

English 453
Studies in the American Novel
Joe Lockard
Spring 2008

MW 1:40-2:55
SLN 11506
269 LL



Texts

Charlotte Temple, Susanna Rowson (1794)
[Modern Library]

The Linwoods, Catharine Maria Sedgwick
(1835) [University Press of New England]

Ruth Hall, Fanny Fern (1855) [Penguin]

The Wide, Wide World, Susan Warner (1850)
[Feminist Press]

The Minister's Wooing, Harriet Beecher
Stowe (1859) [Penguin]

Life in the Iron Mills, Rebecca Harding
Davis (1861) [digital edition]

Work, Louisa May Alcott (1872) [Penguin]

*Minnie's Sacrifice; Sowing and Reaping; Trial
and Triumph*, Frances E.W. Foster (1869,
1876, 1888) [Beacon Press]

The House of Mirth, Edith Wharton (1905)
[Modern Library]

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The American novel rose on the shoulders of women. This course examines early American fiction as a history of women representing their own lives, work, families, communities, and social barriers. It will cover a wide range of periods, styles and authors: the early Republican sentimental morality tale, Jacksonian romances, antebellum and post-Civil War religious and social novels, African American and early 20th-century naturalist writing. The course introduces US prose fiction by women as integral to the cultural self-understanding of American literature.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Full reading knowledge and discursive command of course texts expressed through discussion participation. [20 percent]
- Two 8-10 page argumentative papers [40 percent apiece, 80 percent total] All papers in MLA style.

Regular attendance and completion of all requirements are needed for a passing grade. No post-semester extensions on the second seminar paper will be granted without documented health reasons.

If further clarifications are needed concerning course content and requirements, do not hesitate to e-mail the instructor or attend office hours, preferably early in the semester.

OFFICE HOURS AND RESOURCES

Instructor office hours for Spring 2008 will be M 9am-12noon. It is always advisable to e-mail or call ahead in order to schedule a meeting, as occasional meetings may interrupt this schedule. I can be contacted via Joe.Lockard@asu.edu. My office telephone is (480) 727-6096; do not leave voice mail. There will also be online office hours each Tuesday evening from 7-9pm. I can be reached via Skype for texting-only at jlockard.

GRADES

Grades are an archaic form of evaluation, and better forms of evaluation can be employed. However, your instructor appreciates having a salary and this course gives honest grades using clear criteria.

You have the right to query or challenge any grade given during this course, without concern for making the request. Upon receiving a grade query, the instructor will either raise or confirm the grade and provide an explanation for the decision.

COURSE ELECTRONICS

This course employs a MyASU website that should be visible and can be accessed from your MyASU homepage. The course site contains the syllabus, assignment announcements, supplementary readings, and relevant course materials. Any files placed on the MyASU course site will be announced by e-mail specifying their content and location within the site.

E-mail instructions: All class e-mail from the instructor will be generated from the course site, and MyASU sends e-mail to university addresses. Since e-mail will not be delivered to non-university addresses, please check your university e-mail regularly and correspond with the instructor from that same address. The instructor cannot accept responsibility for ensuring e-mail receipt at non-university addresses.

ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have a learning variation that makes in-class assignments, including in-class speaking and/or writing, difficult for you, please let me know and we will arrange another method of evaluation. If

certain instructional styles work better for you than others, please let me know: e.g., if you need handouts in large print, if certain visual formats are more difficult for you to understand than others, if all printed material needs to be in black and white instead of colors, etc. If you need assistance taking notes, please tell me and I will arrange an accommodation. Further, if you find accommodations necessary because of work or childcare issues, let me know during office hours or by e-mail. Such accommodation requests should be made at the beginning of the semester. Finally, if childcare arrangement lapses would prevent you from attending class, please bring your child to class and we shall be delighted to welcome her/him. The instructor definitely can use the play company.

DETAILED SCHEDULE

- *This schedule is subject to adjustments and alterations, which will be announced both in class and online.*
- *Readings are due at the class meeting on the assignment date specified.*
- *Bold numbers in square brackets refer to class session number.*
- *There are 28 scheduled class sessions.*

Monday, January 14
Introduction

Wednesday, January 16
Rowson, Preface & chaps. 1-10

Monday, January 21 -- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
No class

Wednesday, January 23
Rowson, chaps. 11-20

Monday, January 28
Rowson, chaps. 21-35

Wednesday, January 30
Sedgwick, Introduction, 5-123

Monday, February 4
Sedgwick, 124-252
Paper 1 assigned

Wednesday, February 6
Sedgwick, 253-360

Monday, February 11
Fern, chaps. 1-30
Selected newspaper articles
[handout]

Wednesday, February 13
Fern, chaps. 31-65

Monday, February 18
Fern, chaps. 66-90

Wednesday, February 20
Warner, Afterword, 9-181

Monday, February 25
Warner, 181-342

Wednesday, February 27
Warner, 342-497

Monday, March 3
Warner, 498-583
Paper 1 due

Wednesday, March 5
Davis, entire

March 9-16 -- Spring Break

Monday, March 17
Stowe, Introduction, 3-121

Wednesday, March 19
Stowe, 122-216

Monday, March 24
Stowe, 217-332
Paper 2 assigned

Wednesday, March 26
Alcott, Introduction, chaps. 1-6

Monday, March 31
Alcott, chaps. 7-12

Wednesday, April 2
Alcott, chaps. 13-20

Monday, April 7
Harper, Minnie's Sacrifice

Wednesday, April 9
Harper, Sowing and Reaping

Monday, April 14
Harper, Trial and Triumph

Wednesday, April 16
Wharton, Book I, chaps. 1-10

Monday, April 21
Wharton, Book I, chaps. 10-15;
Book 2, chaps. 1-2.

Wednesday, April 23
Wharton, Book II, chaps. 3-14

Monday, April 28
'House of Mirth,' Terence Davies
(2000)
Paper 2 due