story	52-57
	John Smith	102-105
	Early American Literature	153-164
	William Bradford	164-170, 192-194, 195-199
	Roger Williams	234-236, 245
	Anne Bradstreet	Intro, The Prologue, The Flesh and the Spirit, Before the Birth of One of Her Children, To My Dear and Loving Husband, . . . Elizabeth, ...Grandchild Anne, ...Simon, For Deliverance..., Burning...
	Mary Rowlandson	297-330
	Edward Taylor	Intro, Wasp, Huswifery
	Cotton Mather	337-379
	William Byrd	Intro, 428-439
	Jonathan Edwards	Intro, Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God
July 25	Submission of Student Q/As	
	Benjamin Franklin	Intro, The Way to Wealth, <u>Autobiography</u> (Parts 1 & 3)
	Thomas Paine	Intro, Common Sense, The Age of Reason
	Thomas Jefferson	Intro, Autobiography (714-719)
	Philip Freneau	Intro, The House of Night (808-815)
	American Literature 1820-1865	Intro (917-933)
	Washington Irving	Intro, Rip Van Winkle, The Legend Of Sleepy Hollow

SIGN UP FOR CLASS PRESENTATIONS

August 1	Paper #1 Due Submission of Student Q/As J.F. Cooper W.C. Bryant William Apess R.W. Emerson Nathaniel Hawthorne H.W. Longfellow J.G. Whittier	Intro, etc. (980-996) Intro, etc. (1038-1045) Intro, etc. (1045-1051) Intro, Nature, Self-Reliance, Each and All, Uriel, Hamatreya, The Rhodora Intro, Young Goodman Brown, The Minister's Black Veil, The Birth-Mark, Rappaccini's Daughter, The Scarlet Letter Intro, A Psalm of Life, Excelsior, The Fire of Driftwood, The Jewish Cemetery at Newport Intro, Ichabod, Snow-Bound
August 8	Submission of Student Q/As E.A. Poe Mid-Term (2-1/2 hours in-class)	Intro, To Helen, The City by the Sea, the Raven, Ulalume, Annabel Lee, Ligeia, The Fall of the House of Usher, The Masque of the Red Death, The Tell-Tale Heart, The Purloined Letter, The Cask of Amontillado, The Philosophy of Composition
August 15	Submission of Student Q/As Abraham Lincoln Margaret Fuller Harriet B. Stowe Margaret Fuller Class Presentations	Intro., Gettysburg Address Intro., The Great Lawsuit Intro., Uncle Tom's Cabin Chs. XIV, XXX, XXXI, XXIV Intro., The Great Lawsuit (Optional)
August 22	Paper #2 Due Submission of Student Q/As H.D. Thoreau Handout on Picnic Frederick Douglass	Intro, Resistance to Civil Government, Walden Planning (Who wants to do what reading? Who wants to bring what "dishes"?) Where we have the picnic? Nature walk? Do you wish to meet this Saturday or next Saturday, instead of our regular Tuesday time? Intro., Narrative of the Life

Herman Melville

Intro., Hawthorne and His Mosses, Moby-Dick (Chs. I, XXVIII, XLI, XLII), Bartleby, Benito Cereno, Billy Budd

Class Presentations

August 29 Submission of Student Q/As
Thoreau Organic Picnic
Readings from "Walden" and "Resistance to Civil Government" by Class Members
Nature Walk; Entries in Nature Journal

Class Presentations

September 5 Polished Nature Journal and Reflections on Picnic due (3 to 5 pages double-spaced in length)
Submission of Student Q/As
Walt Whitman Intro, Preface to Leaves of Grass, Cavalry Crossing a Ford, Song of Myself (1881), Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking
Emily Dickinson Intro., #s 49, 214, 241, 249, 303, 341, 465, 712, 1540, 1545, 1601, 1732, Letters; any others of your choice
L. M. Alcott Intro., Transcendental Wild Oats

In-class meeting time with instructor, Paper #3

If you wish me to return your final exams and papers to your home address, please bring me a self-addressed, stamped envelope next time. Otherwise, I will leave your final papers and course grade with Mike in the Pearl Harbor office. Final exams will not be returned on a pick-up basis.

September 12 **Paper #3 Due**

Final Exam (3-1/2 hours)