

ENG 391 19th Century American Novel, Winter 2014, CRN 23395

T/Th 2-3:20pm, 191 ANS

Professor Thorsson

Email: thorsson@uoregon.edu

Office Hours: T/TH 10-11:30am January 14-March 13 and by appointment in 521 PLC

Course Description

In this course, we will examine formal strategies and thematic concerns of 19th century American novels. Using close reading and historical context, we'll investigate these questions: How do our authors imagine Americanness? What are the possibilities and limits of the novel form and how are they tied to national identity? How do these novels construct race, class, and gender? This course is an opportunity to hone your critical faculty through scholarly discussion and analytical writing about primary texts. The goal of this course is to help you engage with American literature, improving your writing, reading, and critical thinking skills in the process. This class requires substantial reading and writing and vigorous participation.

Required Readings

Novels (available at the UO Bookstore and on reserve at Knight Library):

James Fenimore Cooper	<i>The Last of the Mohicans</i> (1826), Penguin Classics
Nathaniel Hawthorne	<i>The House of the Seven Gables</i> (1851), Norton Critical
Harriet Beecher Stowe	<i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> (1852), Norton Critical
Herman Melville	<i>Benito Cereno</i> (1855) in <i>Billy Budd and Other Stories</i> , Penguin Classics
Mark Twain	<i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> (1884), Norton Critical
Paul Laurence Dunbar	<i>The Sport of the Gods</i> (1903), Modern Library Classics

Criticism (online or in your edition of one of our novels as noted on our reading schedule):

Mark Twain	"Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses" (1895)
Herman Melville	"Hawthorne and His Mosses" (1850)
James Baldwin	"Everybody's Protest Novel" (1949)
Paul Laurence Dunbar	"Harriet Beecher Stowe" (1898)
Toni Morrison	"This Amazing, Troubling Book" (1999)

Course Requirements and Policies:

Careful reading, vigorous participation, and regular attendance are mandatory. Bring the assigned readings to class and be prepared to discuss them. Your participation grade is based on class discussion, in-class writing, and group work.

Missing class more than twice in the term will result in reduction of your final grade by 1/3 of a letter grade (B becomes a B-) for each absence beyond the two permitted. There is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get notes for that day from a classmate and otherwise catch up on any material you have missed.

Assignments must be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class on the due dates listed below and formatted according to current MLA guidelines (1 inch margins, single-side printed, stapled, correct citation and quotation, and a works cited page). Consult the *MLA Handbook* if you are uncertain of correct format. I will mark late assignments down by 1/3 of a letter grade (B becomes a B-) for each day they are late. I will not accept late assignments more than one week after the due date.

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please meet with me soon. Please request that the Accessible Education Center (<http://aec.uoregon.edu/>) send me a letter outlining your approved accommodations.

The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. Students should acknowledge and document all sources of information. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, see me.

We will discuss each assignment in detail as it approaches. Please also print and consult the assignment sheet posted on Blackboard.

Grading:

Participation	10%
Close Reading (3-4 pages)	20%
Secondary Source Exercise (3-4 pages)	20%
Event Response (2 pages)	5%
Paper Proposal w/ Bibliography (2-3 pages)	15%
Final Paper (7-10 pages)	30%

Week One

T 1/7 Introduction

Th 1/9 **No Class - Make-up session February 19th (see below)**

Week Two

T 1/14 *The Last of the Mohicans*, Introduction, Prefaces, Ch I-XVIII (p vii-189)

Th 1/16 *The Last of the Mohicans*, Ch XIX-XXIV (p 190-254)
Close Reading Handout (Blackboard)

Week Three

T 1/21 *The Last of the Mohicans*, Ch XXV-end (p 255-350)
Mark Twain, "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses" online at:
<http://etext.virginia.edu/railton/projects/rissetto/offense.html>
Assignment Sheet (Blackboard)

Th 1/23 *The House of the Seven Gables*, Introduction, Preface, Ch I-V (p ix-63)
Passive Voice Handout

Week Four

T 1/28 Guided Tour of Kara Walker Exhibit
Meet curator Jessi DiTillio in the lobby of the Jordan Schnitzer Museum
of Art on campus at 2pm.

Th 1/30 *The House of the Seven Gables*, Ch VI-XVII (p 63-188)
Close Reading Due (3-4 pages)

Week Five

T 2/4 *The House of the Seven Gables*, Ch XVIII-end (p 188-225)
Herman Melville, "Hawthorne and His Mosses" online at:
<http://eldritchpress.org/nh/hahm.html>

Th 2/6 Uncle Tom's Cabin, Prefaces, Ch I-XVIII (Vol I) (p vii-199)

Week Six

T 2/11 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ch XIX-XXVIII (first part of Vol II) (p 200-291)

Th 2/13 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ch XXIX-end (p 291-408)
Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Harriet Beecher Stowe" in Norton *UTC* (p 528)
James Baldwin, "Everybody's Protest Novel" in Norton *UTC* (p 532-539)
Secondary Source Exercise Due (3-4 pages)

Week Seven

T 2/18 Benito Cereno, p 159-192

W 2/19 5:30-7pm Prof. Arlene Keizer talk in conjunction with Kara Walker
exhibit, Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art or PLC 180

Th 2/20 *Benito Cereno*, p 193-258

Week Eight

T 2/25 *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Preface, Explanatory, Ch I-VIII (p
1-58)
Event Response Due (2 pages)

Th 2/27 *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Ch IX-XXIX (p 59-215)

Week Nine

T 3/4

Workshop Paper Proposals

Final Paper Proposal Due (2-3 pages), bring 2 copies to class

Th 3/6

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Ch XXX-end (p 216-296)

Toni Morrison, "This Amazing, Troubling Book" in Norton *HF* (p 385-392)

Week Ten

T 3/11

The Sport of the Gods, General Introduction, Chronology, p 295-355

Th 3/13

The Sport of the Gods, p 356-433

M 3/17

Final Paper Due (7-10 pages) to Prof. Thorsson's office (521 PLC) by 5pm – If you would like your paper back with comments, attach a self-addresses, stamped envelope when you turn it in.