English/AM STD 657: Hawthorne’s Fiction of/and the Middle-Class Family

Course Description:
Struggling to transform himself from an amateurish magazine “scribbler” into a popular, professional author, Nathaniel Hawthorne adopted various literary modes including short stories, novels, historical romances, domestic tales, and children’s fiction. Much of his successes and, indeed, his subsequent canonical persistence are owing to these fictions’ articulation of newly emerging national norms, formations like middle-class domesticity and specific constructions of race, class, and gender.

Nowhere are such concerns more obvious than in his juvenile fiction, an interesting and, until recently, understudied aspect of his literary career; it was a genre in which he would produce no less than six books for children on topics ranging from colonial American history to fantastical tales of myth and magic. Not only central to these emerging norms, but also provides a case study in the development of American children’s literature itself in the years before the Civil War, as interests moved from the kind of didactic, historical, and home-centered sketches that dominated the juvenile market in the 1830s and 1840s to a “revolution” of highly imaginative, fantastic works of myth and fable increasingly characterizing his efforts after 1850.

Beyond examining his interest in the burgeoning field of writing for children, we’ll also consider Hawthorne’s fiction about them—short stories and sketches of home and family, husband and wives, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters. We’ll also consider The Scarlet Letter, House of Seven Gables, and Blithedale Romance as domestic fictions of sorts, as novels reflecting both the politics of Hawthorne’s household, and of the nation itself. Additionally, we’ll look at the way his texts wrangle with constructions of the child from the Puritanical to the Romantic, notions of “coming of age,” and shifting formulations of masculinity and femininity. Finally, we'll examine the way his texts help disseminate bourgeois values like self-discipline, hard work, deference to authority, and the necessity of “proper” gender roles, not to mention articulate anxieties over parenting, education, and reform, and exhibit worries over the gendered cultural meanings of literary authorship.

Learning Goals:
1. To gain familiarity with cultural issues vital to the Hawthorne’s fiction, and interrogate his writings along the lines of race, class, and gender.
2. To participate—through writings, discussions, and presentations—in scholarly debates on Hawthorne’s work.
3. To practice skills and habits conducive to the production of strong scholarly research.

Required Texts:
Library of America editions are available at the Vons Bookstore, located on 315 W State Street near the Chauncy Hill Mall. Phone: 765-743-1915.

Tales and Sketches (Library of America College Edition)
Collected Novels (Library of America Edition)
True Stories from History and Biography (Centenary Edition)
Life of Franklin Pierce (Sabin Americana)

Recommended Biographies:
James Mellow, Hawthorne in his Times (1980)

**For Further Reading:**
- Weekly critical sources available on blackboard and/or Course Reserves at Hicks Library

**Grading and Other Requirements:** This course will use +/- grading.

- **Participation (50%):**
  
  *Attendance:* Student are required to attend class having read all the week’s assigned texts, with questions and comments in mind, and with a desire to engage others in conversation. If you do not attend class, obviously you cannot participate in this manner.

  *Short Papers:* Students will write two 4 pp. typed, double-spaced papers, each providing a focused, argument-driven close reading of (a few) passages from a chosen week’s primary text(s). The assignment will be due at noon on the day we meet to discuss the text, and can be emailed to me. These essays may be used to spur class discussion.

  *Presentation:* Each student will give a fifteen-minute presentation on an assigned scholarly source, essentially teaching it to the class. Each student will also write 4 pp. typed, double-spaced paper in which he or she encapsulates the presentation in a concise, well-organized manner. The paper will be due one week after the oral presentation.

  *Conference:* At some point in the semester (before week 11), each student will need to meet with me to discuss ideas for his or her seminar paper.

  *Paper Proposal:* Each student will produce a 1-2 pp. typed, double-spaced proposal, as if he or she were submitting to an academic conference (due in week 12).

  *Bibliographies:* Each student will produce two bibliographies, a preliminary one of at least 15 sources the student intends to investigate as they research their topic (due in week 10) and an annotated one (due in week 14) of 10 scholarly sources he or she will use in his or her final paper.

- **Seminar Paper (50%):**
  
  At the end of the semester, each student will turn in a 15-20 pp. seminar paper on an assigned text of your choice. The paper should integrate scholarly sources, as applicable, both those read in class and those you find in your own research.

All written assignments should conform to the prescriptions of the *MLA Handbook*. Students must complete all components of the course to receive a passing grade.

**Academic Integrity:**

Plagiarism is defined as the act of taking the work of another and offering it as one’s own without giving credit to that source. When sources are used in a paper, acknowledgment of the original author or source must be made through appropriate reference and, if directly quoted, quotation marks or indentations must be used. Any student caught plagiarizing will be given a zero on the assignment, referred to the Dean for further consequences, and, possibly, expelled from the program.
Readings Schedule:

Week 1 (August 26): Introduction
Melville, “Hawthorne and his Mosses” (1850); Elizabeth Peabody to Horace Mann, 3 March 1838; Longfellow’s review of Twice-Told Tales (1837)

Twice-Told Tales: “Scribbling” in the 1830s

Week 2 (September 2)
“Little Annie’s Ramble” (1835, 1837), “The Village Uncle” (1835, 1842), “Sights from a Steeple” (1831, 1837), “A Rill from the Town Pump” (1835, 1837), and “Sunday at Home” (1837, 1837)

Secondary Reading:

Week 3 (September 9)
“The Gentle Boy” (1832, 1837), “Mrs. Hutchinson” (1830), “The Duston Family” (1836), and “Mrs. Bullfrog” (1837, 1846)

Secondary Reading:
- Nina Baym, “Again and Again, the Scribbling Women,” in Hawthorne and Women (1999)

Week 4 (September 16)

Secondary Reading:

Household Histories: the 1840s

Week 5 (September 23)
The Whole History of Grandfather’s Chair (1841)

Secondary Reading:

Week 6 (September 30)
Whole History of Grandfather’s Chair continued

Secondary Reading:

• Derek Pacheco, “‘Disorders of the Circulating Medium’: Hawthorne’s Early Children’s Literature” (2007), and “‘Vanished Scenes...Pictured in the Air’: Hawthorne, Indian Removal, and The Whole History of Grandfather’s Chair,” in Nathaniel Hawthorne Review, Special Issue (Spring 2010)

Week 7 (October 7)

Biographical Stories for Children (1842)

Secondary Reading:

• Patricia Valenti, “‘None but Imaginative Authority’: Nathaniel Hawthorne and the Progress of Nineteenth-Century (Juvenile) Literature in America” in Nathaniel Hawthorne Review, Special Issue (Spring 2010)

Week 8 (October 14)

Mosses from an Old Manse (1846): “The Old Manse” (1846), “The Birthmark” (1843, 1846), “Rappacini’s Daughter” (1844, 1846) and “The New Adam and Eve” (1843, 1846)

Secondary Reading:

• Leland Person, “Hawthorne’s Bliss of Paternity: Sophia’s Absence from ‘The Old Manse’” (1991)

Fantastic Families: the 1850s

Week 9 (October 21)

The Scarlet Letter (1850)

Secondary Reading:

• T. Walter Herbert, Chapter Ten and Eleven, “Double Marriage, Double Adultery” and “Domesticity as Redemption,” in Dearest Beloved (1993)

Week 10 (October 28)

Scarlet Letter continued

Secondary Reading:

• Michael T. Gilmore, “Hawthorne and the Making of the Middle-Class” in Rethinking Class (1994)
• Nina Baym, “Revisiting Hawthorne’s Feminism,” in Hawthorne and the Real (2005)

Preliminary Bibliography due, in class

Week 11 (November 4)

The House of Seven Gables (1851)

Secondary Reading:
• David Anthony, “Class, Culture, and the Trouble with White Skin in Hawthorne’s The House of the Seven Gables” (1999)

Week 12 (November 11)
The Blithedale Romance (1852)

Secondary Reading:
• David Greven, Introduction and Chapter 4, “Madness and Manhood in Hawthorne’s Scarlett Letter and Blithedale Romance,” in Manhood Beyond Desire (2005)

Proposal due, in class

Week 13 (November 18)
A Wonder Book for Boys and Girls (1851)

Secondary Reading:

Week 14
November 23: Annotated bibliography due, 12 PM in my office

November 25: Thanksgiving! (No class)

Week 15 (December 2)
Life of Franklin Pierce (1852)

Secondary Reading:
• Leland Person, “A Man for the Whole Country: Marketing Masculinity in the Pierce Biography” (2009)

Week 16 (December 9)
Tanglewood Tales for Boys and Girls (1853)

Secondary Reading:
• Sarah Wadsworth, Chapter 1, “Wonder Books,” in In the Company of Books (2006)
• Nancy Sweet, “Pragmatic Politics and the Dream of Heroism: Hawthorne’s Life of Pierce and Tanglewood Tales” in Nathaniel Hawthorne Review, Special Issue (Spring 2010)

Week 17 (Finals Week)
Paper Due: Friday 12 PM in my office