Take Home Exam #1  
(250 points)

Due: Monday, September 16 at the beginning of class

General Information: This exam is designed to allow you to show your ability to make use of concepts we’ve discussed in class and to demonstrate your ability to “mine” the text in support of your ideas. Therefore, here are some things to keep in mind. I want to see you use the text and not rely on class examples for your support. An exam that simply regurgitates class discussion will not earn a passing grade. You’ll also want to demonstrate your knowledge of the entire book. Therefore, choose examples from a number of places in the novel, including the end. I’ve given you room to interpret the questions in a number of ways; however, be sure you answer the question I’ve given you. Resist the temptation to follow tangents, unless you can establish their relevance.

I will be grading these exams by looking at your answers: the clarity of your thoughts, your use of specific passages from the text to support your ideas, your ability to clearly explain how your examples relate to the question I’ve asked, and your ability to relate individual examples to the overall topic you’ve selected. However, numerous grammatical and/or proofreading errors will interfere with my ability to follow your argument and will result in a reduction of your grade, so please edit carefully. Also, be sure you meet all format and length requirements, or you’ll receive a reduction in your grade. Format/length requirements are as follows:

- 1 inch margins on all sides
- 12 pt Times New Roman font
- 4-5 pages in length (aim for 2 or more pages for each question)

Good luck.

The Red Badge of Courage (answer one of four)

1. Crane’s book has been described as the most pure example of naturalism ever written. Using the definitions of naturalism I’ve given you in class (try to cover all components), discuss The Red Badge of Courage’s naturalistic features and address how these features make the novel naturalistic.

2. Colors appear quite frequently and serve as symbols in The Red Badge of Courage. Discuss Crane’s use of color (red and black should feature prominently in your discussion, but be sure to include other colors, as well), and then address what they symbolize in the novel. How do these symbols inform your understanding of the novel?

3. Crane’s novels also highlight his use of impressionistic technique. One critic says:

   *The Red Badge of Courage* is indeed a triumph of impressionistic vision and impressionistic technique…Practically every scene is filtered through Fleming’s point of view and seen through his eyes. Everything is related to his *vision*, to his *sense-*perception of incidents and details, to his *sense-*reactions rather than to his psychological impulses, to his confused sensations and individual impressions.

Using this definition, discuss Crane’s use of the technique in *The Red Badge of Courage*. What are the effects of the impressionistic elements in the novel on readers’ (your) understanding of the action?
4. *The Red Badge of Courage* has been discussed as a myth. According to one critic:

The progressive movement of the hero, as in all myth, is that of separation, initiation, return. Within this framework, Crane plots his story with individual variation. Henry Fleming, a youth, ventures forth from his known environment into a region of naturalistic, if not super-naturalistic wonder; he encounters the monstrous forces of war and death; he is transformed through a series of ties and revelations into a hero; he returns to identify this new self with the deeper communal forces of the group and to bestow the blessings of his findings on his fellow comrades. The whole paraphernalia of myth-religious and sacrificial rites – the ceremonial dancing, the dragons with fiery eyes, the mental landscape, the entombment, the sudden appearance of a guide, those symbols so profoundly familiar to the unconscious and so frightening to the conscious personality – give new dimensions of meaning to the novel.

Trace the mythic pattern in the novel. What elements lend themselves to this interpretation? Do these elements provide convincing support for this critic’s interpretation?

*All Quiet on the Western Front* (answer one of four)

1. In *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Paul and his friends put great significance on food. What does food symbolize in this novel? How does food function within the narrative?

2. Remarque is famous for his word pictures. Choose two or three of your favorites and discuss how the words affect readers and what purpose the pictures serve in the narrative. Be sure to include more than just visual pictures (use sound, taste, touch, or smell in at least one of your examples).

3. In class, we discussed the idea that chance rules a soldier’s life at the front. Using several examples from the text, discuss how chance plays a role in the lives of Paul and his friends.

4. Nature features prominently in *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Using examples from the text, discuss how Paul’s conception of nature changes throughout the novel. How do Paul’s idea about nature reflect the changes in his mental state and/or his understanding of the nature of war?