

Dr. Julie Hall
English 569: Studies in the American Novel
Spring 2008
Monday night, 6:00-8:50.

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Studies in the American Novel

Required Texts:

The Scarlet Letter, Nathaniel Hawthorne
The Blithedale Romance, Nathaniel Hawthorne
Moby Dick, Herman Melville
Our Nig, Harriet Wilson
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Samuel Clemens
The Red Badge of Courage, Stephen Crane
The Awakening, Kate Chopin
Passing, Nella Larsen

Course Description

Although the first American novels appeared on the scene in the late 1800s, some forty years after the appearance of the British novel, it can be argued that the American novel truly came into its own with the publication of Nathaniel Hawthorne's masterpiece, *The Scarlet Letter*. Undeniably American in its subject matter, tone, and thematic concerns, it yet rivaled the best that Great Britain had produced.

This course is a study of the flowering of the American Novel in the nineteenth century, beginning with Nathaniel Hawthorne, and including some of the genre's great masters: Herman Melville, Samuel Clemens, Stephen Crane, and Kate Chopin. We will also study the origins and development of the African-American novelistic tradition in this period, as seen in the publication of Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig* and Nella Larsen's *Passing*.

Course Objectives:

This course has several primary objectives:

- 1) To strengthen your ability to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and literature.
- 2) To strengthen your skills in oral and written expression.
- 3) To increase your factual knowledge of the American novel.
- 4) To strengthen your research methods and skills.

Course Requirements:

You will take **two exams** (mid-term and a final) in this class; both will be essay exams. You will write one **researched analysis** paper of approximately 3000-3500 words (excluding Works Cited), due toward the end of the semester. The paper must be written over one of the texts on the syllabus and should make use of at least eight pieces of scholarship. You will write one **annotated bibliography** over an assigned text. The bibliography should review 6 pieces of scholarship. You will make one **oral presentation** in class based on your annotated bibliography.

Course Schedule:

Jan. 21: Martin Luther King, Jr., day. Holiday

Jan. 28: Intro to the Course
The Scarlet Letter

Feb. 4: *The Scarlet Letter*

Feb. 11: *The Blithedale Romance*

Feb. 18: *The Blithedale Romance*
Moby Dick

Feb. 25: *Moby Dick*

Mar. 3: *Moby Dick*

Mar. 10: **Spring Break**

Mar. 17: **Mid-term Exam.**

Mar. 24: *Our Nig*

Mar. 31: *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Apr. 7: *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Apr. 14: *The Red Badge of Courage*
Paper due.

Apr. 21: *The Red Badge of Courage*
The Awakening

Apr. 28: *The Awakening*

May 5: *Passing*

May 12: **Final Exams**

University Policies:

1. Student evaluations. Each student will be asked to evaluate the course at the end of the semester.

2. Student Absences on Religious Holy Days

Section 51.911b of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy 86101 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. Students desiring to absent themselves from a scheduled class in order to observe a religious holy day shall present to each instructor a written statement concerning the religious holy day. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

“Religious holy day” means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

3 Americans with Disabilities Act.

It is the policy of SHSU that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, I encourage you to register with the “SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosure of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. **Please note:** No accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.