Spring 1999

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ENG 3701-002: American Romanticism

Michele Tarter
Eastern Illinois University

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Introduction:

This seminar on American Romanticism will explore the construction of "identity" in America in the early to mid-nineteenth century, analyzing a multiplicity of texts in relation to issues of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class. Primarily, we will focus on the creation of an "American" literature, reading diaries, letters, short stories, essays, poetry, and a novel as we analyze the portraiture of American life, politics, and cross-cultural encounters as written and "created" by various authors from around the country.

Required Texts

Paul Lauter, ed., The Heath Anthology of American Literature, Volume I
Harriet Ann Jacobs (Linda Brent), Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl
Harriet Beecher Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin

Course Requirements

A. Reading, attendance, and participation in class discussions.

It is very important that you keep up with our class reading schedule; there will be short (unannounced) quizzes on the assignments throughout the semester to ensure that you are keeping up with the schedule. Attendance is equally important. If you miss more than three classes, it will seriously affect your final grade: your grade will be lowered a half-grade for each additional class missed. That is, should you have a final grade of a B for the course and you miss a fourth class, your grade would drop to a B-. Please feel free to discuss this policy with me at any time during the semester, should you have questions about your attendance record. I will also be placing emphasis on your class participation, which will be accounted into your final grade. PLEASE DO NOT BE LATE TO CLASS.

B. Group projects. You are to notify me of your top three (3) choices by Monday, January 18th (please put a note in my mailbox or email me by 3:00 pm). Groups will be announced on Tuesday the 19th. Each group will consist of 2-3 students and will meet several times to discuss strategies for presenting their literary piece to the class, in a 15-20 minute creative presentation followed by a thorough analysis of the text in its socio-historical context. You might want to present a historical overview of the writer, for example, or the public reception of her/his work. You are to investigate and research any critical essays written on this piece, in order to present different ideas to the class -- the more critical essays, the better and stronger.
your presentation should prove to be. Share ideas with each other, and be as creative as you dare. You are to lead class discussion on the literary piece, presenting your peers with questions about the work which incorporate the critical research you have shared with them. Your group must meet with me once before your presentation (during my office hours).

Then, at the class following your presentation, you are to turn in a group portfolio with the following materials:

1) an Annotated Bibliography (typed), along with copies of any critical essays you’ve read (the bibliography is to be in MLA format and should include a 2-3 sentence description of each critical work you’ve used in preparing your presentation);

2) a list of questions your group designed to stimulate class discussion;

3) each group member’s personal, confidential summary of the "group" experience, including insights, comments and suggestions, in retrospect (this should be sealed, so that others in the group don’t read it, etc.);

4) any other creative memorabilia you might have included in your presentation, such as handouts for the class, etc.

C. Written Work: Research Paper

Your topic will most likely evolve from your group project research, class discussions, or conference sessions. If you have any difficulty in finding a topic, I will certainly help you by suggesting a few. You are free, however, to choose your topic, but be sure to clear it with me before you put too much work into it. This paper will be the culmination of your work in research and critical thinking about American Romanticism, as experienced in this seminar.

D. Midterm Examination and Final Examination. These will be comprehensive, based on the process of the class. This is why attendance is so very important.

E. Thought for the Day. Just a little enhancement for the course. On the day you select, please bring a quotation to write on the board and share with the class; it could be a song lyric, a poem, an excerpt from a speech, even a passage from a diary. you decide...

Grading percentages/breakdown:

| Group Project: | 25% |
| Research Paper: | 25% |
| Quiz grades/Class participation: | 10% |
| Midterm Examination: | 20% |
| Final Examination: | 20% |

Total: 100%
A note on lateness: Unless you have made prior arrangements with me, any late work will receive a failing grade. You must, however, turn in all work to be considered for a passing grade.

Information for 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.

Plagiarism:
The English Department's statement on plagiarism:

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism -- "The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) -- has the right and the responsibility to impose the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of NC for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.
English 3701: American Romanticism
Professor Michele Tarter
Spring 1999

Syllabus

(Please note: These dates/assignments are subject to change. I often announce changes at the end of class, due to the process and progress of our discussions. Therefore, should you miss a class, you should have a peer’s phone number to check in and see where we left off in discussion and where we are headed in the next class.)

Phone Number__________________________

Jan. 12: Introduction to class

14: American Romanticism and the Early Nineteenth Century
Heath Anthology, pp. 1228-1260

**Project Selections due by Monday, Jan. 18th, 3:00 PM**

19: "The Flowering of Narrative":
Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown" and
"Rappaccini’s Daughter"

21: Hawthorne, "The Birthmark"; Edgar Allan Poe, "Ligeia"

26: Transcendentalism:
Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature" and "Self Reliance"
Group Project #1.

28: No Class

Feb. 2: "The Woman Question"
Sarah Margaret Fuller, "To [Sophia Ripley]," "Summer on
the Lakes," and "Woman in the Nineteenth Century"
Sarah Moore Grimke (pp. 1935-1941); Elizabeth Cady
Stanton (pp. 1942-1947); Sojourner Truth (pp. 1956-
1962); and Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (to be
announced).
Group Project #2.

4: "The Woman Question," continued

9: Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of...

11: Douglass, continued
Group Project #3.

16: Douglass, continued

18: Harriet Ann Jacobs, Incidents in the Life of a Slave
Girl
23: Jacobs, continued
25: Jacobs, continued
   Group Project #4.

Mar. 2: Jacobs, continued

4: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

9: Harriet Beecher Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin

11: Stowe, continued

*****spring break******

23: Stowe, continued
25: Stowe, continued
   Group Project #5.

30: "Indian Voices":
    William Apess, "An Indian's Looking-Glass"; John
    Wannaucon Quinney, "Quinney's Speech"; Elias
    Boudinot, "An Address to the Whites"; John Rollin
    Ridge, selected readings
   Group Project #6.

Apr. 1: "Indian Voices," continued

6: Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government"
   and selections from Walden
   Group Project #7.

8: Thoreau, continued

13: Herman Melville, "Benito Cereno" and "Bartleby the
    Scrivener"
   Group Project #8.

15: Melville, continued
    ***RESEARCH PAPERS DUE.

20: Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself"
   Group Project #9.

22: Whitman, continued

27: Emily Dickinson, selected poetry
   Group Project #10.

29: Dickinson, continued