

English 2329

Homes, Hopes, and Heroes: Self and Society in American Literature

Section 011: TR 8-9:20 AM | **Section 015:** TR 2-3:20 PM

Room: Section 011: LS 424 ([Campus Map Location](#))
Section 015: COBA 251 ([Campus Map Location](#))
Instructor: Dr. Chris Kilgore
Office: 201F Social Work A
Office Hours: MW 1:30-3:30pm and [by appointment](#)
Email (Preferred): chriskilgore@uta.edu English Dept. Phone: (817) 272-2692

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. *The Yellow Wall-Paper*
Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*
Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun*
Pynchon, Thomas. *The Crying of Lot 49*
Moore, Alan, & Dave Gibbons. *Watchmen*

Optional Texts (See below): Glancy, Diane. *Pushing the Bear*, **OR** Rivera, Tomas. *And the Earth Did Not Devour Him (Y No Se Tragó la Tierra)*, Bilingual Edition, **OR** Kingston, Maxine Hong. *The Women Warriors: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts*.

Recommended: *The MLA Handbook, 7th Edition*.

NOTE: Additional required reading materials will be posted to Blackboard as PDF documents. Please be prepared to print these and bring them to class for discussion.

Course Description

This course is not designed as a survey of American Literature, but rather an exploration of the tensions between individual identity and social identity across the history of American literature. Beginning even before our nation's independence, Americans have pondered the boundaries between self and other, and the obligations each of us owes—to ourselves, our families, and those we define as “others.” Although the course's readings are selective, they cover a variety of genres, geographical areas, and perspectives.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, you should be able to...

- ...demonstrate an informed understanding of the changes in how American texts present the idea of self and identity, and use genre-specific terms to describe these changes.
- ...demonstrate an informed understanding of how people who self-identify as “American” use ideas about others to construct that sense of self.
- ...respond critically to all course material, using synthesis, analysis, comparison, contrast, critique and evaluation, and express your ideas in clear, logical, organized, concise, and persuasive ways, in both written and oral forms.
- ...find new insights into stories, poems, plays, *and* your own experience, at UTA and beyond!

Major Assignments

In addition to your Attendance and Participation, I will be expecting you to complete five major assignments, whose due dates you will find on the Course Schedule. **PLEASE NOTE: You must complete all Major Assignments in order to pass the class.**

Paper 1 (3 pages)
Midterm Exam
Oral Presentation

Paper 2 (Based on oral pres., 2 pages)
Paper 3 (5 pages)
Final Exam

Attendance and Participation

Our daily class activities will use a discussion format. I will prepare study guides to help you take notes on the readings, and I will often begin class by introducing some information or concepts to help jump-start our discussions, but there will be no slides or lectures. So it will be your responsibility to come to class having completed the assigned reading, and prepared to take notes on our discussions.

Attendance: Because of this discussion format, your attendance is very important! I allow **4 absences for any reason**, and I do not differentiate between “excused” and “unexcused,” so please do not miss class unless it is an **emergency**. After the fourth absence, **your Overall Grade will drop 10% for each subsequent absence.** If you know there’s a chance you’ll miss class, **email me immediately.**

Participation and Expectations for Out-of-Class Study: There will be in-class writing assignments and activities, amounting to 10% of your overall grade. In the course schedule, reading assignments appear on the dates when we’ll be **discussing** them in class, so please read them **before that date**. We’re going to try to cover a lot of ground, so **the reading load will be very heavy**. Be prepared to spend significant time outside of class reading and writing. In college, you should be spending at least **two hours** on work outside of class for **every hour** you spend in the classroom. That means you should expect to spend **six hours on this class** outside our class time **every week**. As you’ll see in the schedule below, some weeks will be heavier than others, so **plan ahead**.

Grade Breakdown		Letter Grading Scale	
Participation	10%	A:	90-100%
Attendance	10%	B:	80-89%
Paper 1	10%	C:	70-79%
Paper 2	5%	D:	60-69%
Oral Presentation (Group Grade)	10%	F:	<60%
Paper 3	15%		
Midterm Exam	20%		
Final Exam	20%		

*“Would I had phrases that are not known, utterances that are strange, in new language that has not been used, free from repetition, not an utterance that has grown stale, which men of old have spoken.”
(attributed to Khakheperresenb, c. 2000 BCE)*

Additional Requirements

Communications: I will be using our Blackboard site and our UTA email to send important reminders, updates, and revisions to the syllabus. It is ***your responsibility*** to keep up with these resources. You can learn about activating and using MavMail online at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Office Technology: You will need access to a word processing program that can create .doc, .docx, or .rtf files, and you will need to be able to print probably around 20 pages. Please do not leave printing to the same day as our class, as printers have a way of causing you trouble exactly when you don't need it.

Etiquette / Netiquette: In class, we should all endeavor to contribute constructively to the conversation. I will silence and put away my cell phone when class begins, and I expect everyone to do the same. You may use a laptop on days when we read materials on Blackboard, or work on our presentations in class. In email communications, I will write in complete sentences, with a salutation, so I expect everyone to do the same ("k ty" is not an acceptable professional email message).

Academic Integrity

All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

- ***I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.***
- ***I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.***

By enrolling in this course, you agree to adhere to these statements. Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University. In addition, use of others' material without appropriate documentation will result in a grade of zero for the assignment, and possibly a failing grade in the course. For more information, see the library's useful [Plagiarism Tutorial](#) (with paraphrase and documentation examples!), available on the library's website.

Drop Policies

It is your responsibility to officially withdraw if you do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships: <http://www.uta.edu/ses/fao>

"The goal of all inanimate objects is to resist man and ultimately to defeat him."

—Russel Baker

Americans with Disabilities Act

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). I am required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. For more information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations, please see the Office for Students with Disabilities, via phone at (817) 272-3364, and on the Web at www.uta.edu/disability.

Student Support Services

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

Student Feedback Survey

At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Jack London’s Credo

As the term moves on, and you find that you have a great deal to read and to write for this class, I invite everyone to remember Jack London’s Credo, and especially the last line...

*I would rather be ashes than dust!
I would rather that my spark should burn out
in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled by dry-rot.
I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom
of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet.
The function of man is to live, not to exist.
I shall not waste my days trying to prolong them.
I shall use my time.*

For further discussion, please see the excellent commentary by Clarice Stasz ([click here](#)).

Course Schedule

"You never know what is enough unless you know what is more than enough."

—William Blake

This schedule is subject to revision. All revisions will be announced, and the revised schedule will be posted, on our Blackboard site.

Key to Readings:

BB = Reading Available on Blackboard

G = Gilman, *The Yellow Wall-Paper*

F = Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*

H = Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*

M/G = Moore / Gibbon, *Watchmen*

OT = Your Chosen Optional Text

<p>Part One: Constructing a "Self"</p> <p>Week 1 T 1/15: Intro to the Course Th 1/17: BB Hugh Yellowman, "Coyote, Skunk, and the Prairie Dogs" BB Anne Bradstreet, "The Flesh and the Spirit," "In Memory of My Dear Grandchild," "For Deliverance from a Fever," "The Prologue."</p> <p>Week 2 M 1/21: MLK Day T 1/22: BB Jonathan Edwards: "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (Excerpts) BB Benjamin Franklin: "The Way to Wealth" BB Nathaniel Hawthorne: "Feathertop" Th 1/24: BB Thoreau, "Why I Went to the Woods" BB Whitman "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer," "Beat, Drums"</p> <p>Week 3 T 1/29: BB Whitman, "Leaves of Grass / Song of Myself" (Excerpts), Th 1/31: BB Emily Dickinson: 258, 324, 328, 341, 348, 435, 441, 465, 501, 510, 632, 712, 754, 822, 1072, 1129, 1383, 1624, 1732</p>	<p>Th 2/7: BB Langston Hughes (selected poems)</p> <p>Week 5 M 2/11: TURN IN: Paper 1 via Blackboard T 2/12: F Chapters 1-3 (1-64) Th 2/14: F Chapters 4-5 (65-102)</p> <p>Week 6 T 2/19: F Chapters 6-7 (103-153) Th 2/21: F Chapters 8-9 (154-189) F The Text of <i>The Great Gatsby</i> (191-194) F Preface (vii-xvi) Weekend: Watch <i>Citizen Kane</i></p> <p>Week 7 T 2/26: Discuss Film Form & <i>Citizen Kane</i> Th 2/28: Discuss Film Form & <i>Citizen Kane</i> NOTE: It might be a good idea to spend some time reading your OT text!</p> <p>Week 8 T 3/5: Review for Midterm Th 3/7: Midterm Exam</p> <p>3/11-3/15: Spring Break NOTE: It might be a good idea to spend some time reading your OT text!</p>
<p>Part Two: Becoming "Other"</p> <p>Week 4 T 2/5: G (Read the whole thing) BB Gilman, "Why I Wrote..."</p>	<p>Week 9 T 3/19: H Act 1, Scenes 1-2 Th 3/21: H Act 2, Scene 1</p>

<p>Week 10 T 3/26: H Act 2, Scenes 2-3, Act 3 Th 3/28: P Chapters 1-3 (1-63) F 3/29: Last Day to Drop This Week: Start working on OT presentations</p> <p><u>Part 3: Deconstructing Self & Other</u></p> <p>Week 11 M 4/1: Registration for Summer and Fall Begins T 4/2: P Chapter 4-5 (64-119) Th 4/4: P Chapter 6 (120-152)</p> <p>Week 12 M 4/8: TURN IN: Paper 2 via Blackboard T 4/9: OT: Group 1 Presents Th 4/11: OT: Group 2 Presents This Week: Read M/G Chapters 1-3 NOTE: It might be a good idea to start thinking about Paper 3...</p> <p>Week 13 T 4/16: OT: Group 3 Presents Th 4/18: Introduction to Graphic Narrative This Week: Read M/G Chapters 4-6</p> <p>Week 14 T 4/23: Discuss M/G Chapters 1-10 Th 4/25: M/G Chapters 11-12 Weekend: Watch <i>Boys Don't Cry</i></p> <p>Week 15 T 4/30: Discuss Film Form & <i>Boys Don't Cry</i> Th 5/2: Discuss Film Form & <i>Boys Don't Cry</i> Evaluation / Review for the Final Sa 5/4: TURN IN: Paper 3 by 11:55pm, via Blackboard</p>	<p>Final Exams: 2329-011: T 5/7, 8-10:30am in LS 424 2329-015: T 5/7, 2-4:30pm in COBA 251</p>
---	---

*Have you reckon'd a thousand acres much? have you reckon'd the earth much?
Have you practis'd so long to learn to read?
Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?*

*Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems,
You shall possess the good of the earth and sun, (there are millions of suns left,)
You shall no longer take things at second or third hand, nor look through the eyes of the dead, nor feed
on the spectres in books,
You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,
You shall listen to all sides and filter them from your self.
—Walt Whitman*