UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
PHD COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION READING LIST
NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURE

The following is a reading list for doctoral candidates to use as a guide in preparing for the comprehensive examination in nineteenth-century American literary studies. The list is suggestive rather than definitive. Students are expected to be thoroughly familiar with the major works and writers and to have a solid understanding of the way these works contribute to the development of American literary history. The list, of course, should be supplemented by works aligned with the major emphasis of the students’ research interests.

Poetry

Bryant, William Cullen.
   “Thanotopsis.” 1817.
   “Yellow Violet.” 1815.
   “To a Waterfowl.” 1815.
   “A Forest Hymn.” 1825.

Dickinson, Emily.

Dunbar, Paul Laurence.
   *Lyrics of Lowly Life*. 1896.

Forten, Sarah.
   “An Appeal to Women.” 1834.
   “The Slave Girl’s Farewell.” 1832.

Lazarus, Emma.

Lowell, James Russell.
   *The Biglow Papers*. 1846.

Poe, Edgar Allan.
   “Israfel.” 1831.
   “The Sleeper.” 1831.
   “Sonnet: To Silence.” 1829.
   “The Raven.” 1845.
   “Ulalume.” 1847.
   “Annabel Lee.” 1849.

Whitman, Walt.
   *Leaves of Grass* (9th edition) (including 1855 Preface)

Whittier, John Greenleaf.
   *Snow-Bound*. 1866.

Prose

Rowson, Susanna.
   *Charlotte Temple*. 1791.

Foster, Hannah Webster.
   *The Coquette*. 1797.
Brown, Charles Brockden.
   *Edgar Huntly.* 1799.

[Anonymous].
   *Xicoténcatl.* 1826.

Irving, Washington.
   *The Sketch Book.* 1819.

Poe, Edgar Allen.
   *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym.* 1838.
   selected short stories

Child, Lydia Maria.
   *Hobomok.* 1824.

Cooper, James Fenimore.
   *The Last of the Mohicans.* 1826.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo.
   “Nature.” 1836
   “Self-Reliance.” 1841.
   “Divinity School Address.” 1838.
   “Experience.” 1844.

Sedgwick, Catherine Maria.
   *Hope Leslie.* 1827.

Thoreau, Henry David.
   *Walden.* 1854.

Douglass, Frederick.
   *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, As Written by Himself.* 1845
   “The Heroic Slave.” 1852.

Fuller, Margaret.
   *Woman in the Nineteenth Century.* 1843.

Jacobs, Harriet.
   *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl.* 1861.

Warner, Susan.
   *The Wide, Wide World.* 1850.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel.
   *The Scarlet Letter.* 1850.
   *The House of Seven Gables.* 1851.
   *The Blithedale Romance.* 1852.
   selected short stories

Fern, Fanny.
   *Ruth Hall.* 1854.

Brown, William Wells.
   *Clotel.* 1853.

Ridge, John Rollin.
The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta. 1854.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher.
Uncle Tom's Cabin. 1852.

Wilson, Harriet.
Our Nig. 1859.

Melville, Herman.
Moby Dick. 1851.
Billy Budd. 1924.
“Bartleby the Scrivener.” 1853.
“Benito Cereno.” 1855

Cummins, Maria Susanna.
The Lamplighter. 1854.

Alcott, Louisa May.
Little Women. 1869.
Work. 1873.

Davis, Rebecca Harding.

Delany, Martin.
Blake, or The Huts of America. 1859.

Alger, Horatio.
Ragged Dick. 1867.

Chesnutt, Charles W.
The Marrow of Tradition. 1901.
The Conjure Woman. 1899.

Twain, Mark.
Huckleberry Finn. 1884.
Pudd’nhead Wilson. 1894

Crane, Stephen.
Maggie. 1893.
The Red Badge of Courage. 1895.

Marti, José.
Selected Writings (Penguin Classics edition, 2002):
Letters from New York (pp 89-244)
Political Correspondences (pp 255-261)
Poetry: Simple Verses (pp 269-282)
Letters from New York (pp 288-310)
from Patria (pp 314-329)

Jackson, Helen Hunt.
Ramona. 1884.

Ruiz de Burton, Maria Amparo.
Who Would have Thought It? 1872.
The Squatter and the Don. 1885.

Bellamy, Edward.
Looking Backward. 1887.

Norris, Frank.
McTeague. 1899.
The Octopus. 1901.

Winnemucca, Sarah.
Life among the Piutes. 1883.

Harper, Francis.
Iola Leroy. 1892.

Howells, William Dean.
A Hazard of New Fortunes. 1890.
The Rise of Silas Lapham. 1885.

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins.
“The Yellow Wall-paper.” 1892.

Freeman, Mary Wilkins.
A New England Nun and Other Stories. 1891.

James, Henry.
The Portrait of a Lady. 1881.
The Ambassadors. 1903.
The Turn of the Screw. 1898.
“Daisy Miller.” 1878.

Wister, Owen.
The Virginian. 1902.

Jewett, Sarah Orne.
The Country of the Pointed Firs. 1896.

Frederic, Harold.
The Damnation of Theron Ware. 1896.

Dreiser, Theodore.
Sister Carrie. 1900.

Chopin, Kate.
The Awakening. 1899.

Hopkins, Pauline.
Contending Forces. 1900.

Washington, Booker T.
Up From Slavery. 1901.

Criticism


Reising, Russell. Loose Ends: Closure and Crisis in the American Social Text. 1996.

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