

Dr. Roggenkamp

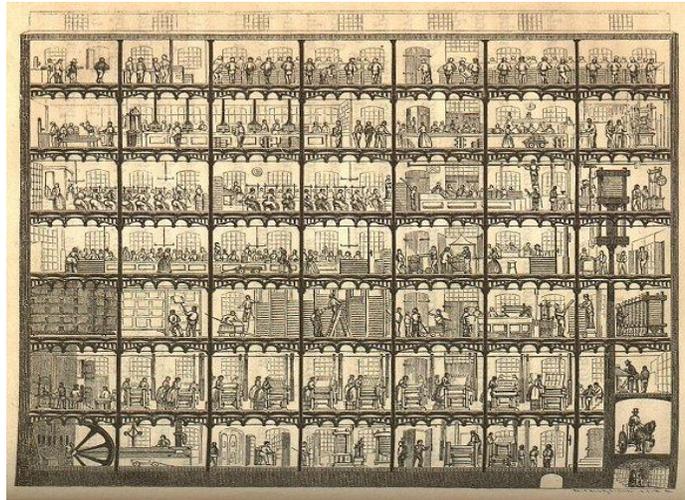
English 527.01E
Antebellum American Literature
Spring 2026

Office: 315 HL

Hours: Virtual by appointment, via email, or in person by arrangement

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Image: Cross section of Harper Brothers publishing firm, from *The Harper Establishment; or, How the Story Books are Made*, by Jacob Abbott (1855)



Course Description

English 527 examines some of the most influential novels, short stories, essays, and poems—as well as key intellectual and artistic movements—of the 1830s and 1850s, the period that scholars once called the “American Renaissance,” but which we now simply refer to as the antebellum era. This time encompassed one of the richest phases of literary production in the nation, an era during which some of the most famous names in American narrative arose, including Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, and Harriet Beecher Stowe.

1830-1860 also saw intense changes in American culture, demographics, technologies, economics, social mores, and, not coincidentally, publishing, readership, and authorship. With explosions in population came competing ideas about what America itself meant, and authors and readers alike continually pondered a number of provocative questions. From where, for instance, should America take its cultural identity, and what should constitute worthy reading material for a nation newly aware of its cultural independence from Great Britain? What role should the mass market play in determining what publishers produced and what people read? What is the artist’s role in shaping a rapidly changing society, and should literature address “the real” or “the ideal?” What do those terms mean, anyway?

We will let a similar series of questions guide us through this semester, starting by thinking about the term “American Renaissance.” What do those words signify, and how might they fail to capture a fuller picture of writing in antebellum America? Why were some of the canonized figures of the “American Renaissance,” sometimes disregarded in their own time? We will also turn to some of the popular fiction and “scribbling women” of the “feminine fifties” and, from these authors, some of the most decisive and moving anti-slavery works. Why were these authors and literary forms so popular in their day, and why were they marginalized after that time? How did the tensions between high-brow, male authors (like Nathaniel Hawthorne and,

	<p>in a more complicated way, Edgar Allan Poe) and middle-brow, female authors (like Harriet Beecher Stowe and Fanny Fern) inform literary production and consumption and shape its subsequent reputation in academia? How do antebellum anxieties about race, class, and gender inform our reading of these works today? Finally, we will end the course by circling back to some of the key works of the “Renaissance” and thinking about what it means—stylistically, aesthetically, and contextually—to write an American epic.</p>														
<p>Student Learning Outcomes</p>	<p>For the purpose of measured Student Learning Outcomes Assessment:</p> <p><u>SLO 1</u> Students will demonstrate satisfactory completion of a critical review of scholarly literature, as measured by a checklist for this assignment.</p> <p><u>SLO 2</u> Students will demonstrate effective construction of a final project, as measured by a checklist for this assignment.</p>														
<p>Required Texts</p>	<p>The following works are required for this course. In addition, you will have a few readings to download from eCollege (details provided in syllabus and in class). In general, you may use any edition you like. The ISBNs listed correspond with the editions ordered through the bookstore.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frederick Douglass, <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> (ISBN 9780393969665) • Fanny Fern, <i>Ruth Hall</i> (ISBN 9780140436402) • Harriet Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (ISBN 9780140437959) • Herman Melville, <i>Moby Dick</i> (ISBN 9780393972832) • Harriet Beecher Stowe, <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> (ISBN 9780393933994) • Walt Whitman, <i>Leaves of Grass and Other Writings</i> (ISBN 9780486456768) • Plus additional readings online and in D2L <p>IF YOU PARTICIPATE IN THE OPTIONAL ZOOM MEETING ON WEDNESDAYS, PLEASE TRY TO HAVE THAT WEEK’S READING ASSIGNMENT COMPLETED BY CLASS TIME.</p>														
<p>Grading</p>	<p>Your final grade for this course will be weighted as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="448 1457 1466 1724"> <tr> <td>Paper 1, periodicals research, 5-6 pp.</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Article presentation</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Class participation/discussion, Weeks 1-4</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Class participation/discussion, Weeks 5-8</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Class participation/discussion posts, Weeks 9-13</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Final Project</td> <td><u>30%</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </table> <p>The department of Literature and Languages does not, as a rule, allow an “Incomplete” (X) on the transcript; incompletes are <i>only</i> awarded under extraordinary circumstances, pending Department Head and Dean approval. If personal issues or conflicts arise that lead to your missing a substantial amount</p>	Paper 1, periodicals research, 5-6 pp.	20%	Article presentation	20%	Class participation/discussion, Weeks 1-4	10%	Class participation/discussion, Weeks 5-8	10%	Class participation/discussion posts, Weeks 9-13	10%	Final Project	<u>30%</u>	TOTAL	100%
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Final Project	<u>30%</u>														
TOTAL	100%														

	<p>of class, you will need to consider withdrawing from the class. As a rough guideline for what A-F grades mean, A is awarded for truly outstanding work, B denotes work significantly above the level necessary to meet basic requirements, C is for work that meets basic requirements in every way, D indicates work that meets only some of the requirements yet is still deserving of minimal credit, and F results if work is not completed or if it fails to meet the requirements of the assignment and/or course. I will provide detailed information about paper evaluation at the time of those assignments.</p>
<p>Discussion / Participation</p>	<p>This course's basic mode of delivery is online, but with an optional zoom meeting every Wednesday from 5:30-7:00 p.m. I will record these class sessions, and if you are unable to attend the zoom meeting on Wednesday, you will need to watch it as soon as I post it (usually by the next day). All students are required, additionally, to participate in the discussion in D2L. Students who are able to participate in the zoom class will not be required to write as much on the discussion board as those who miss the zoom class, however, I require that all students read the majority of comments that other students write.</p> <p>You may post as many times as you like, and you should definitely start posting even if you have not finished the entire reading assignment and activities yet. In fact, sometimes it is very instructive to see people's responses when they are only mid-way through an assignment. I very much prefer that scenario rather than having everyone wait until the very end of the week to post on the discussion board. I have not set a specific quota for how many posts you need to provide for each week's discussion. However, as a general guideline, I will be looking for at least four substantive posts total per week to earn a "B" for that week's discussion, including both responses to other people's posts and new topics that you start on your own. (By substantive I mean posts that are more than one or two sentences in length, posts that are detailed and specific, posts that work to enrich the conversation—not, in other words, short, overly-generalized posts that simply say "I really liked this story.") Students who post all their ideas on the night of the deadline will not fare as well as students who post at least two different days during the week.</p> <p>I urge you to write your comments in response to what others have posted, in addition to starting your own threads. If someone has already posted the point that you had wanted to make, add to that thread rather than starting an entirely new thread that says the same thing. To me, that latter action implies that you are not reading what other people have written. Remember, the whole idea is to get a discussion going!</p> <p>Additionally, again, my expectation is that you will read the posts that other</p>

	<p>people put up, which is tracked on my end. Students who do not also read the majority of other people's posts will not receive full credit, even if they post numerous times themselves.</p> <p>From time to time I will step in and participate in these discussions, and I will read everything you write, but I will not respond to each and every post because I am more interested in what you have to say about the items we read than in what I have to say. Please note that if you miss a discussion deadline, you will not be allowed to go back and post. Thus you would not receive credit for that week's discussion.</p>
<p>Major Assignments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Periodicals Paper: Information forthcoming in a separate document. ▪ Article Presentation: Each student will read and analyze a pre-chosen full-length scholarly article on one text during the semester. I will supply the articles in D2L. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You will create a narrated slide show or video in which you present the central argument, claims, and conclusions of the article. In essence, this presentation will explain the article's thesis, main points, and structure. Include commentary weighing how successful the author is in making his/her argument. Do you find it convincing? Why or why not? What are the article's strengths and weaknesses? ○ Send your presentation to me by the beginning of the week in which your article is scheduled so that I can post it to D2L and everyone else can view it. ▪ Final Project: You will have a choice of topics for your final project. Details forthcoming.
<p>Late Assignments</p>	<p>I grant extensions on papers and assignments only under the most exceptional of circumstances. I will only accept late papers if you make explicit prior arrangements with me and provide documented proof of your inability to complete the paper on time due to extenuating circumstances (dire illness, death in the immediate family, etc.).</p>
<p>Communication and Technology Requirements</p>	<p>I tend to send several emails over the semester, and I will use your university email account (myLeo), so be sure to check it every day.</p> <p>This course will be supplemented using myLeo Online (D2L), the Learning Management system used by ETAMU. You will need your CWID and password to log into the course page via the myLeo portal. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 902-468-6000 or helpdesk@online.tamuc.org. To complete this course successfully, you will need a computer with internet access (high speed recommended) and a word processor equipped with Microsoft Word. Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system and</p>

	<p>a recent version of a browser like Internet Explorer or Google Chrome. Your course will also work with Macintosh OS along with a recent version of Safari or Firefox.</p> <p>ETAMU provides students with technical support in the use of D2L. Technology problems are not generally an excuse for a late assignment--make sure you submit your work in time to allow for any problems accessing the Dropbox. You may reach the help desk by the following means, 24 hours a day, seven days a week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Phone 866-656-5511 ➤ Email helpdesk@online.tamuc.org ➤ Click on “Help” button for information regarding working with D2L
<p>Additional Policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You are responsible for reading and understanding all items included on this syllabus and on any additional documents you receive during the course. ▪ The Department of Literature and Languages will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalty for students who are found guilty of academic dishonesty include failure of the assignment and/or course, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. Refer to the ETAMU Code of Student Conduct 13.99.99.R0.10 for details: http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/ruleSProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf. Examples of plagiarism include but are not restricted to: turning in an essay written entirely or partly by someone else; copying any portion of someone else’s words and presenting those words as your own (i.e. without quotation or citation); copying paragraphs, sentences, or parts of sentences from another source without citation; using the same ideas that you have found in another writer’s essay and presenting those ideas as your own (again, without quotation or citation). If you are not clear about how to avoid any of these acts, it is up to you to clarify, either via online information or our own Writing Center on the first floor of DTH. Unintentional plagiarism is still plagiarism, and we expect all students to understand what constitutes an act of academic dishonesty. ▪ ETAMU acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text or to suggest replacements for text beyond individual words. However, because this course is intended to teach you how to generate your own content, no use of AI for assignments will be permitted. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). ▪ All students enrolled in the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. ETAMU will comply in the classroom and online courses with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related

retaliation on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with registered disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact the Office of Student Disability Resources and Services, Gee Library 162; phone 903-886-5150 or 903-886-5835; fax 903-468-8148; email Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu; website <http://www.tamuc.edu/CampusLife/CampusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/default.aspx>.
- Texas Senate Bill 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in ETAMC buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas license to carry a handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the state of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all ETAMU campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 911.
- Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, DTH 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head or Assistant Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities (CHSSA) after following the steps outlined above. If the instructor in question is the Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where applicable, students should also consult University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 (“Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation”).

English 527: Schedule of Assignments and Readings

Some slight adjustments may occur during the course of the semester.

Note: unless otherwise specified, students who are participating in Wednesday zoom class should have read the assignments prior to class meeting on Wednesday; students who are unable to attend the zoom meeting must view the recorded version asap after meeting recording is posted in D2L then follow up with discussion posts.

<p>Jan 29 - Feb 1</p> <p>(Week 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch introductory video • Read syllabus in entirety • By end of week, read and post on Week 1 Discussion Board (because class starts mid-week, I'll gladly let you have a couple of extra days in the next week to finish this assignment up: • Read Richard F. Teichgraeber, "'A Vast Cultural Bazaar': The Antebellum Literary Marketplace" (from <i>Sublime Thoughts/Penny Wisdom: Situating Emerson and Thoreau in the American Market</i>, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), located in D2L. • Read excerpt from David Dowling, <i>Capital Letters: Authorship in the Antebellum Literary Market</i> (University of Iowa Press, 2009), 1-24, located in D2L. • Post on the Week 1 discussion board
<p>Feb 2 - Feb 8</p> <p>(Week 2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Virginia Fister, "Sunshine and Shadow: Visualizing the Sensational Metropolis in the Illustrated Press and Guidebooks," <i>Visualizing 19th-Century New York</i> digital project: https://visualizingnyc.org/essays/new-york-in-sunlight-and-shadows-urban-sketches-in-the-illustrated-press-and-guidebooks/ • Read Edgar Allan Poe works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Ligeia," https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/147/the-works-of-edgar-allan-poe/5376/ligeia/ ○ "The Fall of the House of Usher," https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/147/the-works-of-edgar-allan-poe/5312/the-fall-of-the-house-of-usher/ ○ "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," https://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/the_murders_in_the_rue_morgue.pdf ○ "The Tell-Tale Heart," https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/147/the-works-of-edgar-allan-poe/5314/the-tell-tale-heart/ ○ "The Black Cat," https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/147/the-works-of-edgar-allan-poe/5235/the-black-cat/ ○ "The Masque of the Red Death," https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/147/the-works-of-edgar-allan-poe/5383/the-masque-of-the-red-death/ ○ "The Bells," https://poets.org/poem/bells ○ "The Raven," https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/147/the-works-of-edgar-allan-poe/5352/the-raven/ ○ "The Philosophy of Composition," https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/147/the-works-of-edgar-allan-poe/5371/the-philosophy-of-composition/ ○ "How to Write a Blackwood Article," https://www.eapoe.org/works/tales/blkwde.htm • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m. • Post on Week 2 discussion board • Watch student-submitted article review once posted

<p>Feb 9 – Feb 15 (Week 3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video from the International Printing Museum, “The 19th-Century Country Paper Newspaper Shop,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORL11t4LTA • Read Nathaniel Hawthorne works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Twenty Days with Julian and Little Bunny,” download in D2L. ○ “Young Goodman Brown,” https://www.columbia.edu/itc/english/f1124y-001/resources/Young_Goodman_Brown.pdf ○ “My Kinsman, Major Molineux,” https://repositorio.ufsc.br/bitstream/handle/123456789/132704/My_Kinsman_Major_Molineux_(Nathaniel_Hawthorne_1832).pdf?sequence=1 ○ “The Minister’s Black Veil,” https://pdcrodas.webs.ull.es/fundamentos/HawthorneTheMinistersBlackVeil.pdf ○ “The Artist of the Beautiful,” https://www.livrosgratis.com.br/ler-livro-online-146069/the-artist-of-the-beautiful • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m. • Post on the Week 3 discussion board • Watch student-submitted article review once posted
<p>Feb 16 – Feb 22 (Week 4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Fanny Fern, <i>Ruth Hall</i> • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m. • Post on the Week 4 discussion board • Watch student-submitted article review once posted
<p>Feb 23 - March 1 (Week 5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m. (We will discuss your periodicals research, as well as some introductory discussion about <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i>, which we begin next week.) <p>Periodicals Research Paper due before 11:59 p.m. on March 1, in Week 5 Dropbox.</p>
<p>March 2 – March 8 (Week 6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Harriet Beecher Stowe, <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> (1852), Volume 1 • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m. • Post on the Week 6 discussion board • Watch student-submitted article review once posted
<p>SPRING BREAK</p>	
<p>March 16 – March 22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i>, Volume 2 • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m. • Post on the Week 7 discussion board

(Week 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch student-submitted article review once posted
March 23 – March 29 (Week 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Frederick Douglass, <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> (1845) • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m. • Post on the Week 6 discussion board • Watch student-submitted article review once posted
March 30 – April 5 (Week 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Harriet Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (1861) • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m. • Post on the Week 9 discussion board • Watch student-submitted article review once posted
April 6 – April 12 (Week 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch “The True Story of Moby-Dick: The Horrifying Voyage of the <i>Essex</i>,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rbsoFkJD44 • Watch “The Hunt for Moby Dick,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cY2HMLkxg9M (be warned that there are some graphic images of dead whales) • Read Herman Melville, <i>Moby-Dick</i>, “Etymology” – Chapter 12 • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m. • Post on the Week 10 discussion board •
April 13 – April 19 (Week 11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Melville, <i>Moby-Dick</i>, Chapter 13 – Chapter 39 • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m. • Post on the Week 11 discussion board
April 20 – April 26 (Week 12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Melville, <i>Moby-Dick</i>, Chapter 40 - end • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m. • Post on the Week 12 discussion board • Watch student-submitted article review once posted
April 27 – May 3 (Week 13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read excerpts from Philip Gura, <i>American Transcendentalism</i> (Hill and Wang, 2007), located in D2L. • Read Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself” (opening untitled poem from 1855 edition of <i>Leaves of Grass</i>). • Optional zoom meeting, Wednesday, 4:30-6:00 • Post on the Week 13 discussion board • Watch student-submitted article review once posted
FINAL PROJECTS DUE in D2L WEEK 13 DROPBOX BY 11:59 p.m. WEDNESDAY, MAY 6.	