



EN 4923/6923, American Novel since 1900:

Fictions of History

Spring 2014 ° T.R., 5:00-6:15 p.m. ° Dr. Ted Atkinson

This course will focus on novels from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to examine how U.S. authors engage with signal historical events and periods through literary representation. We will discuss critical approaches to the relationship between literature and history and apply them to a diverse selection of texts. Our reading will take us from European colonization of the Americas to 9/11, from the Civil War and Reconstruction to the Gilded Age, and from World War I to World War II. Through reading, research, and writing, we will consider how history influences significant works of American literature and explore how literature affords illuminating perspectives on the construction of historical narratives and reveals the possibilities and limitations of historical understanding.

Reading list: Cather, *O Pioneers!*; Wharton, *The Age of Innocence*; Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*; Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!*; Doctorow, *Ragtime*; Silko, *Ceremony*; Morrison, *A Mercy*; DeLillo, *Falling Man*

