

English 562
Nineteenth Century American Literature
Fall 2019
Condon 203

Prof. William Rossi
363 PLC; 346-3955
Hrs: TTh 11:45-1:15
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Syllabus

This course attempts to survey in some depth a rich and complex century of American writing. We will study the variety of forms romanticism took in the United States during the period before the Civil War, giving attention to the works' literary form as well as to the philosophical and political dimensions of their meanings, especially as writers worked to represent and come to grips with slavery and other reform issues. Then we will examine the emergence of literary realism and naturalism in the period after the War, looking particularly at how genre, race, and gender figured in how realism and naturalism were written.

Required Texts

Norton Anthology of American Literature, ed. Nina Baym et al. 8th edition, volume B. (2011).

W.D. Howells, *The Rise of Silas Lapham*. Norton Critical Edition, ed. Paul R. Petrie (2018).

All texts are available at the University Bookstore. Please note that *The Shorter Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 8th edition, vol 1 is an acceptable substitute anthology. But you must have a copy of the Norton Critical Edition of *The Rise of Silas Lapham*.

Course Learning Outcomes

In this upper-division English course, students can expect to learn how to do the following :

- read nineteenth-century American literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions;
- draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate these texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts;
- perform critical, formal analyses of the works we study
- write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose;
- employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments on exam essays and papers;
- employ primary and secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to the final critical essay's thesis.

Class Policies

Social media While laptops and tablets are permitted for taking notes and for accessing texts that are not available in the required *Norton Anthology*, cell phones must be silenced and put away (out of sight) during class time.

Attendance Two absences, for whatever reason, are permitted; thereafter final grades are lowered one-third letter grade for each absence.

Late Papers Late papers lose one notch per day (A to A-), including weekends/holidays. After a week, late papers earn an F. Exceptions to these policies are rare and must be arranged between us prior to the due date.

Oral, Written Work, and Grading

- Discussion leading (10%)
- Close reading analysis (15%)
- Article summary (20%)
- Annotated Bibliography (20%)
- Final paper (35%)

Descriptions of close reading, summary, bibliography, and final paper assignments will be distributed separately.

Students with Disabilities

I will make every effort to accommodate students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me as soon as possible. Please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter outlining your approved accommodations. Counselors can be contacted at the Accessible Education Center (541-346-1155 or email uoaec@uoregon.edu).

Academic Integrity

The University of Oregon values academic honesty. Students are informed of the University's policies and expectations about conduct and academic honesty when they matriculate. You are here because you clearly have the ability to engage your own mind in rigorous intellectual work. The Code can be found at: <https://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-3-administration-student-affairs/ch-1-conduct/student-conduct-code> and is also available in pamphlet form from Oregon Hall. All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. Any use of sources (ideas, quotations, and paraphrases) beyond our lectures and discussion must be properly documented. In other words, rely on your own grey matter, and wrestle with the course material. Protect the integrity of your own work and that of others'. In cases of clearly established plagiarism or cheating, a course grade of "F" will be the minimum penalty. All incidents will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct, as required by University Policy.

Readings Schedule (subject to modifications as needed)

NAAL: *Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 8th edition, vol B. CV= pdf or link available on Canvas; NCE = *The Rise of Silas Lapham Norton Critical Edition*.

T (10/1) Course introduction, self-introductions, and expectations;

American Enlightenment: selection from *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, Part 2 (1784) in class

Th (10/3) CV: Selection from *Autobiography of Thomas Jefferson*, Declaration of Independence draft (1829); Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist* no. 1; James Madison, *Federalist* no. 10 (1787)

T (10/8) **Varieties of Romantic Enlightenment**

NAAL: William Cullen Bryant, “To a Waterfowl” (1821) and “The Prairies” (1834);

James Fenimore Cooper, selection from *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826); Washington Irving, “Rip van Winkle” (1819); CV: Irving, “Adventure of the German Student” (1824)

Th (10/10) NAAL: Ralph Waldo Emerson, “American Scholar,” (1837) “Self-Reliance,” “Circles” (1841), “Experience,” (1844), “Each and All” (1847)

T (10/15) NAAL: Margaret Fuller, “The Great Lawsuit” (1843) (complete)

Th (10/17) NAAL: Walt Whitman, “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” and *Song of Myself* (1855) complete

Enlightenment Consequences and Critiques

T (10/22) NAAL: “Native Americans: Resistance and Removal” Introduction (349);

William Apess, “An Indian’s Looking Glass for the White Man” (1833)

CV: Nathaniel Hawthorne, “Roger Malvin’s Burial” (1832)

CLOSE READING DUE

Th (10/24) NAAL: “Slavery, Race, and the Making of American Literature” Introduction (787-89)

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative* (1845) [selections TBA], “Meaning of the Fourth of July” (1852); Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861); and

Henry Thoreau, “Resistance to Civil Government” [aka “Civil Disobedience”] (1848)

T (10/29) NAAL: Herman Melville, *Benito Cereno* (1855)

Th (10/31) EXAM1 (undergrads only)

Realism, Naturalism, and Social Justice

T (11/5) NAAL: Rebecca Harding Davis, "Life in the Iron Mills" (1861)

Th (11/7) NCE: W.D. Howells on Literary Realism and American Literary History (309-24)

CV: Mark Twain, Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses" (1895)

NCE: Howells, RSL, 3-31

T (11/12) NCE: RSL, 31-184

Th (11/14) NCE: RSL, 184-275

T (11/19) NCE: Selections from modern criticism on RSL tba

Th (11/21) CV: Charles Chesnutt, "The Wife of His Youth" (1898); Sarah Orne Jewett, "White Heron" (1886)

T (11/26) No Class: Final paper conferences in 363 PLC

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

T (12/3) CV: Kate Chopin "At the 'Cadian Ball" (1892) and "The Storm" (1898); Jack London, "To Build a Fire" (1902)

Th (12/5) CV: Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin), "Impressions of an Indian Childhood," "School Days of an Indian Girl," "An Indian Teacher Among Indians" (1900) and "Why I Am a Pagan" (1902)

M (12/9) 8am EXAM 2 (undergrads only)

F (12/13) Final Paper submitted to Canvas by 12 noon