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Office Hours: TBD

## **LITERATURE OF NEW YORK** **Spring 2010**

“There is no place like it, no place with an atom of its glory, pride, and exultancy. It lays its hand upon a man's bowels; he grows drunk with ecstasy; he grows young and full of glory, he feels that he can never die.” - Walt Whitman

“New York is appalling, fantastically charmless and elaborately dire.” - Henry James

### **Course Description:**

In the Literature of New York course, we will study the integral role New York City plays as a setting for a number of important literary works. We will read short stories, poems, and novels in chronological order (not of their publication, but of the time periods they depict) studying the ways in which New York has evolved from the 1800's to present, and considering the many reasons why the city has inspired so many writers and artists. We will examine a range of topics including the role of social class, economic development, sports, and immigration in shaping the culture of New York City. In addition, we will study literary movements such as the Harlem Renaissance and Post-9/11 Literature, and we will supplement our reading with films shot in New York.

### **Texts:**

*Writing New York: A Literary Anthology*, Phillip Lopate  
*The Age of Innocence*, Edith Wharton  
*Pafko at the Wall*, Don DeLillo  
*The New York Trilogy*, Paul Auster  
*The Bell Jar*, Sylvia Plath  
*Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, Jonathan Safran Foer

### **Course Expectations:**

Participation is a crucial component of this seminar style class. Please come to each class having read the assigned materials and annotated your text. Also be prepared to discuss your ideas and/or questions. In order to foster a classroom atmosphere where all participants feel safe to voice their ideas, we will maintain a high level of respect for the opinions and feelings of others. Coursework will include three formal essays, a presentation on a New York artist, musician, or movement, a final exam, in-class writing assignments, and occasional pop quizzes on the reading. You will also be asked to bring extra copies of your essays to class to be used in peer review groups.

**Grade Breakdown:**

50%: Essays:

15%: Essay #1

15%: Essay #2

20%: Essay #3

10%: Presentation

20%: Final Exam

20%: Participation (attendance, discussion, in-class writing, and quizzes)

\* **NOTE:** I will give you a reading schedule for each novel we read. I look forward to working with all of you!