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ENGL 220-02, Novel of Manners, Spring 1999

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English 220, Section 2: Novel of Manners

Professor J. Brady
Palmer 306 (office)
843-3906 (office phone)

Spring, 1999
M Hour, in Palmer 201

Reading List:

Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (Penguin)
Jane Austen, *Emma* (Penguin)
Henry James, *The Bostonians* (Penguin)
Henry James, *The Europeans* (Penguin)
Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth* (Scribners)
Edith Wharton, *The Reef* (Collier)
Truman Capote, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Vintage)
Joan Didion, *A Book of Common Prayer* (Vintage)

Office Hours:

Monday, 1:30-2:30
Wednesday, 1:30- 3:00
Monday-Friday, 11:30-12:00

Course Description:

This course is a study of the evolution of the genre of the novel of manners, from the Regency novels of Jane Austen to its modern and contemporary practitioners in the United States. We move from the courtship plots of Austen's influential fiction, set in England, through Wharton and James's transatlantic adaptations of the genre. After reading Capote's bohemian version of the novel of manners, we turn at the end of the course to Didion's revision of James in her fiction. This course may be taken for credit toward a women's studies minor, or as part of a minor or major in English.

Attendance Policy:

Late arrivals to class will be counted as an absence and any student who misses (or who is counted absent from) class more than four times will receive a zero in the 10% of your grade reflecting class participation and attendance. Any student who misses more than six classes will be forced to withdraw from the course and will receive either a WF (Withdraw failing) or, after the end of the withdraw period on March 26th., an F in the course.

American Innocents

April 6, 8, 13

The Reef

April 15, 22, 27

A Book of Common Prayer

April 29

In-class essay on final two novels

* I have not scheduled a class for April 20, which is Awards Convocation, in hopes that we can use it as a reading day in this course. If other classes have to be cancelled, this day will then be pressed into service as a regular class day.

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Method of Evaluation:

Essay on Austen (1500- 2000 words)	25%
In-class essay exam on Henry James	15%
In-class question*	10%
In-class participation, attendance	10%
Essay on <i>House of Mirth</i> or <i>Breakfast at Tiffany's</i> (1500-2000 words)	25%
Final in-class essay exam on Didion and Adams	15%

* Each student will pose one formal question to the class during the semester, speaking from notes only. Your question should be focused, given a context, and its potential significance made clear to your classmates. The question should not merely repeat critical perspectives already developed on the text but should explore an area or dimension of the text you think important to our understanding of the work. Having posed your question, you should then be prepared to guide class discussion. More generally, class participation is considered a must in this course. It bears underscoring that 20% of your grade in this course comes from your in-class question and your performance in class over the semester.

