

English 242: American Literature II

Dr. Michael Germana

Fall 2018

Section 001: 9:30-10:20 MWF 317 Clark Hall

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Introduction:

If the first half of the American Literature survey dramatizes the rise of a new nation and the creation of a unique literary tradition, the second half shows how the Civil War led to new beginnings for America and American literature alike. In this course we will examine the cultural history of the United States from this “new beginning” to the present through the lens of American literature.

Required Materials:

To purchase from the WVU bookstore:

- Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*
- Robert S. Levine, et al. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 9th Edition, Vols. C, D, & E
- Luis Valdez, *Zoot Suit and Other Plays*
- A Blue Book (the more pages, the better)

Online Resources:

- A list of links to course texts marked “online” can be found at <http://community.wvu.edu/~mjgermana/> **When you see “online” next to an assigned reading, follow these steps:**
 - 1) Visit <http://community.wvu.edu/~mjgermana/> (might as well bookmark it now)
 - 2) Click on the title of the assigned reading—they appear in the order we will cover them in class.
- The remaining course reading will be available in .PDF form through eReserves. **When you see “eReserves” next to an assigned reading, follow these steps:**
 - 1) Visit the University Libraries eReserves page at <https://reserves.lib.wvu.edu>
 - 2) Click “Log In” on the menu list to the left
 - 3) Log in using your MyID username and password
 - 4) Select our course from the list
 - 5) Select the assigned reading. Readings will appear in the order we will cover them.

Course Objectives:

Students enrolled in this course will learn to:

- Identify genre conventions and analyze their effects
- Identify and analyze effects of complexity or ambiguity
- Locate texts in social, economic, political, and literary history
- Connect texts to other literary or cultural texts
- Define and employ applicable literary critical terms
- Compare and contrast texts that cross a diverse range of genres, perspectives, and historical moments
- Interpret texts within diverse literary, cultural, and historical contexts

GEF Objective:

This course satisfies GEF Objective 6: The Arts and Creativity

Assignments:

In addition to periodic pop quizzes, group discussions, and general class participation activities, coursework for the semester consists of four essay exams. **These exams cannot be made up except in extraordinary circumstances, so be sure you don't miss class on scheduled exam days.**

Grading System:

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Exam One: | 20% |
| Exam Two: | 20% |
| Exam Three: | 20% |
| Exam Four: | 20% |
| Pop Quizzes: | 10% |
| Participation: | 10% |

All four exams will be graded on a 100-point scale with grade ranges as follows:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|------|
| + | 100-98 | + | 89-88 | + | 79-78 | + | 69-68 | | |
| A | 97-92 | B | 87-82 | C | 77-72 | D | 67-62 | F | 59-0 |
| - | 91-90 | - | 81-80 | - | 71-70 | - | 61-60 | | |

There will be 12 pop quizzes over the course of the semester. Each pop quiz is worth a maximum of 10 points. The total number of points earned *up to but not exceeding 100* by semester's end will be your pop quiz grade. Note that the total number of points available exceeds 100, so if you miss a pop quiz it won't sink your grade. Don't miss more than two, though!

The remaining 10% of the grade will be determined by your participation in class discussions, group activities, and the like.

Attendance Policy:

Because participation counts for 10% of your grade and material for the exams come from lectures and/or class discussions, you must attend regularly. **You can miss up to five non-exam classes without penalty.** Choose your five days judiciously. Subsequent absences will drop your participation grade one letter grade per day. **A failing grade for the course will be recorded for any student with ten or more absences.**

If you are more than five minutes late for class, you will be counted absent. Missed pop quizzes, which are administered at the beginning of class, cannot be made up under any circumstances.

Each and every member of the class should come prepared to discuss each day's reading. This means carefully reading the text(s) scheduled for each class meeting and arriving prepared to discuss two questions: 1) what do you think the author is trying to reveal to or demonstrate for their readers, and 2) how does the author construct their text(s) to accomplish this goal?

Plagiarism Statement:

Plagiarism is the (mis)representation of someone else's work as your own. It may be direct (e.g., not documenting a quoted source) or indirect (paraphrasing ideas, thoughts, etc. without due credit). In either case, neglecting to acknowledge sources for outside material is a serious offence and may result in failure for the assignment and possibly the course. Please see me if you are not sure about how to use or acknowledge certain materials.

Academic Integrity Statement:

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the Student Conduct Code at <http://studentlife.wvu.edu/studentconductcode.html>. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me *before* the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Intellectual Property Statement:

All course materials, including lectures, class notes, quizzes, exams, handouts, presentations, and other materials provided to students for this course are protected intellectual property. As such,

the unauthorized purchase or sale of these materials may result in disciplinary sanctions under the Campus Student Code.

Inclusivity Statement:

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu>.

Contact Information:

If you have questions about the course or concerns you would like to share privately with me, please contact me via email at Michael.Germana@mail.wvu.edu. **But please do not write to ask me for lecture notes or to request a summary of what you missed on any given day.** If you miss class and need class notes, ask one of your classmates.

You are also invited—but not required—to follow me on Twitter at [@michael_germana](https://twitter.com/michael_germana). **When I tweet or re-tweet something relevant to this course, I will use the hashtag #ENGL242. You can and should do likewise if you would like to share something with the class that pertains to our readings and/or discussions.** You may also message me through Twitter at your convenience.

Course Calendar:

August:

15 W Introduction/s

Reconstruction Re-written:

17 F S. Weir Mitchell, "The Case of George Dedlow" (online)

20 M Constance Fennimore Woolson, "Rodman the Keeper" (online)

22 W Joel Chandler Harris, from *Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings*: "Story of the War" + "Race Improvement" + "As To Education" (online) + "The Wonderful Tar-Baby Story" (Vol. C, pp. 509-510) + "How Mr. Rabbit Was Too Sharp for Mr. Fox" (Vol. C, pp. 510-511) + Excerpt from Introduction (handout)

24 F Charles Chesnutt, "Dave's Neckliss" (online) + "The Goophered Grapevine" (online)

Immigration, Assimilation, and Resistance:

27 M Bret Harte, "Plain Language from Truthful James" (a.k.a. "The Heathen Chinees") (online) + Zitkala Ša (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin), from "Impressions of an Indian Childhood" (Vol. C, pp. 1127-1132) + from "The School Days of an Indian Girl" (Vol. C, pp. 1133-1140)

The Progressive Era, the Labor Movement, and the Dawn of Naturalism:

- 29 W Jacob Riis, Introduction to *How the Other Half Lives* + Chapter XI + illustrations (online) + Upton Sinclair, Chapter 14 of *The Jungle* (online) + Lewis Hine, Child Labor Photographs (online)

31 F **Exam One**

September:

3 M **Labor Day—Class Does Not Meet**

5 W Jack London, “To Build a Fire” (Vol. C, pp. 1113-1124)

7 F Stephen Crane, “The Open Boat” (Vol. C, pp. 1048-1064)

First Wave Feminism:

10 M Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper” (Vol. C, pp. 844-855)

12 W Kate Chopin, “The Story of an Hour” (Vol. C, pp. 542-544)

Two Views on Race Relations at the Turn of the Century:

14 F Booker T. Washington, from *Up From Slavery*: “The Atlanta Exposition Address” (Vol. C, pp. 716-724)

17 M W. E. B. Du Bois, from *The Souls of Black Folk*: “Of Our Spiritual Strivings” (Vol. C, pp. 921-926) + “Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others” (Vol. C, pp. 927-936)

Modernism(s):

19 W Gertrude Stein, from *Tender Buttons*: “Objects” (Vol. D, pp. 190-200)

21 F Robert Frost, “Mowing” (Vol. D, pp. 219-220) + “Mending Wall” (Vol. D, pp. 220-221) + “After Apple-Picking” (Vol. D, p. 228) + “The Road Not Taken” (Vol. D, p. 230) + “Nothing Gold Can Stay” (Vol. D, p. 233) + “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” (Vol. D, p. 233)

24 M Jean Toomer, from *Cane*: “Blood-Burning Moon” (Vol. D, pp. 622-628)

26 W Zora Neale Hurston, “How It Feels to Be Colored Me” (Vol. D, pp. 533-536) + Countee Cullen, “Yet Do I Marvel” (Vol. D, p. 854) + “Incident” (Vol. D, pp. 854-855) + “Heritage” (Vol. D, pp. 855-857)

28 F Langston Hughes, from “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” (Vol. D, pp. 328-330) + “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” (Vol. D, p. 835)

October:

1 M **Exam Two**

3 W William Faulkner, “That Evening Sun” (online)

World War Two and Post-War American Identity:

5 F Luis Valdez, *Zoot Suit*, Act One

8 M Valdez, *Zoot Suit*, Act Two

10 W Allen Ginsberg, “Howl” (Vol. E, pp. 487-494) + “Footnote to Howl” (Vol. E, p. 495)

12 F **Fall Break—Class Does Not Meet**

The Civil Rights Movement:

15 F Gwendolyn Brooks, “the white troops had their orders but the Negroes looked like men” (Vol. E, p. 308) + “We Real Cool” (Vol. E, p. 309) + “The Last Quatrain of the Ballad of Emmett Till” (Vol. E, p. 313) + “To the Diaspora” (Vol. E, pp. 315-316)

17 W Flannery O’Connor, “Everything That Rises Must Converge” (online)

19 F Toni Morrison, “Recitatif” (Vol. E, pp. 607-620)

22 M **Exam Three**

Second Wave Feminism, Multiculturalism, and Postmodernism:

24 W Maxine Hong Kingston, from *The Woman Warrior*: “No Name Woman” (Vol. E, pp. 798-807)

26 F Junot Díaz, “Drown” (Vol. E, pp. 1208-1216)

29 M George Saunders, "CivilWarLand in Bad Decline" (Vol. E, pp. 1153-1165)
Post-9/11 America:

31 W Deborah Eisenberg, "Twilight of the Superheroes" (eReserves)

November:

2 F Kevin Brockmeier, "The Ceiling" (eReserves)

All Together Now: Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*:

5 M Langston Hughes, "Dream Boogie" (handout) + Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Prologue-Chapter 1

7 W Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 2-3

9 F Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 4-7

12 M Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 8-10

14 W Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 11-13

16 F **Class Does Not Meet**

---Fall Recess---

26 M Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 14-17

28 W Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 18-21

30 F Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 22-24

December:

3 M Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 25-Epilogue + course evaluations

5 W **Exam Four (alternate—see explanation below)**

There will be two opportunities to take the final exam. Choose the option that best suits your schedule. You may take the exam on the last day we are scheduled to meet (December 5), or you may take it during our final exam time-slot (that would be 2:00 PM on Tuesday, December 11) in Clark 317. Bear in mind that the fourth exam is identical in format to the previous three exams, and will therefore only take 50 minutes to complete. It is not a comprehensive final exam.