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ENG 4300-003: The Self-Made Individual

John Allison
Eastern Illinois University

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ENGLISH 4300-003: The Self-Made Individual

SYLLABUS

Instructor: John Allison
Coleman Hall 3552 (316F)
581-6978/348-0269

Office Hours: MW: 10-11:00, 2-3:00; F: 10-11:00 and by appointment.

Purpose and Scope

We will focus on a central motif in American life and literature -- the self-made individual. Given the vast reach of our topic, we will discuss works from the Colonial period through the first half of the 20th century. The works include autobiographies written about actual lives, as well as novels written about fictional characters. As we study the works, we will consider such questions as the following, while by no means restricting ourselves to them.

- Is the concept of a self-made identity a viable one?
- To what extent and in what ways does a preoccupation with self-development relate to narrativity and vice-versa?
- What relationships exist between identity formation and social milieus, philosophical assumptions, and gender and race classifications?
- What, if anything, do we learn about being an American from the works?

Requirements

- Midterm Essay (4-5 pp. with primary support): 20%
- Critical Essay (8-10 pp. with primary/secondary support): 45%
- Final Essay (4-5 pp. with primary support): 25%
- Class Presentation: 10%
**Attendance**

This class includes an attendance policy. After three unexcused absences, each subsequent unexcused absence will reduce your final grade by five percent. For an excused absence, you must have a verifiable excuse from Eastern's Health Service, your medical doctor, or an appropriate university official. Excused absences will not be granted for class observations or student teaching.

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.
Tentative Schedule

English 4300-003

1. Week of January 12
   - Introduction to Course
   - *Autobiography* (46-80)

2. Week of January 19
   - King's Day: No Classes
   - *Autobiography* (80-120)
   - *Autobiography* (120-57)

3. Week of January 26
   - Douglass, *Narrative* (27-67)
   - *Narrative* (67-94)
   - *Narrative* (94-109)

4. Week of February 2
   - Chopin, *The Awakening* (3-26)
   - *The Awakening* (26-54)
   - *The Awakening* (54-88)

5. Week of February 9
   - *The Awakening* (88-109)
   - Reports and Discussion
   - Lincoln's Day

6. Week of February 16
   - Dresiser, *Sister Carrie* (1-56)
   - *Sister Carrie* (56-103)
   - *Sister Carrie* (103-151)

7. Week of February 23
   - *Sister Carrie* (151-213)
   - *Sister Carrie* (214-53)
   - *Sister Carrie* (253-300)

8. Week of March 1
   - *Sister Carrie* (300-69)
   - Reports/Discussion
   - Midterm essay Due
9. Week of March 8:
   - Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (Chapters I-III)
   - *The Great Gatsby* (IV-VI)
   - *The Great Gatsby* (VII-IX)

**Spring Break**

10. Week of March 22
    - Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!* (I-III)
    - *Absalom, Absalom!* (IV-V)
    - *Absalom, Absalom!* (VI)

11. Week of March 29
    - *Absalom, Absalom!* (VII)
    - *Absalom, Absalom!* (VIII)
    - *Absalom, Absalom!* (IX); Reports/Discussion

12. Week of April 5
    - Conferences
    - Conferences
    - Conferences

13. Week of April 12
    - *Invisible Man* (3-135)
    - *Invisible Man* (136-95)
    - *Invisible Man* (196-250)

14. Week of April 19
    - *Invisible Man* (251-332)
    - *Invisible Man* (333-408)
    - *Invisible Man* (409-478)

15. Week of April 26
    - Reports/Discussion
    - *Invisible Man* (479-581)
    - **Critical Essays Due**, Student Evaluations, Take-Home Final