

ENG 80: MAJOR AMERICAN AUTHORS
"FORMS OF AMERICA"
T/R 2-3:15 + F sections // Royce 190
Spring 2012

Professor Lowenstein
Office hours T/R 3:30-4:30 pm and by appointment, Hum 242
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Requirements:
4-5 pp. paper 25% // midterm 25% // final 35% // section participation 15%
More than three absences from lecture may result in a course grade reduction
University policies on plagiarism strictly enforced

* = Supplied as PDF on course webpage

Some thoughts to get us started:

"Unfitted for business, in a nation where every one is busy; devoted to literature, where literary leisure is confounded with idleness; the man of letters is almost an insulated being, with few to understand, less to value, and scarcely any to encourage his pursuits."

Washington Irving, 1813

"All our words from loose using have lost their edge."

Ernest Hemingway, 1932

WEEK ONE:

APRIL 3 **INTRODUCTIONS AND CLASS POLICIES**

APRIL 5 **WHAT IS "AMERICAN" LITERATURE?**

Washington Irving, "Rip Van Winkle" (1819)

Edgar Allan Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839), "The Raven" (1845), "The Philosophy of Composition" (1846)

WEEK TWO:

APRIL 10 **THE AMERICAN "RENAISSANCE"**

Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar" (1837), "The Poet" (1844)

APRIL 12 Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Minister's Black Veil" (1836), "The Birthmark" (1843)

WEEK THREE:

APRIL 17 Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener" (1853), "Benito Cereno" (1855)

APRIL 19 **AFRICAN AMERICA: THE LITERATURE OF SLAVERY AND ITS AFTERMATH**

Frederick Douglass, "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass" (1845)
W.E.B. Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folk* (1903), chapter 1

WEEK FOUR:

APRIL 24 **"THAT D — — D MOB OF SCRIBBLING WOMEN": AMERICAN WOMEN WRITERS**

Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), chapters VII and IX (pp. 767-87)

Emily Dickinson (1830-86): 320 [258] ("There's a certain Slant of light"); 340 [280] ("I felt a Funeral, in my Brain"); 479 [712] ("Because I could not stop for Death"); 591 [465] ("I heard a Fly buzz--when I died"); 764 [754] ("My Life had stood--a Loaded Gun--"); 1263 [1129] ("Tell all the Truth but tell it slant--")

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892)

APRIL 26 **THE "ART" OF THE "AMERICAN" NOVEL**

Henry James, *The American* (1877)

WEEK FIVE:

MAY 1 James, *The American*

MAY 3 ***MIDTERM EXAM**

WEEK SIX:

MAY 8 **MODERNISM: THE CONSOLATIONS OF CRAFT**

T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

Ezra Pound, "In a Station at the Metro" (1913), *"Imagisme" (1913), *"A Few Don'ts By An Imagiste" (1913)

Wallace Stevens, "Anecdote of the Jar" (1923), "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" (1931)

MAY 10 William Carlos Williams, "The Red Wheelbarrow" (1934)

Robert Frost, "After Apple Picking" (1914)

*Ernest Hemingway, "Big Two-Hearted River" (Parts I and II) (1925)

WEEK SEVEN:

MAY 15 **THE SPACES AND TIMES OF AMERICAN MODERNISM**

Willa Cather, *The Professors House* (1925)

MAY 17 Cather, *The Professors House*

WEEK EIGHT:

MAY 22 **GETTING SCHOOLED: AMERICAN LITERATURE IN THE PROGRAM ERA**

*Flannery O'Connor, "Everything That Rises Must Converge" (1965), "The Barber" (1948)

*Raymond Carver, "I Could See the Smallest Things" (1981), Carver alt. endings

MAY 24 SIGNS OF THE TIMES: LOST IN THE POSTMODERN FUNHOUSE

*John Barth, "Frame-Tale" (1968), ~~"Title" (1968)~~

Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49* (1965)

***ESSAY DUE IN CLASS**

WEEK NINE:

MAY 29 Pynchon, *CL49*

MAY 31 DEFENDING THE FAITH: FORMS OF BELIEF IN LATE MODERNISM

*Phillip Roth, "Defender of the Faith" (1959)

*David Foster Wallace, "All That" (2009)

WEEK TEN:

JUNE 5 THE POST-HUMAN CONDITION: THE CULTURAL VITALITY OF APOCALYPSE

Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (2006)

JUNE 7 McCarthy, *The Road*

***FINAL EXAM: MONDAY, JUNE 11, 2012, 11:30AM-2:30PM**