

LITR 353 Social Movements and Literature: Local Color and Regionalism

Fall 2011

Professor Funston

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Office hours: MW 2:30-3:30 and by appointment

Description:

We will examine a range of writers, active in the 19th and early 20th centuries, as a way to understand the regionalist movement in literature, which was a reaction to the numerous changes in American society during this period. We will look at how these writers fit (or do not fit) into the mainstream literary movements, as well as to what degree such labels as “regionalism” and “local color” are used as gender-based aesthetic judgments.

Objectives:

1. To survey regionalist writing of the 19th and early 20th centuries
2. To explore assumptions and value judgments made about mainstream literature
3. To examine how writers respond social, historical, philosophical, political, and economic forces
4. To analyze literary texts critically and analytically
5. To locate, understand, and evaluate relevant scholarship

Texts:

Andersen, Sherwood Winesburg, Ohio

Cable, George Washington The Grandissimes

Cather, Willa My Antonia

Chopin, Kate The Awakening and Selected Stories

Jewett, The Country of the Pointed Firs

Nagel, James and Tom Quirk The Portable Realism Reader

Wharton, Edith Ethan Frome

Wharton, Edith Summer

Requirements:

1. Engagement: I expect that you come to class prepared to engage seriously in the work of the class, which includes reading, thinking, and writing. Engagement will be demonstrated by the following:
 - a. submitting required work on time
 - b. reading and thinking through the scheduled assignment
 - c. writing a thoughtful response to the reading as required
 - d. responding to questions for writing in class as required
 - e. participating in class discussions in a constructive manner (constructive means comments that show insight and move the class forward...not comments that are repetitive, obstructive, or tangential)
2. Writing:
 - a. three scholarship papers
 - b. homework responses
 - c. summation
3. Attendance: I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences; an absence is an absence. You are allowed two absences penalty-free. **50 points** will be deducted from your final point total for each additional absence; 4 or more absences, regardless of the reasons, will result in automatic failure in LITR 353 (0.0).

Tardiness will also lower your point total: **25 points** will be deducted each time you come to class late (after 8:30).

Formats:

1. Scholarship analysis: You will use the MLA on-line database to locate and obtain a substantial (minimum 10 page) articles published in reputable professional journals three times this semester. The scholarly articles must be focused on an author or a text covered in this course; you will be expected to contribute your findings to the class. Your analyses should be typed and error-free; they may be in the form of detailed paragraphs or an essay.

Essentially, you will be examining and evaluating the arguments put forward in these scholarly articles. You must identify the writer's thesis as well as the structure of the writer's argument and the evidence the writer gives to support the argument. In addition, you must identify how the writer situates his or her work in relation to what others have done previously in the same area; you must also identify how the writer sees his or her findings in relation to the author's total body of work. Finally, you must discuss how this article relates to your own experience of and thinking about the text. Failure to use MLA format for citations will greatly lower your grade.

2. Homework "responses" (200 words minimum) will be judged on content rather than correct form; the responses must be typed. Since homework responses will form the basis for that day's class discussion, they must be completed prior to the class meeting and brought to class. The point of these homework responses is to demonstrate your insight into the reading—generally, there will be no one "right" answer.

Summaries of the reading or tangential discussions are unacceptable. Addressing the assignment minimally or superficially is just barely acceptable. College-level work reflects

serious engagement with and a thorough understanding of the reading as well as evidence of real thought and the use of skills and concepts from class.

ALL homework responses will be collected on Wednesday November 30 and will be returned during the scheduled final exam period.

3. Summation: This essay is your opportunity to reflect on what you have accomplished in this course. You will be describing your sense of this period as reflected in the literary texts, as well as your evolution as an analytical reader of these texts. It is due for the final course meeting on December 7.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another person without giving proper credit. IT IS THEFT. It includes

- word-for-word copying without quotes and documentation
- using material from the Internet without documentation
- paraphrasing without proper credit
- patching a paper together from a variety of sources
- turning in another student's work (essays, paragraphs, sentences, words, ideas) as your own
- using ideas or structures from sources without credit

The penalty for plagiarism: 0.0 for the course and referral to the College's judicial system for disciplinary action. Ignorance or "honest mistakes" are not excuses for plagiarism. You should consult the College's catalogue on academic honesty.

Grading

The grade for LITR 353 will be calculated on 1000 points, distributed as follows:

Scholarship papers	400
Homework responses	200
Summation	100
Engagement	300

Course Grading Scale:

4.0	900-1000
3.7	870
3.3	830
3.0	800
2.7	770
2.3	730
2.0	700
1.7	670
1.3	630
1.0	600

I: Introduction; Woolson, "Rodman the Keeper"; Harte, "'The Luck of Roaring Camp'"

II: Cable, "Belles Desmoiselles Plantation"; Grandissimes chs 1-20; Grandissimes chs 21- 40

III: Cable, Grandissimes, chs. 41-61; Chopin, "At the 'Cadian Ball," "The Storm," The Awakening, chs. 1-20

IV: Chopin, The Awakening, chs. 21-39; **scholarship #1 due 9-21**

V: Freeman, "Revolt of 'Mother,'" Jewett, "Miss Tempy's Watchers," Cooke, "How Celia Changed Her Mind"; Jewett, "White Heron," Country of the Pointed Firs 1-10

VI: Country of the Pointed Firs 11-21; Wharton, Ethan Frome, chs. 1-9

VII: recess; **scholarship #2 due 10-12**

VIII: Wharton, Summer, chs. 1-18

IX: Zitkala-Sa, "Trial Path," Dunbar-Nelson, "Sister Josepha," Gale, "Nobody Rich, Nobody Poor"; Chesnutt, "The Sheriff's Children," "The Wife of His Youth," Chopin, "Desiree's Baby"

X: Austin, "Walking Woman," Far, "Mrs. Spring Fragrance," Chopin, "Athenaise"; **scholarship #3 due 11-2**

XI: Frederic, "My Aunt Susan," Garland, "The Return of the Private," Cather, "Wagner Matinee"; Cather, My Antonia bk 1-2

XII: Cather, My Antonia bk 3; Cather, My Antonia bk 4-5

XIII: **scholarship #4 due 11-21**; recess

XIV: Anderson, Winesburg, Ohio pp 21-102; Anderson, Winesburg, Ohio, pp 103-189

XV: Anderson, Winesburg, Ohio, pp. 190-247; **summation due 12-7**