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English 208, Spring 2013 Section 0243  
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(Include your text w/name, class and section #)

This syllabus is subject to change or update. You will be notified in class and via email of any changes.

**ATTENDANCE:** Mandatory. Regular attendance will make this course enjoyable and stress-less because everything you need to excel and write papers to be proud of will be thoroughly covered in this class through review, instruction, discussion, and assigned readings. Missing more than one week of classes will result in being dropped from class. When absent, please contact instructor via text or email stating when you will return. I prefer text messages but be sure to include your name, class and section number as I have six classes and will not answer texts or emails that do not contain this information. If you are going through a personal crisis, please let me know if there is any way that I can assist you in finishing the course or if you need to drop it.

Get four phone numbers and emails from four different classmates whose notes you may ask to borrow when you are absent or to ask if there is homework due. Do not expect me to catch you up on material missed in class while you are out. You are also responsible for turning in assignments missed while absent and for viewing any films you missed. They are available on YouTube, the internet, or blockbuster. It is the student's responsibility to

withdraw from the class to prevent getting an F for failure to drop the class.

**CLASS RULES:** Turn off all cell phones in class; no texting or answering calls in class. Any student observed texting or talking on the phone will be asked to put his/her phone on my desk for pick up when class is over. No gum chewing in class. No talking while another is talking. Be respectful of others when making comments and respect the comments of others. This class is a free speech zone.

**NOTE:** This is a critical thinking class that requires independent thought as well as outside reading and research on topics students may be unfamiliar with or may not agree with. The highest form of ignorance is to criticize ideas that one knows little or nothing about, thus, students are expected to listen with an open mind to new information, analyze it objectively, then go within to find their own answers. Consideration of other races, religions, genders and world views are fundamental. Class discussions are expected to be thought provoking, uplifting, stimulating and above all, congenial. Individual ideas of students are to be shared, not imposed upon others. Students who are closed minded, judgmental or fanatical should drop this class.

**TEXTBOOKS:** American Literature II (Pearson). E-College MyLabsPlus. Available in the bookstore.

**PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:** Plagiarism is the use of another person's words as if they were your own. If you use material from someone else, give credit to the author or the source of that information by putting quotation marks around their works and using in text citations. If you cannot remember who the author is or the source, then put anonymous or unknown in parenthesis.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** 208 AMERICAN LITERATURE II presents representative pieces of American literature from the Civil War to the present. The selections are taken from a wide variety of

literary forms, such as essays, short stories, poems, letters, speeches, and novels.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

### **(1) Written and Oral Communication**

Students will demonstrate the interactive nature of communication involving speaking, writing, listening and reading. Evidence will be the student's ability to make a clear, well-organized verbal presentation employing appropriate evidence to support the arguments or conclusions and to write a clear, well-organized paper using documentation and quantitative tools when appropriate.

### **(2) Information Competency**

Students will demonstrate information competency by combining aspects of library literacy, research methods and technological literacy. It includes consideration of ethical and legal implications of information and requires the application of both critical thinking and communication skills. Evidence will be the ability to find, evaluate, use, and communicate information in all its various formats.

### **(3) Aesthetic Responsiveness**

Students will demonstrate aesthetic responsiveness by taking a position on and communicating the merits of specific works of art, music and literature and how those works reflect human values. Evidence will be written or oral communications that articulate a personal response to works of art, explain how personal and formal factors shape that response and connect works of art to broader contexts.

**EXPLANATION OF GRADING:** An “A” paper or group project is excellent and is free from careless grammatical, spelling, and organizational errors. It begins with a clear thesis. It has seamless transitions from paragraph to paragraph, never losing sign of its focal point. It draws a logical conclusion that answers a problem stated in the thesis. It meets the length requirement of the assignment. It has an original point of view that is lively and interesting to read. It has no format errors. An “A” represents a written and verbal level of unusual polish and style, and often takes a surprising angle in developing the material. This level shows consistent excellence and always surpasses assignment expectations. A “B” paper is a good essay and has many of the qualities found in an “A” paper, but it might have one too many writing errors. It often lacks the depth of explanation and originality seen in an “A” paper. It represents solid, readable writing that does what the assignment asks. “B” level writing demonstrates concrete support for claims, fine organization, and substantive thoughtfulness. A “C” paper is an adequate essay. It may have errors but not enough to hurt its clarity. It shows some of the qualities of an “A” or a “B” paper, but it does not develop the idea to its fullest. It is adequately organized but is rather simplistic. It satisfies all of the requirements of the assignment, but it lacks sufficient, concrete support needed to illustrate its assertions or prove its point. It also shows lapses in editing proficiency and contains careless errors. A “D” paper is inadequate. It contains all or some of the following problems; is too short, has many errors, lacks clarity and focus, lacks logical organization, rambles, is too general, or doesn’t satisfy the requirements of the assignment. An “F” paper is off topic, poorly written and contains too many errors.

**GRADES:** Based on all work assigned and a total of 100 points.

Homework/Classwork/Participation/Attendance = 40%; Midterm = 20%; Final Research Paper = 20%; Final Exam = 20%  
Explanation: 90-100=A 80-89=B 70-79=C 60-69=D 59-

Below=F

**THERE WILL BE IN CLASS GROUP SESSIONS:** Bring your ideas and material to class to develop individual or group projects. Instructor will assist students.

### **AMERICAN LITERATURE - LAB 1**

"Here is not merely a nation but a teeming nation of nations." -  
Walt Whitman

**INTRODUCTION:** What Whitman realized about late nineteenth-century America has become even more manifest in the 21st century. America's literature, too, has become a wealth of texts that are created by and represent a variety of issues marked by racial, gender, and socioeconomic concerns that reflect the radical changes in national temperament. Moreover, they challenge the definition not only of "American literature," but more fundamentally, the concept of "American" identity.

This course will present you with a wide range of America's literature where voices are more often in conflict with one another than in harmony. Our task is to think critically about the "American" texts using several critical perspectives and to examine literary movements and innovations **within their historical context**. Ultimately, we will seek ways in which the literature of this "teeming nation of nations" can help us understand who we are.

In addition to regular readings and writing assignments, this course is broken into Labs that include a laboratory component that allows for hands-on primary source research.

## REQUIRED READINGS From Textbook

- Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) 1835-1910. “The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” (Text p. 24)
- Charlotte Perkins Gilman 1860-1935. “The Yellow Wall Paper” (Text p. 203-204)
- Kate Chopin 1850-1904. “The Storm” (Text p. 137-138).
- Booker T. Washington 1856-1915. “Up From Slavery” (Text p. 160-162)
- Mary E. Wilkins Freeman 1852-1930. “The Revolt of Mother (Text p.144-145) "Old Woman Magoun" (Text at [www.lamc.mylabsplus.com](http://www.lamc.mylabsplus.com) week 3)
- Louisa May Alcott, "The Brother aka My Contraband" (Text at [www.lamc.mylabsplus.com](http://www.lamc.mylabsplus.com) Week 3)
- Joel Chandler Harris, "The Wonderful Tar-Baby Story" and "How Mr. Rabbit Was Too Sharp for Mr. Fox" (Text p. 118-122)
- Gertrude Bonnin, from Impressions of an Indian Childhood (Text at [www.lamc.mylabsplus.com](http://www.lamc.mylabsplus.com) Week 3)
- José Martí, "Our America" 1892. (Text at [www.lamc.mylabsplus.com](http://www.lamc.mylabsplus.com) Week 3)

**CULTURAL MATERIALS:** Video clips of the 1920's club scene; Photographs, paintings, and popular press images from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

WEEK 1: Review of syllabus, goals and theme for the class; individual introductions of students; exchange of student contact information. Discussion of success tips and Gladwell's research on success in *Outliers* as well as The Rosenthal Effect. In class viewing of *BBC's Imagine: The Secret to Life* by Alan Yentob. Take notes on all films viewed in class to answer discussion questions. Type notes for use later in papers. **ASSIGNMENT:** View all links and read all assigned material in Week One's tab at [www.lamc.mylabsplus.com](http://www.lamc.mylabsplus.com). **ESSAY #1:** Write a one page

reflective essay analyzing what you learned from the assigned materials about how to be a healthy skeptic who is also open to new ideas yet is able to think critically. Success Tip: While reading materials, highlight quotes and bring to class for use in class discussions. **READING:** Begin reading the short pieces outlined above under Required Reading for later discussion and assignments.

**WEEK 2:** In class viewing of *Kymatica* by B. Stewart. (available for download from YouTube). Discussion of the ego's role throughout history as the villain in literature. Discussion of how the ego perpetuates fear, ignorance, attachment, addictions, lack of integrity and the role of the Ego as a metaphorical parasite that prevents individuals from reaching the pivotal level of Courage where truth, honesty and integrity are critical for having an authentic sense of worth and self esteem. Review of Don Miguel Ruiz's Four Agreements as a tool for reaching the level of Courage. **HOMEWORK:** Discussion Board due Sunday before midnight. Complete the assigned reading in Week 3's link at [www.lamc.mylabsplus.com](http://www.lamc.mylabsplus.com).

**WEEKS 3-6: DISCUSSION STARTERS:** Pudd'nhead Wilson suggests that "training is everything." Is identity solidly fixed? How is identity defined in the assigned texts? How do women identify themselves? How do minorities identify themselves? Do the texts express similar definitions or are there contradictions? Do the differences in genre also suggest differences in identity definition? (i.e. short story v. non-fiction v. essay v. painting)? If these literary and cultural texts were your only peek into late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century American notions of identity, what conclusions would you come to? How would you say American identity of this time period is defined? How does it change? **DISCUSSION BOARD.** Choose one of the above questions and comment on it, then post on the discussion board. Respond to the posts of two other classmates.

**GROUP WORK:** Group exploration of ideas: initial questions, discoveries, difficulties, successes, questions, conclusions, and interpretations. Guidelines: **Each individual** in the group will have a maximum of 5 minutes to present to the rest of the class his/her interpretive discoveries and reading of "identity" in the texts. Include the role of the ego as a villain in the materials. Compare and contrast the hero and villain. It could be man vs. self (inner higher self vs. ego); man vs. society (collective ego); man vs. nature (as an adversary vs. earth mother); or man vs. man (higher self vs. outer ego). Include the complicated ways these texts describe or characterize identity. You may focus on a couple of specific texts or talk more generally about all of them, keeping in mind that you'll still need to draw attention to specific examples to prove your points. Use literary texts as well as specific cultural materials as evidence. Everyone in the group should present some part of the group's information. The presentations will be evaluated according to both content and style. Power point, video, music, dance, artifacts (posters, clothing, or fads of the period) and multi media should be incorporated into the group project.

**WEEKS 7-11: THE MODERN MOMENT.** Modernism is the label usually attached to the cultural period that occurred between 1900 and 1940. That is the easy definition--but Modernism is not that easy to define, particularly when it is regarded as a cultural moment, rather than just a literary phenomenon. Why? Because the forty years of Modernism included social and political movements that the United States is still adapting from (the so-called "war to end all wars,") the Harlem Renaissance, migration of African Americans to the North, increased immigration, the Great Depression, and the beginning of World War II. If that's not enough, literature was only one of the means of cultural expression--art, photography, dance, music, psychology, and architecture all assumed "modernist" tendencies. This moment gives you the opportunity to explore the literature, music, art, and

culture of the modern period, the chance to realize just how complicated these years were, and the challenge of creating your own definition of the modern moment based on primary and secondary source research.

**REQUIRED READING** (These texts are in your American Literature II Anthology)

- William Faulkner, 1897-1962, "That Evening Sun" (p. 626-627)
- Ernest Hemingway, 1899-1961, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" (p. 645)
- Zora Neal Hurston, 1891-1960, "The Gilded Six-Bits"
- Eugene O'Neill, 1888-1953, "The Emperor Jones" (p. 512-514)
- Jean Toomer, 1894-1967, "Georgia Dusk" and "Fern" (p. 593-595)
- Dorothy Parker, 1893-1982, "General Review of the Sex Situation" (p. 579)

**SELECTED POEMS OF:** (1-4 POEMS EACH)

- E.E. Cummings, 1894-1962 (p. 580-585)
- Langston Hughes, 1902-1967 (p. 683-694)
- Claude McKay, 1889-1948 (p. 544-545)
- Amy Lowell, 1874-1925, (p. 383-389)
- Robert Frost, 1874-1963, (p. 390-404)
- Ezra Pound, 1885-1972, (p. 455-459)
- William Carlos Williams, 1883-1963, (p. 444-458)
- T. S. Eliot, 1888-1965, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (p. 475-581)

**CULTURAL MATERIALS:** Photographs, cultural artifacts, and modern art; Lyrics and melodies of jazz and blues: Billie Holiday, Louis Armstrong, Etta James ("Cadillac Records"); Video clips that set the jazz and blues scenes of the modern period. "Cotton

Club,” “Color Purple,” and “Lady Sings the Blues”

**DISCUSSION STARTERS:** What do you notice about the content of literature--that is, what is the subject matter, who is written about? Are there differences in appropriate subject matter from literature that comes before modernist literature? What do you notice about the style of the literature? The music? The art? Note that I've been referring to "modernisms"--in the plural. How might these texts be divided as if there are competing definitions of the movement? Or should there be? Consider the language that is used, as well as the form the language takes. Do you see some of the same tendencies in literature reflected in music or art? Why might all these modernist tendencies be happening at this time in history?

**GROUP PROJECTS:** Initial groups will be assigned at the start of the lab; halfway through the discussion, groups will be divided and mixed--one person from each group will share lab's findings with another group. At the end of the lab, each member of each group should:

- have a definition of "modernism" that the individual group has decided upon
- select two texts that exemplify this definition (one must be a literary text)
- select one text that seems ill-fitted to this definition, either in whole or in part
- be prepared to talk about one of the important modernist people who might have contributed to a particular mindset of the times and how this person's ideas are visible in the literature and other cultural texts.

**INDIVIDUAL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT:** Of all of the texts you have examined (literary, visual, film), select the one that you think best represents or exemplifies the definition of "modernism" that you have created. For this written response, you do not need to

describe the text in detail. Rather, spend your time developing and detailing your definition, using the text you have selected as the evidence to support your definition. Length: 2-3 pages, MLA with citations. Rewrite this paper several times before sending it to the live online tutor at Pearson's MyWritingLab for feedback. Be sure to give Pearson's Smart Tutor a 3 day turnaround. Do not procrastinate as you will need time to make the corrections that Pearson's tutor suggests before submitting it to me. Please submit your paper through the drop box at [www.lamc.mylabsplus.com](http://www.lamc.mylabsplus.com). Homework: Review The Elements of Poetry listed at [www.lamc.mylabsplus.com](http://www.lamc.mylabsplus.com).

## WEEKS 12-16: Economic and Social Class in Mid-20th Century American Film

A remarkable number of films in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s were produced that focused on the class issues—both social and economic, and complicated this even further by also incorporating race and ethnicity into their portrayals. This lab asks that you examine a different kind of text, a film, from one of these decades, with an eye toward how it represents socio-economic issues. How are characters portrayed? How are class issues physically presented? Are there tensions apparent because of different socio-economic classes? How do these conflicts get resolved, if they do? Do racial or ethnic differences complicate the portrayal of economics and social class?

Texts	Discussion Starters	Assignment
<p>Step One: Watch the film in its entirety. The library has facilities to watch films.</p>	<p>What changes do you notice over time (from the 1940s to the 1960s, depending on the dates your films were produced) in how socio-economic class is portrayed?</p>	<p>Post your findings on the Discussion Board</p>
<p>Step Two: After you have watched the film in its entirety, each group should select one 8 to 10 minute segment in the film that you think best represents that film's portrayal of social and economic class. Cue the tape to this section—each group will share this brief portion of film with two other groups.</p>	<p>What do you notice about how characters of different social and economic classes are portrayed?</p>	<p>Essay 2 Assignment and Guidelines</p> <p>MLA FORMAT 2-3 pages Works Cited Page Five References</p>
<p>Step Three: Each group will briefly introduce their film, play the 8-10 minute segment. Play all the</p>	<p>Compare the portrayals of social and economic class in these films to</p>	<p><b>FILMS</b> <i>Citizen Kane</i> (1941); <i>Salt of the Earth</i> (1953); <i>On the Waterfront</i></p>

<p>excerpts from the films first and then begin your discussion with the starter questions in the next column.</p>	<p>literature published before the mid-twentieth century.</p>	<p>(1954); <i>The Heat of the Night</i> (1967);  <i>The Help</i> (1950's/1960's)</p>
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**FINAL:** "In the American Society": By this time in the semester, you should be realizing that although the more things change, the more they stay the same; it's also true that the more things change, well, the more they change. Your task is to search through literary texts and other types of primary source cultural materials that all have something to say about what American society was like in the last half of the twentieth century and in these early years of the twenty-first century. You may find that you're right back to where you started--we're really not that different from the townsfolk of Dawson's Landing--or, you may find, that contemporary Americans have moved far beyond their (our) (literary) ancestors.

But here's the twist: The essay that provides an analysis of the literary texts and cultural materials, "In the American Society," already has been written. Read this essay first at [www.lamc.mylabs.plus](http://www.lamc.mylabs.plus). You are responsible for finding the other literary texts and the cultural materials that provide evidence for the essay's argument about the contemporary American society. Some places to look? Your anthology, other Literary texts, popular press magazines, newspapers, including political cartoons, films, websites that document social change, artwork, photographs, and other materials that reflect and respond to the culture.

**GROUND RULES:** You must find, read, and analyze five literary selections from your American Lit Anthology, Part III:

American Prose Since 1945. Via consensus, the class will narrow down the selections chosen by students. In groups of five, examine at cultural artifacts from 1945 to present. Please provide a hard copy of the image/artifact, large enough to view from a few feet away. We'll be creating our own "museum" exhibits and we'll all need to see the materials. The texts you ultimately select should come from different media sources. Please provide a typed list of all artifacts you examined.

**DISCUSSION STARTERS:** What or who constitutes American society? How do these texts represent a changed or changing American society? Are the changes accepted or tolerated or are they met with resistance? Arrange the literary and primary text chronologically--do you notice trends in how the American society is defined? Who has the power to define "society"? Who doesn't? How can these primary source documents help you to gain a better insight, make more creative connections, or develop a deeper reading of the literature? Consider some examples from your own lives that focus on this issue of how American society is defined, not defined, or is ill-defined. Then, compare your own observations with one of the literary texts selected. Do your experiences reflect the American society in the text?

**IN CLASS FINAL ASSIGNMENT:** Please bring your artifacts to class; we'll hang them on the walls around the room, or set them on tables. As a class, we'll examine the artifacts along with the literary texts and together come to an analysis of contemporary American literature and culture.