American Literature, 1865-Present

English 2302, Section 2
Wednesday 5:30-8:00 pm
Gladfelter 764
Professor Paul Benzon
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Office: Anderson Hall 1127
Office Hours: Wednesday, 1:30-5:00 pm and by appointment
Mailbox: Anderson Hall 1029
Course Blog: http://tual2.wordpress.com
Course Twitter Hashtag: #tual2

Course Description
In this course we will study the diverse scope of American literature from the late nineteenth century to the present. We will consider a wide range of questions and issues as we approach this literature, including the ways in which American writers across this period use literary innovation represent and respond to issues such as modernization and urbanization, the changing shape of racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual relations, multiple world wars, the emergence of consumer culture and counterculture, and the increasing technological saturation of American life. Taking these and other issues as our focal points, we will attempt to think about how the American literature of the last 150 years functions as a history of our own complex cultural moment.

Required Texts
Henry James, *Daisy Miller* (9780141441344)
Stephen Crane, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (9781551115979)
Nella Larsen, *Quicksand and Passing* (9780813511702)
Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* (9780679723165)
Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (9781400033416)
Tony Kushner, *Angels in America* (9781559363846)
Selected other readings (marked with an asterisk and available on Blackboard or online as noted)

The books listed above are available at the University Bookstore and on reserve at Paley Library as well as through various online retailers. If you order your books online, you are responsible for making sure that they arrive in plenty of time for you to read them be prepared to discuss them in class—do not wait until the last minute to order them. I recommend using <u>Amazon Student</u> to get your books quickly and affordably.

Materials on Blackboard must be printed out and brought to class on the days we will be discussing them. I recommend that you print this material out at the beginning of the semester and keep it all together so that you will have it in hand well before it is due.

Grading
You must complete all of the following course assignments in order to pass the course:

Class Participation	15%
Twitter	15%
Course Blog	20%
Word Follow	15%
Textual Annotation	15%
Final Exam	20%

Preparation, Participation, and Class Structure
We will spend our class time each day on a variety of different activities, including but not limited to full-class discussions, small-group discussions, presentations, screenings, and in-class writing. While I may occasionally give short lectures, the bulk of our time will be spent talking and engaging together with the course material and with each other's ideas. In order to do this, it is essential that you come to class prepared to address the day's material. This means printing out (if necessary) and completing all reading before class, bringing the reading to class, and being prepared to discuss the reading thoughtfully. You should have interpretations, questions, and responses to share with the class, and you should be prepared to offer these and to be called on in our conversation. Discussion and work in class are important parts of this course, so active, thoughtful participation will have an impact on your final grade. More generally, the more each of you brings your own thinking to the discussion, the more all of us will get out of class—I encourage you to offer perspectives, ideas, examples, oppositions, questions, and other contributions as much as possible. If you are uncomfortable with speaking in class, please let me know or come see me at the beginning of the semester so that we can work together to make things easier for you.

I will schedule time for a break roughly halfway through class. Because our class has a long evening slot, I encourage you to bring food, snacks, drinks, etc., as long as you eat and drink them in a way that does not distract from our work in class.

Although I will lecture rarely, if ever, that does not mean that you should not take notes on what the class has to say about the material we are discussing, just as you would in a lecture course. On the contrary, even when it seems as if we are "just talking" about a reading, a piece of culture, or something else, you should still be actively thinking and writing—do not let the discussion just pass you by without actively engaging it, even if only as a listener and note-taker at certain moments. Having a record of the class' comments, opinions, debates, etc., will be extremely valuable to you in preparing to develop topics and arguments for further writing and thinking in the course.

Laptops and tablets may be used in class only for class-related work such as note-taking, class writing or reading, and research. If inappropriate computer or electronic use becomes a problem for some members of the class, I will revoke permission to use them for the class as a whole. If you have questions about whether a certain use of technology is appropriate or not, please don't hesitate to ask me.

Sleeping, texting, listening to music, non-class-related computer use, talking outside of class discussion and other similar behaviors are disrespectful to me and to your classmates and disruptive of our work in class. Students who engage in such behaviors will be asked to leave class and marked absent for the day.

Online Work
Your online work for this course will take two different forms: regular posts to a Twitter feed for our class and weekly posts to a course blog. This work will serve several purposes: firstly (and most immediately), it will give us a chance to think and talk critically about some of the course material before we discuss it in class and to gear our discussion towards issues and questions that are important to you or that you are curious about or confused by. In giving you the opportunity to bring new material and new areas of concern into our conversation, it will also help you to generate topics, ideas, and arguments for papers.

Twitter Posting. You should set up a Twitter account if you do not already have one, and start to follow the hashtag #tual2, which we will use to mark all of our class-related tweets. As part of your classwork on Twitter, you should post **at least four class-related tweets per week** using this hashtag (although I encourage you to post more—as many as you find productive or useful—and I imagine that many people will find themselves going over that minimum fairly frequently). For more in-depth information on how to set up and use Twitter for this course and what to post, see the separate handout at the end of the syllabus.

Twitter Grading. Rather than grading every tweet(!) or grading your work on Twitter every week, I will grade it holistically several times over the semester. This means that I will respond to and assess your work once early in the semester and once closer to the end. The use of Twitter in the university classroom is still a relatively new thing, so our work here will be somewhat experimental. The best way to do well on this ongoing assignment is to take it seriously and to post consistently and substantively, using the hashtag as a way to continue our work outside the classroom in a productive way throughout the semester—be sure not to put yourself in the position of posting lots of "catchup" or filler tweets at the last second before grading.

Blog Posting. Note that the blog is located on our independent course website at http://tual2.wordpress.com, **not on Blackboard** (although we will use Blackboard for email, papers, and other elements of the course). You are not required to register with WordPress in order to post on the blog, but you must subscribe to the blog so that you receive notifications of new material that I post. The most recent main post will appear at the top of the page—click on the comments link for that post to read what others have written and post your response.

Blog Content. Your work on the blog will take different forms at different points in the semester. Sometimes I will post a prompt for you to respond to, while at other times your posts can be more open-ended; sometimes I will ask you to address a particular passage or other element from the reading, while at other times I will ask you to think about a broader issue or question that connects several texts. The blog is a space for us as a group to be reflective about the material we are discussing, and to begin to air initial responses, interpretations, and reactions before we pursue them more fully in class discussion. In this spirit, your posting to the blog should be thoughtful and analytical—you should offer interpretations and questions rather than summaries or solely personal responses. Because a blog allows discussion to happen over time, you should always read what has already been posted to the blog on a given week before you make your own post, and you should try to address that material in what you say—thoughtful responses that oppose, expand, rethink, complicate, or otherwise complement what others have written are as helpful and meaningful as "standalone" comments (if not more so). I will participate in conversations as they develop as well as posting opening threads.

Each post should be at least 200 words—you might write and edit your post in Microsoft Word or a similar program so that you know the length of your post and so that you have a backup of it on your computer. I will sometimes ask you to include images, links, video clips, and other media elements in your posts—this is fairly easy to do and we will discuss it in class at the beginning of the course.

Blog Scheduling. Unless I specify otherwise, there will be a blog post due each week at **midnight on Sunday night**, usually covering roughly the first half or ¾ of the reading for the coming Wednesday's class. This deadline is designed to help you balance the pace of reading over the week between class meetings—one useful way to organize your reading and writing for the course might be to plan some tweeting both before and after your blog post, so that you have a chance to work out some ideas for your post as well as a way to follow from it in conversation with other people in the class. Because of the time-sensitive nature of the blog, late posts will not receive credit.

Blog Grading. I will grade your blog posts on a scale of 1-4 each week. Criteria for each grade are as follows:

Grade	Characteristics
1	The post is missing, late, or severely underdeveloped, consisting of only a few sentences.
2	The post meets all the technical requirements of the assignment (quotation, use of media, length, etc.), but only engages with the material and the issues it raises in a passing or superficial sense.
3	The post uses textual or other material to make analytical claims, and begins to develop them, but those claims or connections are not fully developed or analyzed.
4	The post uses textual or other material to make thoughtful, original analytical claims and/or connections and engages and analyzes the issues it raises in independent, in-depth ways.

Word Follow
As part of our work in the first section of the course, you will select one "rich" word from one of the texts we read, and analyze that word as it appears across your chosen text. This assignment is intended to help you practice with literary analysis at the microscopic level and with placing that analysis in the context of a larger work. I will provide more in-depth instructions for this assignment early in the semester.

Textual Annotation
As part of our work in the second section of the course, you will choose a single page or two-page spread from either text in this section to scan and annotate. This assignment is intended to give you an opportunity to engage in close, in-depth analysis of a small piece of text. I will provide more in-depth instructions for this assignment as we begin our work on these readings.

Final Paper
This course requires a final paper of seven to nine double-spaced typed pages in twelve-point font, incorporating some independent outside research. A proposal for this paper will be due in the weeks leading up to the due date for the paper, and the paper itself will be due at the beginning of class on the last day.

Attendance
Consistent attendance, preparation, and participation are crucial to your success in this course. I will expect that you come to class on time and ready to work**.** This is particularly important given that our class meets once a week instead of two or three times—it's essential that we all come consistently prepared to make the most of every class meeting. **More than two absences will have a negative impact on your final course grade, and more than three absences will result in your failing the course. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.** Thus these absences are meant to cover illnesses, personal emergencies, job obligations, and any and all other contingencies that might keep you from class. Latenesses and early departures of more than 10 minutes will each be considered equal to half an absence (however, even if you are more than 10 minutes late, or if you will need to leave class more than 10 minutes early, you should still always come to class). If you miss class, it is your responsibility to keep up with the work—make sure to turn in any written work that was due for the day, and check the course blog and course website on Blackboard or come see me during my office hours to see what you might have missed in class.

Technology and Course Work
Technology will be a frequent tool in our work together in this course: in addition to posting on Twitter and on the class blog and communicating with me and your classmates via email, you will be handing in papers electronically as well as in hard copy form, and I may ask you to view multimedia material online as part of certain readings and paper assignments. Additionally, some of our readings will be accessible online through Blackboard for you to download and print out to read. As such, you are responsible for making sure that you have the technological tools and access necessary to keep up with the reading and writing for the course. Expect that you will have technological problems at some point in the semester, and plan accordingly—rather than being exceptions or excuses, these moments are part of life in a technological world, and you should be prepared to avoid them and work around them when they do come up. I recommend that you do this in a few ways: print out readings ahead of time, save your papers frequently, back up your work using a website such as OWLBox or dropbox.com as well as a USB drive, make sure you have access to alternate computers and printers (a friend's or roommate's, a lab in the library or TECH Center, etc.), and leave yourself time to use these backup resources rather than relying on everything working perfectly at the last second. If you have questions about how to use any of these resources (or anything else technology-related), don't hesitate to come ask me.

Office Hours and Additional Help
I want each of you to be successful in this class. Helping each of you develop as readers, writers, thinkers, and students of American literature is important to me, and I want to do what I can to help you achieve those goals and succeed in my class. More importantly, I have a lot of interest in the material we will be working on this semester, and I would love for you to get the same enjoyment from it that I do. If you have any questions, problems, or things you want to discuss—about the course, the readings, writing assignments or paper ideas, life at Temple, future academic or career plans, or anything else at all—or if you simply want to talk more about what we're doing in class, please come see me. I encourage you to think of meeting with me not just as a last resort or something to do when you need help, but as a central part of making your learning more productive, meaningful, and enjoyable. My office hours are Wednesday from 1:30-5:00 in Anderson Hall 1127—this time is set aside for us to talk and for me to help you and work with you. If you aren't free during that time, get in touch with me before or after class or by email and we can set up a time that is more convenient—I'm also happy to talk via Google Chat, Skype, or other means. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you are having trouble or feel you need help, or for any other reason.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity
Independent thinking is a crucial component of your work in this course. **If you plagiarize, you will fail the course.** If you are uncertain about anything, ask **before** you hand in the work. The following rules cover several basic concerns involving plagiarism. If you are in any way uncertain about citation or about what constitutes plagiarism, do not hesitate to consult me.
a)   The language in your paper must be either your own or a direct quote from the original author.
b)   Changing a few words or phrases from another writer's work is not enough to make the writing your own. The writing is either your own or the other person's; there are no in-betweens.
c)   In-text citation and an accurate bibliography acknowledge that the fact or opinion expressed comes from another writer. If the language comes from another writer, quotation marks are necessary, in addition to a correct citation.

Disability Statement
This course is open to all students who met the academic requirements for participation.   Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Contact Disability Resources and Services at 215-204-1280 to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Statement on Academic Freedom
Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The University has adopted a policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy # 03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link: http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02 .

Course Schedule

In addition to reading the literary selections listed below, you should also read the headnote for each author on the day we will be discussing them.

The schedule of readings below may change over the course of the semester. It is your responsibility to keep abreast of these changes by attending class, checking your email and the class blog regularly, and contacting me or coming to my office if you have any questions.

Section 1: Space, City, Movement, Identity	
Wednesday, Aug. 27	Course Introduction
Wednesday, Sept. 3	Henry James, *Daisy Miller*
Wednesday, Sept. 10	Stephen Crane, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*
Wednesday, Sept. 17	Nella Larsen, *Quicksand*
Wednesday, Sept. 24	*T.S. Eliot, "The Wasteland"

Section 2: Memory, Nationhood, Narrative	
Wednesday, Oct. 1	Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* 1-142 **Word Follow Assignment Due This Week**
Wednesday, Oct. 8	Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* 145-222
Wednesday, Oct. 15	Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* 222-end
Wednesday, Oct. 22	Toni Morrison, *Beloved* 1-134
Wednesday, Oct. 29	Toni Morrison, *Beloved* 135-end

Section 3: Future Approaches	
Wednesday, Nov. 5	Tony Kushner, *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* **Textual Annotation Assignment Due This Week**
Wednesday, Nov. 12	Tony Kushner, *Angels in America: Perestroika*
Wednesday, Nov. 19	Open Day/TBA **Final Paper Proposal Due This Week**
Wednesday, Nov. 26	**No Class: Thanksgiving Holiday**
Wednesday, Dec. 3	**Final Class: Conclusions** **Final Paper Due**

American Literature II
Professor Benzon
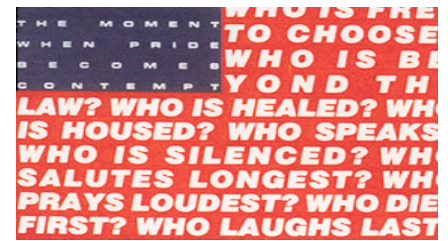
How to Use Twitter in this Class

Twitter is a social media/microblogging platform organized around posts of 140 characters or less. It is an increasingly large part of digital culture, and is used by journalists, activists, authors, scholars, and celebrities, in addition to everyday people around the world. In this class, we will use Twitter as a way of recording our thoughts about the texts we read and the issues they raise, and of sharing that thinking with one another outside of the classroom.

Getting Started

• *Register.* If you don't already have a Twitter account, go to twitter.com and register for one. If you already have an account, you may want to start a separate one just for this class—that decision is up to you. However, whatever account you choose to use for class cannot be a "protected" (i.e., private) account—if you use a private account, your tweets won't show up in the class conversation, and I won't be able to see them and give you credit for them, so make sure to use a public account for this class.

• *Download.* There are a wide range of ways to access Twitter: you can use the main webpage or a variety of (mostly free) clients and applications available for smartphones and computers. Using one of these will help you to keep track of our class conversations in an organized way—I recommend TweetDeck, which is available through any web browser as well as in a standalone application and a plugin to Google Chrome. TweetDeck will allow you to create a separate column for our class hashtag, which will help you to see it and follow it on its own.

• *Follow.* In addition to allowing you to stay connected with peers and friends, Twitter is also a powerful news-gathering and reading tool for the larger world. Start following people and organizations that interest you, both in relation to your personal interests and in terms of the issues of our course. If nothing else, you should start following our class hashtag, #tual2, which will show you all the posts by members of our class. You can set up an ongoing search for this on the Twitter webpage or a separate column for it in many Twitter clients. Make a point of checking this hashtag regularly—that way you'll be sure to see any notes or announcements I send out, and you'll also be up on what people are discussing before you post.

Tweeting for Class

The number one rule to being a productive, successful tweeter for this course is to **be substantive**: it's fine to tweet me with basic questions about class business or to have some social chat with classmates, but make sure that the majority of your tweets for class engage the course material, your classmates, and me in a way that advances and/or adds to our ongoing class conversation. Our goal is to make our conversation on Twitter an extension of our in-class conversation, so use that as a model for what to tweet: raise thoughtful ideas and responses to the texts, your classmates, and me. *Relatedly, everything you say on Twitter for this class should be civil and respectful—this is a public forum, and you should not use it in ways that are antagonistic, offensive, or otherwise inappropriate.*

Ways to Tweet for Class:

• **Livetweet your reading.** You should read actively for this (or any) course, writing down as many notes, questions, ideas, important passages, etc., as possible as you go. Twitter is a great way to do this publically and collaboratively—using it as a way of taking notes online in conversation with classmates will deepen and extend how you understand the material.

• **Respond to classmates.** Relatedly, having multiple people tweeting about the same readings and issues provides a great opportunity for dialogue and debate—you can use Twitter to ask and answer questions about the readings, add to what others are already saying, disagree or start a debate, etc.

• **Post relevant links.** If you see material online that raises issues related to our course, tweet a link to it and tell us what you think of it!

These possibilities for posting are only some initial suggestions about how to use this platform for our class—the overarching guideline is to be thoughtful, critical, creative, and engaged. If you've got questions about how to use Twitter for our class (technical, content-related, or something else), email me at pbenzon@temple.edu, or tweet me at @pbenzon.