



Spring 2010

ENGL 4570

Studies in the American Novel

Tues/Thurs 10:00-11:15

Dr. Robert Cousins

Is there an *American* bildungsroman tradition?

The *bildungsroman*, or coming-of-age novel, provides the broad theme for this course. We will study a series of texts in which the protagonists struggle to establish or make sense of their own identities amidst the many tensions of their social and cultural contexts. In particular, we will consider ways in which gender, ethnicity, and race both complicate and energize our protagonists' attempts to find their places in society. We will also consider important innovations in the development of the genre, as represented in many of our texts.

Our tentative reading list includes

- 📖 Elizabeth Stoddard. *The Morgesons*. 1862.
- 📖 Mark Twain. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. 1885
- 📖 Zora Neale Hurston. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. 1937.
- 📖 Ralph Ellison. *Invisible Man*. 1952.
- 📖 John Okada. *No-No Boy*. 1957.
- 📖 Maxine Hong Kingston. *The Woman Warrior*. 1975.
- 📖 Leslie Marmon Silko. *Ceremony*. 1977.
- 📖 Sherman Alexie. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. 2007.