Spring 1-15-2011

ENG 3701-002: 19th-Century American Literature Before the Civil War

Stephen Swords
Eastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2011

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons

Recommended Citation
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2011/90

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2011 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 2011 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.
English 3701 19th Century American Literature before the Civil War

Stephen Swords coleman 3020

sswords@eiu.edu 217-367-6253

Office hours: 8:30-9:30, 12:15-2:00 Tuesdays and Thursdays and by appointment

Books for the course:

Frederick Douglass, Narrative of a Life

Ralph Waldo Emerson, Essays and Lectures

Nathaniel Hawthorne, complete Novels and Selected Tales

Henry David Thoreau, Portable Thoreau

Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass

This is a course on the literature in the United States in the period leading up to the Civil War. During this time, America in many ways doesn’t really know who or what it is, or what it is supposed to be. Mainly European in heritage, yet a revolution away from that, a place of freedom with 10 million enslaved, a place of new ideas, yet burdened by many traditions and prejudices, a dynamic place, yet oddly dull and unformed—one can see the writers of this period struggling with ideas like this, trying to conjure up a country and a culture they can believe in. We will be reading deeply in several writers from this time, multiple pieces by each of them, in order to get a sense of the complexity and contradiction in their thought and point of view.

Rules and regulations:

1. Keep up with the reading, come to class, participate. Your final grade will be based 50% on your involvement in the class.

2. There will be a large take-home final at the end of the semester that will be worth 50% of your final grade