English 343
American Literature 1860-1910
Course Syllabus, Winter 2002
Tues/Thurs 10:00-11:20
CGC 151

Prof. V. Lamont
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Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 12:30-2:00 or by appointment
A Note About Availability: Generally, I am on campus all day on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Students are welcome to drop in at any time and, if I do not have pressing commitments, I will be happy to help you. I cannot guarantee my availability, however, outside of my office hours or scheduled appointments.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS
Through lectures, class discussion, and student presentations, this course will explore late-nineteenth century American literature in its cultural and historical context. After the end of the Civil War in 1865 and into the early 20th-century, American culture and society transformed drastically: recently emancipated African Americans struggled for a new place in society, the economy industrialized at a furious pace, immigration increased exponentially, Native Americans were forced to assimilate, women agitated for the vote—the list of profound changes in American society goes on and on. All of these developments provided American writers with rich subject matter to work with as they struggled to make sense of a society that older generations found unrecognizable. In addition to familiar voices from this period such as those of Mark Twain and Louisa May Alcott, we will explore emergent, marginal literatures by African, Native, and immigrant American authors.

TEXTS

Required
Alcott, Louisa May, Little Women (Broadview).
Love, Nat. The Life and Adventures of Nat Love (Bison Books).
Zangwill, Israel, The Melting Pot (on reserve).

Highly Recommended

(Note: all royalties earned from the sale of The Little, Brown Compact Handbook will go to the Department of English Scholarship Fund.)

ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION
In the interest of fairness, all students will be evaluated on the basis of the following assignments. There will be no exceptions (i.e. substitute assignments, second exam sittings, etc.) without supporting documentation (usually medical) which convincingly justifies the request for special treatment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation Journal</td>
<td>Every Friday</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>Sign Up</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>40%</td>
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1. Participation Journal
Students are expected to prepare for class by carefully reading the assigned text, and to participate in class discussion. Each student is responsible for keeping track of his or her participation in a participation journal. In this journal, you will record the comments and questions you contributed to class discussion, explain what prompted you to offer these comments or questions, and describe the outcome of your contribution to the discussion. You may also include private reflection on content of lectures and discussion. You may be asked to write journal entries in class to prepare for discussion. Journal entries for the week are due in my mailbox (HH 252) every Friday so that I can read them while the week’s classes are still fresh in my mind; late entries are of little benefit and will not be accepted. I will keep your journal entries until the end of the term, when I will re-read them in order to determine your mark for class participation.

Evaluation
Student participation will be evaluated on the basis of the following evidence, as recorded by students in their participation journals: preparation (careful reading of assigned text before class), contributions to ongoing critical conversations in class (are they constructive? productive? intellectually stimulating?), private reflection on class discussion and lectures (does it demonstrate intellectual engagement with content of the course?).

2. Group Seminar Presentation
This assignment will give you the opportunity to meet each other and work as a team. The purpose of this assignment is to present a broader historical context through which the primary text might be understood and interpreted, and to facilitate class discussion about your topic. You should attempt to link the seminar material to the particular writers and texts we are studying in the course. The seminar should last 30 minutes, although latitude (and high marks) will be given to seminars that go over time due to lively discussion. Students will sign up for seminar topics (listed in the schedule of classes, below) during the first week of class.

This assignment requires research. Start your research early to allow time for interlibrary loans and recalls.

Everyone in the group will receive the same mark, and it is the group’s collective responsibility to ensure that everyone contributes his or her fair share; however, the instructor reserves the right to reduce the grade of individual students who have clearly not made an adequate contribution to the project. If you experience problems with group dynamics, it is important that you bring them to my attention as soon as they arise.

Additional Requirements
1. A handout summarizing the content of your presentation in enough detail to serve as study notes for the final exam, to be distributed to the class on the day of your presentation.
2. An annotated bibliography of works consulted for the presentation, formatted using correct MLA style as explained in the Little Brown Handbook. Do not make up your own citation style; doing so will result in the loss of marks. Each entry must be accompanied by a brief (1-3 sentences) summary of the major argument of the text.
3. A copy of the notes and any additional aids (e.g. overheads) you use for the presentation. This material will not be formally evaluated. I will use it to help jog my memory when grading your presentation, and to come up with questions for the final exam.
Seminar Topics
(Note: The questions accompanying each topic are intended to facilitate brainstorming and are not prescriptive; you are responsible for formulating your own original research questions.)

The Chicago Worlds Fair (Jan. 22): Held in 1873, the Chicago World’s Fair was a celebration of progress in American society. Tell us about the idea of “progress” as it was represented at the Fair.

The Huck Finn Controversy, Then & Now (Jan. 31): *Huck Finn* was criticized when it first appeared in 1885 because of fears that it would have a bad influence on the morals of its readers. More than 100 years later, debate continues about whether or not the novel belongs on the curriculum of American highs'c#. Tell us about both early and recent controversies.

The Woman Suffrage Movement (Feb. 12): Find out about arguments, strategies, and propaganda used to promote both sides of the woman suffrage debate. What ideologies of gender were implicit in pro- and anti-suffrage arguments?

Segregation and the “Jim Crow” Laws (Feb. 28): After African American slaves were emancipated in 1865, they were confined by law to certain neighborhoods, jobs, restaurants, and so on. Tell us about the “Jim Crow” laws. What did prominent African American spokesmen such as Washington and Du Bois have to say about them?

Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show (Mar. 7): As the American West was settled and developed, Anglo-Americans produced books and performances to preserve as text the “disappearing frontier.” Tell us about Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show. How did it represent the significance of the frontier in American culture? How did it represent (and misrepresent) Native Americans and other marginal groups?

The New Woman (Mar. 21): “New Woman” was a popular catchphrase in American culture at the turn of the century, used to describe the new generation of American women. Describe and critique popular representations of the American “New Woman.”

The New Immigration (Mar 28): During the late-19th and early-20th century, immigration to the U.S. increased dramatically, and more immigrants came from countries with cultures and values very different from those that were predominant in the U.S., raising questions about if and how the “new immigrants” should be assimilated into American culture and society. Tell the class about this debate. How did mainstream Americans interpret cultural, racial, and ethnic difference? What measures were taken to integrate the new immigrants into American society and culture? How did the new immigrants respond?

Pointers for a Successful Seminar
1. Stay within the time allowed.
2. Work as a group. Presentations consisting of four or five loosely connected—or unconnected—topics will receive lower marks than those showing solid evidence of team-work at all stages of the project.
3. Avoid information overload. The most common weakness in group presentations is that they present too much detailed material without clearly emphasizing key points. Talk about the forest, not the trees.
4. Problems with group dynamics (usually related to unfair division of workload) should be brought to my attention immediately. There is nothing I can do about them once the project reaches its final stages.
5. Creativity is encouraged. Role playing, dramatizations, multi-media aids, class exercises, and debates are just a few of the alternatives to the traditional lecture as means of delivering the content.
6. Remember, the main goal of your presentation is to generate intellectual discussion.
Tips for Public Speaking
1. Do not constantly lecture or read from a written text. Unless you are “natural” at public-speaking, you will probably need to equip yourself with a script, but your delivery should be informal and “speakerly.”
2. Make eye contact with everyone in the room. Do not fix your gaze on one person; this tends to exclude everyone else from the discussion.
3. Create spaces for exchange with your audience throughout your presentation. An audience can only listen for so long before they get bored and start to tune out. It’s a good idea to “wake up” your audience occasionally through some kind of participation exercise (a writing exercise, a discussion question, a poll, a quiz, etc.)
4. Ask good questions (not as easy as it sounds!). A good question should be open-ended (i.e. it should solicit elaboration rather than a “yes/no” answer). A good question should not look for the “right” answer; rather, it should be an invitation for the audience to contribute their own ideas. When asking questions, it’s a good idea to write student responses on the board. This validates student responses, and makes it easier for you and the class to analyze the responses.
5. Go with the flow! Remember, the point of your presentation is to engage the audience. If you get a good discussion going, don’t shut it down prematurely so you can get through all of your material. While every member of your group should have an equal chance to participate in the presentation, it’s not the end of the world if you don’t get through everything you have prepared.

Evaluation
Presentations will be evaluated as follows: intellectual challenge of the content, evidence of ample background preparation, equal division of labor of all group members in both preparation and presentation of material, integration of individual contributions into a coherent whole, ability to facilitate class participation and discussion, attention to broader issues raised in the course, commitment to and enthusiasm for the project. Everyone in the group will receive the same mark. It is the group’s collective responsibility to ensure that all members contribute equally, and to contact me to mediate if there are problems with the division of labor or other aspects of group dynamics that cannot be resolved within the group. In circumstances where a student clearly does not complete his or her fair share of the group assignment, I reserve the right to assign that student an individual grade.

3. Essay
Required Length: 8-10 pages presented according to these specifications:

* typed or word processed, single-sided, on 8 1/2” x 11” white paper;
* double-spaced, with three lines of type per inch—no more and no less;
* body text in a 12 pt font or 10 characters per inch;
* all margins set at 1”—no more and no less; do not use right justification;
* number all pages 1/2” down from the upper-right hand corner with your last name before the number;
* on the first text page, provide your name, the date, and course number one inch down from upper-left corner. Double-space between this identification and the essay title, center the title, and double-space between title and first line of text.

Topics: Devise an original topic within the following parameters: it should compare and contrast two texts on the syllabus, and the topic should address the course’s focus on understanding late 19th-century American literature in its historical, social and cultural context. Remember, this is a Literature course: Pay particular attention to the text’s structure and language. Try to make the topic as unique and specific as you can. Once you have devised a topic, you must make an appointment to discuss it with me. I will not accept essays from students who have not done so.
Evaluation
Essays will be evaluated according to the following components: originality, interest, and level of intellectual challenge of the thesis; coherence and persuasiveness of the argument; analysis and integration of supporting evidence; and mechanics (organization, sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, correct use of MLA citation format). First-class (80-100%) marks will be awarded only to essays that excel in every category. Note that, because the composition and content of an essay are interdependent, problems with the composition of an essay are likely to impede the clear expression of the content.

4. Exam
The final exam, to take place during the exam period, will consist of sight passages, short-answer, and essay questions and will cover the entire course, including all assigned readings as well as material from lectures and student presentations.

If you are having difficulty with any aspect of these assignments, it is important that you consult with me early on in the process.

Note on avoidance of academic offenses: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline), which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.

If you use secondary sources in your essays, you must use correct citation and documentation. If you are uncertain of how to use secondary sources, consult The Little, Brown Handbook. If you are still uncertain, consult with me. Incorrect citation and documentation is a form of plagiarism, a serious academic offense, and could result in academic penalty.

Late Policy
In order to ensure that all students receive fair and equal treatment with respect to lateness or absence, the policy for this course regarding late or missed assignments is as follows:

General Expectations: All students are expected to make their education a top priority. Requests for special treatment will be considered only if circumstances which are totally beyond the student’s control make it impossible for the student to meet his or her academic obligations without special dispensation.

Exams: Exams will not be rescheduled except in the case of documented emergencies. If a student misses a mid-term or final exam, that student will receive a grade of zero for that assignment, except in the case of documented emergencies.

All other assignments are due at the beginning of class on the designated deadline date. Extensions will be considered provided the student consults with me before the deadline. The penalty for late assignments is a deduction of 3% per day or part thereof, including weekends. Assignments submitted on the deadline date, but after class has started, will be considered late. Submit assignments outside of class at your own risk. Late assignments submitted outside of class will be penalized based on the date I receive them, regardless of when they were actually submitted. Always back up your work on disk, and save hard copies of all assignments you submit. I accept no responsibility for lost assignments.
*Emergencies (usually medical) will be fairly dealt with, provided you contact me (by phone, email, or in person) within three working days of the assignment due-date, and are able to provide documentation to explain and justify the missed/late assignment. Documentation requirements for medical emergencies are outlined in the University of Waterloo calendar (p. 1:10). Students are also expected to know University and Faculty regulations regarding exams and assignments (University Calendar p. 1:9-1:11 and 9:8). Non-medical emergencies will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, and must be accompanied with appropriate documentation. While I sympathize with students who encounter computer/printer malfunctions, I do not consider these to be emergencies.

I will not accept any essays at all after the last class of the term.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES & READINGS**

Please bring your texts to class.

H=Harper Anthology

Seminar topics are explained in more detail above (in section entitled “Group Seminar Presentation”)

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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Introduction to course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 8</td>
<td>Introduction: American Literature after the Civil War; Seminar Sign-up</td>
<td>“Introduction” (H 1289-1305); Whitman, “Drum Taps,” “Memories of Lincoln” (H 1229-38).</td>
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<td>Jan. 10</td>
<td>Diversity in American Literature</td>
<td>Whitman, “Song of Myself” (H 1166-1228)</td>
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<td>Jan. 17</td>
<td>The other side of industrialization: Native American Voices</td>
<td>“Cultural Portfolio: Oral Traditions” (H 1609-1613); “Cherokee Oral Tradition” (H 1624-25); “Native American Assimilation and a Reemerging Tradition” (H 1322-32).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 24</td>
<td>Literary Movements: Realism &amp; Romance</td>
<td>Ambrose Bierce, “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” (H 1600-1608); William Dean Howells, “Editha” (H 1528-36).</td>
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<td>Jan. 29</td>
<td>Realism &amp; Local Color</td>
<td>Mark Twain, “Fenimore Cooper’s Literary Offences” (H 1343-50), The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (H 1354-22)</td>
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<td>Jan. 31</td>
<td>Twain, cont’d. Seminar: The Huck Finn Controversy Then &amp; Now</td>
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<td>Feb. 5</td>
<td>Twain, cont’d</td>
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<td>Feb. 7</td>
<td>Domestic Realism</td>
<td>Louisa May Alcott, Little Women</td>
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<td>Feb. 12</td>
<td>Alcott, cont’d. Seminar: The Woman Suffrage Movement</td>
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<td>Feb. 14</td>
<td>Alcott, cont’d</td>
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<td>Feb. 18-22</td>
<td>Reading week</td>
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<td>Feb. 26</td>
<td>Naturalism</td>
<td>Jack London, “To Build a Fire” (H 1839-48)</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
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<td>Mar. 5</td>
<td>African American Lit. cont’d.</td>
<td><em>The Life and Adventures of Nat Love</em></td>
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<td>Mar. 7</td>
<td>Nat Love cont’d Seminar: Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show</td>
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<td>Mar. 12</td>
<td>New Women’s Writing</td>
<td>Kate Chopin, <em>The Awakening</em> (H 1646-32)</td>
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<td>Mar. 14</td>
<td>Essays Due – No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 19</td>
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<td>Chopin, cont’d.</td>
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<td>Mar. 26</td>
<td>The Melting Pot</td>
<td>“Cultural Portfolio: The New Immigrants” (H 1307-21); Israel Zangwill, <em>The Melting Pot</em> (Reserve)</td>
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<td>Mar. 28</td>
<td>Seminar: The New Immigration</td>
<td><em>The Melting Pot</em>, cont’d</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2-4</td>
<td>Catch-up, Review</td>
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