

English 346

Timothy Sweet, ENGL 346, Fall 2001, American Literature 1800-1865

English 346: American Literature, 1800-1865

Fall 2001 MWF 9:30-10:20 112 Armstrong

Timothy Sweet

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Office Hours 10:30-11:30 MWF and by appointment

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OVERVIEW

This course examines the contribution of literature to the formation of American culture from the early national era to the Civil War era. Many approaches are possible to the study of this rich and diverse period. This course organizes the material into three topical units: 1. a turn to history as a key to America's present and future 2. a turn to nature as an alternate key, in dialogue with or even opposition to this turn to history; 3. the crisis that slavery embodied within both of these categories, which erupted in the war.

TEXTS

James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pioneers*. Penguin 0-14-039007-3

Lydia Maria Child, *Hobomok and other Writings on Indians*. Rutgers 0-8135-1164-x

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, ed. David W. Blight. Bedford-St. Martin's 0-312-07531-6

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Selected Essays, Lectures, and Poems*. Bantam 0-553-21388-1

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Selected Tales and Sketches*. Penguin 0-14-039057-x

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*. Princeton 0-691-01464-7

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*. Oxford 0-19-283409-6

Various photocopied materials as listed in the schedule

REQUIRED WORK AND GRADING

Readings as listed on the syllabus plus any background reading you may find beneficial.

Three essays, each 5-6 pp., which will require you to demonstrate mastery of the readings and the ideas generated during class discussion and lecture. They are sequenced progressively to help you develop your skills at incorporating research sources into your writing. Assignment sheets for each essay will be distributed separately. Each will count for 30% of your final grade.

A presentation to the class in which you set an interesting agenda and raise useful questions to stimulate a discussion of the day's readings. The presentations should last about 10 minutes. I will collect a copy of your notes (including bibliography) so that I have a record of the presentation. The presentation, including notes, will count for 10% of your final grade.

Attendance and participation are, of course, essential to your success in this class.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Social Justice. I support WV's commitment to social justice and will work to create a positive learning environment based on open communication and mutual respect. I welcome your suggestions.

Special needs. If you have a learning disability, hearing or vision problems, or any other special need that might affect your performance or participation in class, please talk with me.

COURSE POLICIES

Late work. Late assignments receive a deduction of one-half of a letter grade for each class

period they are late.

Absences. You are allowed three absences from regular class meetings (a week's worth of class). Your course grade will drop one half of a letter grade for each absence beyond these.

Incompletes. I do not give grades of "Incomplete" except in extreme circumstances, and then only if a substantial portion of the semester's work has already been completed. If an emergency comes up, contact the Dean of Student Life immediately (293-5611).

Academic Dishonesty. The following definitions are from the West Virginia University Undergraduate Catalog. Please see the section on Academic Integrity/Dishonesty for the full definition and discussion of procedures.

Plagiarism. "submitting, without appropriate acknowledgment . . . material that has been knowingly obtained or copied in whole or in part, from the work of others. . . , including (but not limited to) another individual's academic composition, compilation, or other product, or commercially prepared paper."

Cheating. "doing academic work for another student, or providing one's own work for another student to copy and submit as his/her own."

Cases of academic dishonesty will result in an F for the course and appropriate academic discipline. If you have questions about how to document sources, etc., please talk to me.

SCHEDULE

8/20 Introduction; overview of unit I

22 Barlow, excerpts from *The Columbiad* (photocopy)

24 Irving, "Rip Van Winkle" (photocopy)

8/27 Cooper, *Pioneers* (at least through 168)

29 *Pioneers* (at least through 315)

31 *Pioneers* (finish)

9/ 3 Labor Day recess

5 Child, *Hobomok*

7 *Hobomok*; Child, "History of the Condition of Women" (168-80)

9/10 view excerpts from *Last of the Mohicans* film

12 Bryant, "The Prairies"; Brown, "The Cherokee Indians" (photocopy)

14 Hawthorne, "Alice Doane's Appeal" (110), "May-Pole of Merry Mount" (172), "Endicott and the Red Cross" (217), "Mrs. Hutchinson" (14)

9/17 Hawthorne, "The Gray Champion" (124), "Legends of Province House" (232), "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" (29), "Sir William Phips" (7)

19 Hawthorne, "Roger Malvin's Burial" (51), "Young Goodman Brown" (133), "Minister's Black Veil" (185), "Man of Adamant" (208)

21 Hawthorne, "Wakefield" (149), "Notch of the White Mountains" (159), "Earth's Holocaust" (336)

9/24 Apess, "Eulogy on King Philip" (photocopy)

26 study day

28 Essay I due; overview of unit II; class meets in computer lab 128 Stansbury (research)

10/ 1 Emerson, *Nature* (13-56)

3 *Nature*

5 Emerson, "Concord Hymn" (363); Bryant, "Thanatopsis," "To Cole" (photocopy)

10/ 8 Thoreau, Walden (at least through 98)
10 Walden (at least through 222)
12 Walden (finish)

10/15 Emerson, "Self-Reliance" (48), "Thoreau" (340)
17 Whitman, "Out of the Cradle" (196), "As I Ebb'd" (202), "Pioneers!" (183)
19 Whitman, "Song of Myself" (29)

10/22 Whitman, Calamus poems (95-112)
24 class meets in computer lab 128 Stansbury (Whitman hypertext archive)
26 class meets in computer lab 128 Stansbury (Dickinson pages)

10/29 Dickinson, selected poems (photocopy)
31 study day
11/ 2 Essay II due; overview of unit III

11/ 5 Douglass, Narrative (including "Selected Reviews, Documents, and Speeches" 119-45)
7 Narrative
9 Narrative

11/12 Melville, "Benito Cereno" (photocopy)
14 "Benito Cereno"
16 Davis, "John Lamar," "Blind Tom" (photocopy)

11/19-23 Thanksgiving recess

11/26 Davis, "David Gaunt" (photocopy)
28 Whitman, Drum-Taps poems (219-55)
30 Drum-Taps poems

12/ 3 Melville, Battle-Pieces poems (photocopy)
5 Whitman, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" (255)
7 course evaluations; excerpts from Ken Burns documentary on the Civil War

Essay III due in my mailbox (231 Stansbury) by noon Tuesday, Dec. 11.