

ENG 460-16 Selected Studies in Literary Period/Movement: Naturalism
JGM 106, 7:30-10:20 MTWTh
Summer 2002

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Office Hours: By appointment

"The world does not despise us; it only neglects us." -- Thomas Hardy

Course Description and Objectives:

The course is an in-depth study of the movement known as Naturalism. In addition to having a pronounced effect on the literature which followed it, literary naturalism explores a plethora of issues of vital importance to us all, not the least of which are the place of science in our lives and the effect of heredity and environment on personal identity and moral responsibility. We'll examine a range of short naturalistic fiction, verse, and non-fiction prose as we grapple with the artistic and intellectual significance of literary naturalism, past and present. Our discussions will be surprising, frustrating, disturbing, animated, controversial, and (no doubt) fun. Prerequisite: ENG 210 or 220 and junior standing. LAS ethics.

In its various programs and offerings, the Department of English, Foreign Languages and Journalism works toward four goals: (1) an improvement of communication skills through practice in diverse types of expository and imaginative writing; (2) a development of critical thinking through exposure to and interpretation of the various world views offered in literary works; (3) an increased appreciation of literature, its backgrounds, history, and values through an analysis and discussion of authors and literary works covering a wide range of attitudes, perspectives, and expressions; (4) a deeper understanding of one's own culture and a tolerance and acceptance of things foreign through a study and appreciation of another language and culture.

In all of its programs, the department encourages its students to grow in self-knowledge and the knowledge of others through its emphasis on the humane and liberal characteristics of its offerings.

Required Materials:

- Bierce, Ambrose. *The Civil War Stories of Ambrose Bierce*. Bison, 1988.
- Crane, Stephen. *The Portable Stephen Crane*. Penguin, 1977.
- Dreiser, Theodore. *Short Stories*. Dover, 1994.
- Hardy, Thomas. *Thomas Hardy: The Complete Poems*. Palgrave, 2002.
- London, Jack. *To Build a Fire, and Other Stories*. Bantam, 1988.
- Norris, Frank. *The Best Short Stories of Frank Norris*. Ironweed, 1998.
- An up-to-date unabridged college dictionary.
- A college handbook (guide to style, grammar and usage).
- At least two computer disks.
- Stamina and good humor.

Recommended:

- Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 5th ed. New York: Modern Language Association, 1999.

- Stevens, Bonnie Klomp and Larry L. Stewart. *A Guide to Literary Criticism and Research*. 3rd ed. Fort Worth: Harcourt, 1992.
- Holman, C. Hugh and William Harmon. *A Handbook to Literature*. 8th ed. New York: Macmillan, 1992.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is an essential part of the student's educational experience and a requirement for an adequate evaluation of student academic progress. For this and other reasons, listed below, attendance is mandatory. While certain absences may be necessary or unavoidable in the case of genuine illness, emergency, or when acting as a representative of MWSC, excessive absences will result in failure of the course. Chronic lateness and/or leaving early will count toward absences. As stated in the *Student Handbook*, when an announced examination falls on a day that a student is absent, instructors are not required to prepare or give a make-up test. You are responsible for material covered or assignments given which you missed because of absence, so ask another student to inform you of what happened while you were gone. If I should be unable to meet class, you will be notified by a secretary, fellow instructor, or a note on the classroom door.

Preparation and Participation:

You are required to make significant contributions to class in the form of preparation and participation. Preparation includes completing the readings and daily assignments, as well as bringing your assignments, textbook, and other materials with you on the appropriate days. If you come unprepared, you will receive a zero for any work due that day.

Participation includes the help you give to fellow writers and the contributions you make to class discussion. Active and insightful contributions to class discussion are therefore not "extra credit." Like the written assignments, your regular, tactful and substantive comments are part of the minimal requirements for successful completion of the course. If you are a naturally quiet person, force yourself to be more vocal; do not assume that if I do not call on you that you need not participate, as it is your responsibility to voice your observations at appropriate and relevant times. Conversely, if you are a naturally talkative person, you may have to restrain yourself so that everyone has the opportunity to contribute. Since you obviously cannot make up for discussions from which you were absent, attendance is again critical.

Student Conduct:

As a condition of remaining at MWSC, the college expects all students to conduct themselves so as to maintain an effective environment for learning; to act responsibly in accordance with good taste; and to respect fully the rights of others. Behavior that disrupts the classroom environment or interferes with other students' learning will result in dismissal from the classroom. Passionate and forceful language are sometimes appropriate, intolerance and dogmatism are not.

Assignment Requirements:

All out of class written assignments for this course must be word processed unless otherwise specified. Non-word processed submissions will be returned with no credit. Assignments should follow MLA format, and pages should be stapled together before you come to class (do not use folders or paper clips and do not fold down the corners of papers). Do not throw away any work you do for this class, from notes to drafts to final papers, and keep back-up copies of all papers you turn in to me.

Late Work:

All assignments are due at the beginning of the hour on the due date. Learning is a cumulative process, and each assignment is designed to build on the previous one. Given that late work disrupts this important aspect of the learning process, and given the intense pace of summer classes, **no late work is accepted.**

Grading:

All the guidelines and standards for classes at MWSC are similar to those used by other colleges and universities throughout the country. You, as a serious student, will appreciate the fact that we hold high standards for your work. Your grade will be determined by the quality of your papers, quizzes, and other assignments, as well as by your preparation for and participation in class. Keep in mind that every day, on the basis of your behavior and written work, I have to make the best estimate I can about the closeness of your reading, the extent of your understanding of

concepts, and the strength of your interpretive and communicative skills. Your job is to give me the best evidence you can. Assignments will be evaluated according to how well they meet the requirements outlined in the assignment description and the following general scale.

A = Superior

B = Above Average

C = Average

D = Minimum = passing below average

F = Failing

Daily Projects and Writings = 30%

Final Paper = 35%

Final Exam = 35%

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a most serious offense and, therefore, will incur harsh punishment. Don't think you won't get caught; writing style is distinctive and verifiable. It is the student's responsibility to prove that all work is their own. Papers with evidence of plagiarism, intentional or not, will fail. Plagiarism may also result in failure of the course.

Disabilities:

Any student who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of abilities should contact me immediately so that we can discuss class requirements.

General:

This syllabus is of a contractual nature, and by remaining in the course you acknowledge your acceptance of its stipulations in their entirety. If the goals, policies, procedures, standards, expectations, or obligations are unclear, then you should speak with me immediately. If they are clear but unacceptable to you, then you should drop the course.

If you choose to remain in the course, be sure to keep a copy of this syllabus with you and to refer to it regularly. Policies are enforced without exception to ensure uniformity and predictability, to avoid confusion and anxiety, and to facilitate fairness and objectivity for all students. In the interest of efficiency, however, I reserve the right to make necessary alterations to this syllabus and to make announced changes in daily plans. Any announcements made in class automatically supersede this syllabus. It is your responsibility to find out about announced changes.

Final Thoughts:

For further explanations, comments, and advice, I am available during office hours. For additional help outside of class, I strongly recommend the Center for Academic Support. I genuinely want you to succeed in this class and at MWSC generally. I therefore urge you to keep in mind that what you gain from this course, and from your education generally, is proportional to the amount of productive time and careful attention you devote to it.

Course Outline:

This outline shows major readings and assignments, but additional readings and assignments will be given in class throughout the semester.

6/24 Introduction

- 25 Hardy: "Hap," "At a Bridal," "In a Wood," "To a Lady," "Nature's Questioning," "The Impercipient," "At Lunar Eclipse," "Doom and She," "The Problem," "The Subalterns," "The Sleep-Worker," "God-Forgotten," "By the Earth's Corpse."
Bierce: "A Study of Determinism," "The Ancestral Bond," "Natura Benigna," "The Short Story."
From *Devil's Dictionary*: "Accident," "Animal," "Decide," "Descent," "Destiny," "Education," "Effect," "Foreordination," "Freedom," "Freethinker," "Free Will," "Immoral," "Intention," "Monkey," "Moral," "Novel," "Ocean," "Pray," "Realism," "Reason," "Reconsider."
- 26 Hardy: "Mute Opinion," "The Comet at Yell'ham," "Mad Judy," "The Ruined Maid," "The Respectable Burgher," "In Tenebris II," "A Dream Question," "A Reminder," "Before Life and After," "New Year's Eve," "God's Education," "To Sincerity," "Wagtail and Baby."

- Bierce: "One of the Missing," "The Affair at Coulter's Notch," "A Son of the Gods."
- 27 Hardy: "Channel Firing," "The Convergence of the Twain," "A Plaint to Man," "God's Funeral," "The Voice," "In Church," "In a Museum," "Heredity," "The Pedigree," "He Wonders About Himself," Apology to *Late Lyrics and Earlier*, "According to the Mighty Working."
- Bierce: "A Tough Tussle," "An Occurance at Owl Creek Bridge," "Chickamauga," "The Coup de Grace."
- 7/1 Hardy: "A Cathedral Facade at Midnight," "Xenophanes, the Monist of Colophon," "Freed the Fret of Thinking," "The Aerolite," "The Forbidden Bans," "The Six Boards," "Yuletide in a Younger World," "The Practical Woman," "Our Old Friend Dualism," "Drinking Song," "Christmas 1924," "Family Portraits," "Afterwards."
- Bierce: "One Officer, One Man," "Parker Adderson, Philosopher," "Jupiter Doke, Brigadier-General," "A Horseman in the Sky."
- 2 Norris: "Lauth," "Suggestions" (I and III), "The Puppets and the Puppy," "Little Dramas of the Curbstone," "Fiction is Selection," "Frank Norris' Weekly Letter" (3 Aug., 1901), "A Plea for Romantic Fiction"
- 3 Norris: "Reversion to Type," "A Case for Lombroso," "Fantasie Printaniere," "Shorty Stack, Pugilist," From "Perverted Tales": "'Ambrosia Beer, by A--e B--e" and "'The Green Stone of Unrest,' by S--n Cr--e," "A Deal in Wheat"
- 4 Holiday!
- 8 Crane: "The Men in the Storm," "An Experiment in Misery," "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky," Poems: "In the desert," "God fashioned the ship of the world carefully," "I stood upon a high place," "Well, then, I hate Thee, unrighteous picture," "Two or Three Angels," "I walked in a desert," "Do not weep, maiden, for war is kind," "To the maiden," "Have you ever made a just man?," "A slant of sun on dull brown walls," "A man said to the universe," "A man adrift on a slim spar," "A row of thick pillars."
- 9 Crane: "Stephen Crane's Own Story," "The Open Boat," "The Blue Hotel."
- 10 London: "The White Silence," "In a Far Country," "The Law of Life," "Batard."
- 11 London: "Love of Life," "To Build a Fire," "South of the Slot."
- 15 London: "A Piece of Steak," "War," "The Mexican."
- 16 **Final Paper Due**
London: "The Somnambulists," "The Other Animals," "The Red One."
Dreiser: From *Notes on Life*: "Myth of Free Will" and "Myth of Individual Responsibility," "Man's Insignificance," "The Struggle for Existence" (1897), "Curious Shifts of the Poor," "True Art Speaks Plainly"
- 17 Dreiser: "McEwen of the Shining Slave Makers," "The Second Choice," "Typhoon." Review.
- 18 **Final Examination**