

**English 263: U.S. Literature and Multiculturalism (32639R)****John Carlos Rowe ([johnrowe@usc.edu](mailto:johnrowe@usc.edu))****M/W 2-3:15; Office Hours: M/W, 12-1, THH 402 E****THH 203****Fall 2012****Texts (in course sequence):**

Charles Brockden Brown, *Edgar Huntly*. Penguin pb.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Selected Works*, ed. John Carlos Rowe. Riverside Ed. Houghton Mifflin pb.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, eds. Seymour Gross, Sculley Bradley, Richmond Croom Beatty, and E. Hudson Long. Norton Critical Edition. W. W. Norton pb.

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, Written by Himself*; ed. Houston Baker. Penguin pb.

Henry James, *Daisy Miller*, in *Selected Tales*. Penguin pb.

Gertrude Stein, *Three Lives*, ed. Linda Wagner-Martin. Bedford/ St. Martin's pb.

John Neihardt and Nick Black Elk, *Black Elk Speaks*. University of Nebraska Press pb.

Muriel Rukeyser, *The Book of the Dead*, in *Out of Silence: Selected Poems*. TriQuarterly Press pb.

Langston Hughes, *Montage of a Dream Deferred*, in *Selected Poems*. Vintage pb.

Maxine Hong Kingston, *China Men*. Vintage pb.

**Course Description:**

Although the term multiculturalism is relatively recent, dating to the debates in the 1980s and early 1990s, there is a long history of multicultural writing in the United States that constitutes one important national literary tradition. We will use multiculturalism, then, as our organizing principle, in order to understand cultural definitions of the United States in different historical periods as well as to gain a better understanding of the heritage of the recent concept of multiculturalism. Not all of the writers we will read are advocates of multicultural politics; some defend contrary views and in doing so give us a better understanding of the conflicts that culminated in the culture wars of the 1980s. Figuring out the cultural politics of the writers we are studying, both in their own times and for ours, will be one of our projects.

## Course Requirements:

**Midterm:** There will be an in-class midterm on **October 17, W** (Week 8). The midterm will consist of two essay questions, one designed to be answered in about 30 minutes and focusing on a single author and the other designed to be answered in 45 minutes and comparing and contrasting two authors. Although only two questions will be offered, each question will involve internal choices regarding the authors/ texts you may choose to answer the question. **Open book, but you cannot bring your class notes.**

**Term Paper:** A term paper of approximately 10-12 double-spaced pages will be due on the Monday class meeting of the last week of classes: **December 3, M**. A proposal for the term paper will be due in class on **October 3, W** (Week 6). The term paper should develop a coherent thesis (or argument) and support that thesis with evidence from primary texts (usually works assigned in the course) and secondary scholarship (at least three and usually more scholarly sources should be used). Sources should be cited according to the Modern Language Association's system of works cited. **The proposal** should consist of a 1-2 page description of the planned thesis for the essay and a preliminary list of scholarly sources (at least 5) – books, chapters, journal articles, et al. – the student plans to use. The proposal is due early in the semester (Week 6), so students interested in later authors, texts, and periods should plan to read ahead and consult with me about their plans before drafting their proposals.

**Final:** There will be a two-hour final examination during the regularly scheduled examination time: **Friday, December 14, 2-4 PM, in the regular classroom**. The examination will consist of two essay questions, each requiring one hour to answer and each question asking for evidence from 2-3 different authors/ texts. One question will focus on works studied since the midterm examination (that is, from Henry James to Maxine Hong Kingston); one question will focus on the full range of the course. Once again, two questions will be offered, and each question will involve internal choices about the authors/ texts you may use to answer the question. **Open book, but you may not use your class notes.**

## Grading:

**Midterm:** 25 % of the final grade  
**Term Paper:** 40 % (including proposal)  
**Final:** 35 %

Late papers will not be accepted and make-up examinations not administered, unless there is a documented personal/ family emergency (usually medical) or religious holiday that conflicts with one of the due dates.

## Legal statements for USC syllabi

**Student Behavior** that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive

behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action. These strictures may extend to behaviors outside the classroom that are related to the course.

**Students with Disabilities** requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

**Academic Integrity.** USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A:

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>.

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at:

<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

## Syllabus

### Week 1

**8/27:** Introduction to the course. Discussion of the course requirements and definition of basic terms in the course, as well as overview of the issues.

**8/29:** Read: Charles Brockden Brown, *Edgar Huntly*, Grabo's introduction (pp. vi-xxiii) and chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-42).

### Week 2

**9/3:** Labor Day Holiday. No class.

**9/5:** Read: *Edgar Huntly*.

### Week 3

**9/10:** Read: *Edgar Huntly*.

**9/12:** Read: *Edgar Huntly*.

### Week 4

**9/17:** Read: Emerson, *Nature*, in Rowe, *Selected Writings*.

**9/19:** Read: Emerson, "The American Scholar," "Self Reliance," and "The Poet," in Rowe.

### Week 5

**9/24:** Read: Emerson, "An Address on the Emancipation of the Negroes in the British West Indies," "Woman," and the poems, "Boston Hymn" and "Voluntaries," all in Rowe.

**9/26:** Read: Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, "Custom-House" through ch. 8.

### Week 6

**10/1:** Read: Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, ch. 9-17.

**10/3:** Read: Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, ch. 18-24. **Due: Term paper proposal due in class.**

### Week 7

**10/8:** Read: Douglass, *Narrative of the Life*.

**10/10:** Read: Douglass, *Narrative of the Life*.

### **Week 8**

**10/15:** Read: Douglass, *Narrative of the Life*. **In-Class Review for Midterm Examination: How to Study; Key Issues.**

**10/17: Midterm examination in class. Open book, not open notes.**

### **Week 9**

**10/22:** Read: James, *Daisy Miller*

**10/24:** Read: James, *Daisy Miller*

### **Week 10**

**10/29:** Read: Stein, *Three Lives* (“Melanctha”).

**10/31:** Read: Stein, *Three Lives* (“Melanctha”). Recommended: “The Good Anna” and “Gentle Lena” (other two narratives in *Three Lives*).

### **Week 11**

**11/5:** Read: Neihardt and Black Elk, *Black Elk Speaks*.

**11/7:** Read: Neihardt and Black Elk, *Black Elk Speaks*.

### **Week 12**

**11/12:** Read: Neihardt and Black Elk, *Black Elk Speaks*.

**11/14:** Read: Neihardt and Black Elk, *Black Elk Speaks*; screen Paul Steckler and James Welch, *Killing Custer*.

### **Week 13**

**11/19:** Read: Langston Hughes, ““The Negro Speaks of Rivers” and *Montage of a Dream Deferred*.

**11/21-11/24: Thanksgiving Holiday.**

### **Week 14**

**11/26:** Read: Langston Hughes, *Montage of a Dream Deferred*.

**11/28:** Read: Kingston, *China Men*, “On Discovery” through “The Laws”

**Week 15**

**12/3:** Read: *China Men*, “Alaska China Men” through “The Adventures of Lo Bun Sun.” **Term Essay Due in Class.**

**12/5:** Read: *China Men*, “The American Father” through “On Listening.” **How to Study for the Final Examination: Main Issues.**

**12/14, Friday, 2-4 PM, THH 203. Final Examination in regularly scheduled classroom. Open book, not open notes.**