

ENGL 693D Special Topics: Antebellum American Literature  
Fall 2012 Tuesday 4:00-6:50 Colson G06

Tim Sweet

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105 Colson, hours: Tuesday 3:00-4:00 and by appointment

### Overview

We'll investigate the major movements and genres of American literature from the 1820s through the Civil War, with more emphasis on longer full-length works than is typical in a survey. Selections will include the Anglo-American turn to history (Irving, Cooper, Sedgwick, Hawthorne) and native American responses (Cusick, Apess, Schoolcraft); the turn to nature (Emerson, Thoreau); the literature of slavery and abolition (Whittier, Douglass, Melville, Stowe, Jacobs) and other reform literature (Child, Fuller, Fern); the transformation of lyric poetry (Bryant, Schoolcraft, Poe, Whitman, Dickinson, Melville) and the persistence of epic (Longfellow); and the development of the novel (Melville, Stowe, Fern). We'll conclude by examining some literary responses to the Civil War (Whitman, Melville, Dickinson).

### Texts

*Norton Anthology of American Literature, 1820-1865* (vol. B), 8<sup>th</sup> edition. 978-0393934779

James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pioneers*. Penguin. 978-0140390070

Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*. Penguin. 978-0142437247

Fanny Fern, *Ruth Hall*. Penguin. 978-01404366402

David Cusick, *Ancient History of the Six Nations* (1827) (download)

William Apess, "Eulogy on King Philip" (1836) (PDF)

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855) (PDF)

A few short items in PDF. (All PDFs available on the course's eCampus site.)

### Graded work

- A presentation, in which you take responsibility for giving some close readings and providing discussion questions for one class period. 5% of final grade.
- Two take-home essay exams, each 8-10 pp. double-spaced plus Works Cited page, documented using MLA style. Each 40% of final grade.
- A critical review essay, in which you synthesize and critique at least three recent articles or book chapters on an author or text of your choice from the syllabus. 4 pp. double-spaced plus Works Cited page, documented using MLA style. 15% of final grade.

### Policies

- *Social justice*. WVU does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. I concur with WVU's commitment to social justice and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination.
- *Late work*. Except in extraordinary circumstances, late work will not be accepted.
- *Attendance*. For every unexcused absence, your final grade will be lowered by one letter. If you must miss class (for contagious illness, emergency, etc.), please notify me ahead of time and provide documentation. We will follow WVU policy for cancellation on account of weather.

**Schedule** (page numbers refer to the *Norton*, vol. B, 8<sup>th</sup> edition)

8/21	Course Introduction "Introduction" 3-24
8/28	Irving, 25-27, 29-62 Cooper, 79-86 Sedgwick, 86-10 Hawthorne, 369-418, 450-76 Cooper, <i>Pioneers</i> through 217
9/4	Cooper, <i>Pioneers</i>
9/11	"Native Americans: Removal and Resistance," 349-69 Cusick, <i>History of the Six Nations</i> <a href="http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libraryscience/24/">http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libraryscience/24/</a> Apress, 129-31, <i>Eulogy on King Philip</i> (PDF) Schoolcraft, 160-61, 164-67
9/18	Emerson, 211-43, 269-86, 310-326 Child, 180-82, 190-210 Fuller, 740-86 Fern, 905-15
9/25	Thoreau, 961-64, 981-1155
10/2	<b>First exam due</b>
10/9	Bryant, 121-29 Schoolcraft, 161-63 Emerson, 341-48 Longfellow, 596-607; <i>Song of Hiawatha</i> (PDF) Whittier, 608-28 Poe, 629-44
10/16	Whitman, 1310-95 Dickinson, 1659-1704
10/23	"Slavery, Race, and the Making of American Literature," 787-804 Douglass, 1170-1282 Melville, 1424-27, 1526-82
10/30	Stowe, 805-904 Jacobs, 920-42
11/6	Election day recess
11/13	Melville, <i>Moby-Dick</i>
11/20	Thanksgiving recess
11/27	Fern, <i>Ruth Hall</i> ; <b>Critical review essay due</b>
12/4	South Carolina Declaration of Secession <a href="http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_scarsec.asp">http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_scarsec.asp</a> Mississippi Declaration of Secession <a href="http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_missec.asp">http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_missec.asp</a> Timrod, "Ethnogenesis" (PDF) Lincoln, 730-40 Whitman, 1395-1408 Melville, 1583-86 Dickinson, "It Feels a Shame" (PDF)
	<b>Second exam due Tuesday, Dec. 11.</b>