ENG 3702-003: American Realism

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English 3702--003
American Realism
CH 313
Fall, 2000

Texts:

Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson, Johnson, ed.
In Our Time, Hemingway

General Comments:

Our focus in this course will be primarily on the readings themselves, but we will also be studying American prose and poetry that reflects important formative years in this country's history. What was happening intellectually and culturally between the years 1865 and 1915 had a lot to do with the lives of the fictional characters we'll meet this term. America's literature is a self-conscious one: who is an American? What does he or she value? How did the social climate of this period help shape who you and I are today? Let's try together to answer these and the many other questions of American identity that will surely come up in our discussions.

Reading/Viewing Schedule:

The following is a list of the works we'll be reading or videos we'll see. The order is chronological and my omission of a timetable, intentional. If this class is any good, we'll get behind as we spin off in tangents. Let's let the pace of the course march to its own drummer.

1. The Civil War, Ken Burns (video)
2. Dickinson: selected poems; Voices and Visions (video)
3. Twain: "Notorious Jumping Frog"; Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
4. Harte: "Outcasts of Poker Flat"
5. Howells: "Editha"
6. James: Daisy Miller; Turn of the Screw
7. Chopin: The Awakening
8. Wharton: Ethan Frome
9. Crane: "The Open Boat"; "The Blue Hotel"; selected poems
11. Masters: selected poems
12. Frost: selected poems
13. Robinson: selected poems
14. Hemingway, In Our Time
Grades/Requirements:

1. class participation (20%)
2. daily quizzes (20%)
3. two papers (40%):  
   a. an analytical/critical essay of 3-5 pages, typed, double-spaced on an assigned topic, due around mid-term;  
   b. a combination paper and oral report on an assigned or approved cultural topic; 10-15 minute presentation to class and paper due one week after; you determine when you want to do this
4. comprehensive final exam (20%)

I urge you to get busy on 3.b. as soon as possible, both for your own sake and for the enrichment of the class.