

The University of Texas at El Paso

Department of English

Major American Authors: Hawthorne, Emerson, Fuller
English 4350 (CRN: 16534)

T/R., 3:00 – 4:20 p.m. Hudspeth 300

Fall 2016

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“There is the grand truth about Nathaniel Hawthorne. He says NO! in thunder; but the Devil himself cannot make him say *yes*. For all men who say *yes*, lie; and all men who say *no*,—why, they are in the happy condition of judicious, unincumbered travellers in Europe; they cross the frontiers into Eternity with nothing but a carpet-bag—that is to say, the Ego. Whereas those *yes*-gentry, they travel with heaps of baggage, and damn them! they will never get through the Custom House.”

--Herman Melville, Letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, April 16, 1851

This famous appraisal, offered by his great admirer Herman Melville, presents much of what is both captivating and elusive about Nathaniel Hawthorne: he presents a powerful voice of dissent from the metaphysical margins; yet his is a fugitive sensibility as well, crossing frontiers of custom and form in the moral geography of the American imagination. In his writings, Hawthorne frequently stages similarly elliptical renderings of authorial persona and voice: at the beginning of “The Custom House,” he suggests that there is “an inmost Me” behind [the] veil” of the text; but he ends the essay with the unexpected revelation that he is, in fact, “a citizen of somewhere else.” Here, and elsewhere, Hawthorne figures the work of romance as a medium for destabilizing the categories of author, reader, text, and history—always warning readers that (as Melville appreciated) such things are neither what, nor where, they may at first appear to be.

In this course we will delve deeply into such matters, pursuing them over the arc of Hawthorne’s literary career and in conversation with two of Hawthorne’s most important contemporary interlocutors: Ralph Waldo Emerson and Margaret Fuller. Although Emerson and Fuller will receive less extensive treatment, our attention to them will be serious; taken together, the three writers provide key contrasts that richly illuminate issues, possibilities, and (often troubling) contradictions that are often overlooked in 20th and 21st Century characterizations of their respective legacies. Throughout, our method will be to situate our close-readings of these writers within two literary and historical frameworks. On one hand, we will endeavor to read them in terms of their respective historical moments, taking account of those key social and political issues (individualism, nationalism, party politics, capitalism, reform movements, slavery, feminism, spiritualism, European revolutions, and so on) that bear directly on their work. On the other, we will engage them (Hawthorne in particular) in terms of the robust and evolving critical dialogue surrounding their work, drawing forth what is useful for our immediate purposes, and using our survey of Hawthorne criticism as a “case study” for the current status of nineteenth century Americanist literary studies.

Required Texts:

[Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter and Other Writings*. 1850. Norton Critical Edition. Ed. Leland S. Person. New York: Norton, 2004.](#)

[---. *The House of the Seven Gables*. 1851. Norton Critical Edition. Ed. Robert S. Levine. New York: Norton, 2006.](#)

---. *The Blithedale Romance*. 1852. Bedford Cultural Edition, 1996.
 Ralph Waldo Emerson and Margaret Fuller. *Selected Works*. Ed. John Carlos Rowe. New York:
 Houghton-Mifflin-Riverside, 2003.

Schedule of Readings (to be completed by corresponding date). “(B)” indicates an item posted to Blackboard. All readings need to be brought to class:

1	Aug. 23	Introductions
2	Aug. 25	<p>Theorizing the Romance Charles Brockden Brown, “The Difference between History and Romance,” <i>The Monthly Magazine and American Review</i>, 2.4 (April 1800): 250-54 (B); Nathaniel Hawthorne, “My Kinsman, Major Molineaux” (B). Recommended: George Dekker, “Once More: Hawthorne and the Genealogy of American Romance” <i>ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance</i> 35.1 (1989): 69-83 (B)</p>
3	Aug. 30	<p>American Literary Prospects Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The Poet” (186-206); Margaret Fuller, “American Literature” (B); Hawthorne, “The Artist of the Beautiful” (B) Recommended: Hawthorne, “Alice Doane’s Appeal” (<i>Seven Gables</i>, 241-50)</p>
4	Sep. 1	<p>The Sovereign Self Emerson, <i>Nature</i> (23-58), “Self-Reliance” (93-114); Fuller, Selected Letters to Ralph Waldo Emerson (B)</p>
5	Sep. 6	<p>Twice Told Tales: Puritanism and the Historical Imagination Hawthorne, “Mrs. Hutchinson,” (<i>TSL</i> “The Minister’s Black Veil” (<i>TSL</i>), “Endicott and the Red Cross” (<i>TSL</i>))</p>
6	Sep. 8	<p>Individualist Aspirations Emerson, “The American Scholar” (58-74), “Circles” (115-24) Recommended: George Kateb, from <i>The Inner Ocean</i> (B); Eduardo Cadava, from <i>Emerson and The Climates of History</i> (B)</p>
7	Sep. 13	<p>Mutabilities of the Self “Experience” (166-86); Hawthorne, “Young Goodman Brown” (<i>TSL</i>, 178-188)</p>
8	Sep. 15	<p>Feminist Manifesto: The Great Lawsuit (I) Margaret Fuller, <i>Woman in the Nineteenth Century</i> (299-348)</p>
9	Sep. 20	<p>The Great Lawsuit (II) Fuller, <i>Woman in the Nineteenth Century</i> (348-410); Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, “The Great Lawsuit” (B) Recommended: Fuller, <i>Appendices to Woman in the Nineteenth Century</i> (410-39)</p>
10	Sep. 22	Class Cancelled
11	Sep. 27	<p>On Marriages and Union Fuller, Journal selections (B); Emerson, Journal selections (B); Hawthorne, Journal</p>

selections (B); Larry J. Reynolds, "Hawthorne's Labors in Concord" (B)

FIRST PAPER DUE IN CLASS

12	Sep. 29	Midterm
13	Oct. 4	The Decapitated Surveyor: Romance and the Symbolics of America Hawthorne, "Preface to the Second Edition"; "The Custom House" (5-35) Recommended: Douglas Anderson, "Jefferson, Hawthorne, and 'The Custom House'" (B); Lauren Berlant, "The Nationalist Preface" (B)
14	Oct. 6	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i> (I) Hawthorne, <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> (chapters 1-8, pp. 36-79) Recommended: Nina Baym, "Revisiting Hawthorne's Feminism" (541-58)
15	Oct. 11	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i> (II) <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> , cont'd (chapters 9-16, pp. 79-122) Recommended: Leland S. Person, "The Dark Labyrinth of Mind: Hawthorne, Hester, and the Ironies of Racial Mothering" (656-70)
16	Oct. 13	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i> (III) <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> , cont'd (chapters 17-end, pp.122-166) Recommended: Sacvan Bercovitch, "The A-Politics of Ambiguity in <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> " (576-97)
17	Oct. 18	<i>Mosses From an Old Manse</i> (I): The Power of Blackness Roger Malvin's Burial (B); "Earth's Holocaust" (B); Herman Melville, "Hawthorne and His Mosses" (B)
18	Oct. 20	<i>Mosses From an Old Manse</i> (II): Science, Knowledge, and Obsession Hawthorne, "The Birth-mark" (<i>TSL</i> , 199-211), "Rappaccini's Daughter" (B) Recommended: Anna Brickhouse, <i>from</i> "Hawthorne's Mexican Genealogies" (B)
19	Oct. 25	The Dark House Hawthorne, <i>The House of the Seven Gables</i> (Preface and chapters 1-6, pp. 3-71) Recommended: Richard H. Millington, "The Triple Beginning of <i>The House of the Seven Gables</i> " (407-418)
20	Oct. 27	<i>The House of the Seven Gables</i> (II) <i>The House of the Seven Gables</i> (chapters 7-12, pp. 71-133); Nathaniel Parker Willis, <i>from</i> "The Pencil of Nature: A New Discovery (294-96); Anonymous, <i>from</i> "Daguerreotypes" (296-97); Emerson, [Sea and Shore] (298); T. S. Arthur, "The Daguerreotypist" (298-303); Frederick Douglass, [Our Photographic Process] (303); Charles Poyen, [Animal Magnetism] (304-307); Hawthorne, [Love is the True Magnetism] (307-09); Gustave de Beaumont and Alexis de Tocqueville <i>from On the Penitentiary System in the United States</i> (309-312); Hawthorne, [Railroads] (312-13)
21	Nov. 1	<i>The House of the Seven Gables</i> (III) <i>The House of the Seven Gables</i> (chapters 13-end, pp. 133-225) Recommended: David Anthony, "Class, Culture, and the Trouble with White Skin in

Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables* (438-460)

22	Nov. 3	New England Cultures of Reform: Politics and/of Gender Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Man the Reformer" (125-39), "Woman" (244-56); Angelina E. Grimké "Human Rights Not Founded On Sex" (<i>Blithedale</i> , 459-64); Lydia Maria Child, <i>On Women's Rights</i> (<i>Blithedale</i> 479-85); Charles Fourier, <i>The Impact of Industrialism, The Benefits of Association, and The Condition of Women</i> (<i>Blithedale</i> 336-40)
23	Nov. 8	New England Cultures of Reform (II): Brook Farm and <i>The Blithedale Romance</i> Hawthorne, <i>The Blithedale Romance</i> (Preface, chapters 1-7); Louisa May Alcott, "Transcendental Wild Oats" (366-80); The Brook Farm Phalanx, Prospectus for <i>The Harbinger</i> (433-40); Hawthorne, <i>Letters to Sophia Peabody</i> (425-25).
24	Nov. 10	<i>The Blithedale Romance</i> (II): Spiritualism, Mesmerism, and Stage-Effects <i>The Blithedale Romance</i> , cont'd (chapters 8-20); Harriet Martineau, excerpt from "Miss Martineau on Mesmerism" (300-10); Margaret Fuller, excerpt from "The New Science; or, the Philosophy of Mesmerism or Animal Magnetism" (310-12). Recommended: Richard Brodhead, "Veiled Ladies: Toward a History of Antebellum Entertainment" (B)
25	Nov. 15	<i>The Blithedale Romance</i> (III): Gender and Reform <i>The Blithedale Romance</i> , cont'd (chapters 21-end), Hawthorne, "On Margaret Fuller" (490-92); from Hawthorne's Journal (B)
26	Nov. 17	Dispatches from Rome: Democracy, Art, and Revolution Margaret Fuller, "New and Old World Democracy" (441-46), "The Springtime Revolutions of '48" (446-54), "Revolution in Rome" (454-64), "Kings, Republicans, and American Artists" (464-78), "The Arrival of the French" (478-81), "Between the Heaves of Storm" (481-89), "Bombardment and Defeat" (490-92), "The Next Revolution" (492-95)
FINAL PAPER PROSPECTUSES DUE		
27	Nov. 22	Race, Science, and the Politics of Abolition Emerson, "Fate" (B); "An Address...on...the Emancipation of the Negroes in the British West Indies" (207-30); "The Fugitive Slave Law" (230-244); Fuller, on Frederick Douglass (B)
	Nov. 24	THANKSGIVING
28	Nov. 29	Race, Slavery, and War Hawthorne, "Chiefly About War-Matters" [1862] (B); Emerson, "John Brown" (B); Recommended: Arthur Riss, "The Art of Discrimination," <i>ELH</i> 71.1 (August 2004): 251-87 (B)
29	Dec. 1	The Sacrifice of Relation: Concord, Salem, and Beyond

A Final Exam will be administered on Thursday, December 8th, between 4:00 and 6:45 p.m.

Course Requirements:

Reading of required texts. The reading load for this course is substantial; it is therefore important that you stay current in your work. Additionally, much of Hawthorne's, Emerson's, and Fuller's work can be quite challenging to read; to really understand them, you will need to read and re-read them, and dwell in the ambiguities and contradictions of their sometimes ornate styles. Practically speaking, this means re-reading, underlining, making marginal notes, writing provocative questions and observations to bring with you to class, and actively connecting ideas and techniques between the texts we read.

Attendance and Participation: (10%) This course combines lecture, student presentations, and discussion. Faithful attendance is expected and regular class participation in class, in the form of questions, observations, and speculations, is key. Come to our sessions prepared to share your questions and observations; the more involved you are on a daily basis, the more you will learn and enjoy. Please be advised that, upon your sixth unexcused absence, you will either be dropped from the course automatically (prior to October 28th, the University drop deadline), or fail the course outright (after the deadline). In keeping with standard departmental policy, absences are only excusable in cases of documented family or medical emergency.

Class Presentation: (10%) Each student shall be required to make a focused, ten-minute presentation devoted to a self-selected day's reading. See guidelines below.

Written work: a short paper at midterm, 5-7 pages (20%); and a longer final essay, 7-10 pages (30%). Each of these assignments will ask you to develop an original interpretive argument based on our class readings. A short prospectus for your final paper will be due at our 24th session. These deadlines are firm. I will provide more information on papers as the course unfolds, but you may write on any topic that bears relevantly on our work in the course. A short prospectus will be due at our 26th session. For each, I particularly encourage you to avail yourselves of the wealth historical newspaper and academic journal materials available online, such as the *APS Online*, Project Muse (muse.jhu.edu) and JSTOR (www.jstor.org). Please feel free to come talk to me during my office hours to help develop ideas. MLA guidelines for documentation are to be followed.

Midterm & Final Examination: (10%; 20%) More details to follow.

Plagiarism. This is a form of academic fraud, and I take it very seriously. If you plagiarize in any way, your work will be forwarded, as a matter of official University Policy, to the Office of the Dean of Students for review and (where appropriate) punishment. The consequences of plagiarism can be very serious, resulting in reduced grades, course failures, and sometimes in academic suspension. I understand, though, that citing sources properly can be confusing at times; if you're ever in doubt about how to do this, just ask me.

Cell Phone Policy: No cell phones in class; please silence them and put them away for the duration of our class sessions. Although some of you may have electronic text editions of titles from the syllabus on, say, a kindle app, I ask you to recognize that cell phones are woefully inadequate reading devices for serious intellectual work in a classroom setting. Other cell phone uses are likewise not permitted; they are a distraction to all, and their use (however habitual, however addicting—believe me, I get it) is disrespectful to your fellow students and to me. If I see you texting, checking your email, &c., I will ask you to leave and mark you as absent for the day. If you have reason to anticipate an emergency phone call (say, a sick child or relative that may require you to excuse yourself during class), please inform me before class begins.

Presentation Guidelines

Each student will be required to make a short presentation of **no longer than** ten minutes in length, focusing on something that you deem significant in that day's reading. You are welcome to bring in outside perspectives—critical or historical references, contextual theoretical elaborations, etc.—but this is not required. Nor are you required to cover every topic addressed in a given day's reading in comprehensive fashion. Instead, what I ask is that you draw attention to a few specific passages in the text(s) that you consider important, to make an effort to contextualize and explain those passages, and to offer at least a provisional argument as to why they deserve our attention within the larger context of the course. It's ok if you haven't quite made up your mind about what the ultimate significance of your argument is in any final sense: these presentations are not about finding definitive answers; rather, they are about asking deeper and more complex questions.

Usually, I will ask that presentations take place at the beginning, or near the beginning, of each class. They are designed principally to promote productive class discussion. To this end, I ask that presentations be made up of two basic parts (but feel free to innovate on this structure): one, your own observations that frame your issues and understanding of the text(s) (this is the main part of the presentation); and two, a short list of 2-3 questions for the class that follow from your remarks and which are designed to promote more extended discussion at the conclusion of your ten minutes. I also ask that you include a handout that delineates the major points addressed in your remarks, and spells out the specific questions/issues you have for the rest of us. If you have further questions, or are having trouble with your presentation, I encourage you to visit me during office hours, or write me an e-mail at rlgunn@utep.edu.

N.b.: If you choose to read your presentation out loud, ten minutes equals roughly 4 pages, typed & double-spaced.