

Genre History, Criticism, and Theory

Under guidance of a professional writer or scholar in the writing field, the student will design a specific curriculum for achieving a working awareness of the history, range of criticism, and critical theory associated with the writing genre. Reading will certainly be a part of this, but papers or interviews, attendance at lectures, formal courses, or other modalities may also be a part of this course.

Student: Suzanne Bair

Faculty Member: Michael Agresta

Course Number: ENG539

Semester and Year: Spring

Credit Hours: 4

Subtitle for Course: Market, Discourse, and Strategies for Writing About Disability

Course Description: In this course, primarily through wide-ranging reading, the student will explore the theory and practice of writing non-fiction, with an emphasis on writing about disabilities. We will alternate between theory, including theory general to the field of non-fiction and specific to the lives of people with disabilities, and examples of literature that has attempted to put such theory into action.

Requirements: This course is a series of seven assignments involving both reading and writing. Every other week by Friday night, the student will turn in a reading journal entry of 1000 words or more. The tone of the reading journal is to be conversational, conveying insights, questions, and problems that arise as a result of reading. Every other Monday, the student and professor will discuss the reading and the most recent journal entry as well as more wide-ranging questions about building a career in the field.

Evaluation: Each of the seven assignments will make up 10% of the grade, with a total of 70% of the cumulative grade coming from these assignments. Bi-weekly discussions will make up another 30% of the final grade. The instructor's expectation is that the quality of the journals and discussion, and the depth of understanding craft, will improve over the course of the semester.

Reading List: *The Disability Studies Reader* edited by Lennard Davis

Exile and Pride by Eli Claire

Politics and the English Language and Other Essays by George Orwell

Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors by Susan Sontag

Far From the Tree by Andrew Solomon

Schedule

January 17 Semester starts

Fri Jan 27 Assignment #1 due: Read any combination of texts in *Disability Studies Reader* totaling 200 pages. The aim is to familiarize ourselves with academic and literary discourse and jargon. Discuss what elements of discourse were new or interesting to you. Also feel free to weigh in on the arguments made in the pieces you read, whether or not you agree.

Mon Jan 30 phone chat

Fri Feb 10 Assignment #2 due: Read *Exile and Pride*. Discuss mixture of memoir, history, and polemic. How does the author's approach to mixing genres work? How does it fail? What would you have done differently? What would you like to borrow?

Mon Feb 13 phone chat

Fri Feb 24 Assignment #3 due: Read *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors*. Discuss Sontag's mix of memoir, history, and polemic, and compare to Clare's. How is each approach effective? What are the drawbacks of each?

Mon Feb 27 phone chat

Fri Mar 10 Assignment #4 due: Read *Politics and the English Language*. Discuss the title essay and Orwell's critique of academic jargon. Compare to the other works we've read so far this semester. Contrast Clare, Sontag, and the reader with the other essays in the Orwell collection (besides the title essay).

SPRING BREAK

Mon Mar 20 phone chat

Fri Mar 31 Assignment #5 due: Read any new combination of texts in *Disability Studies Reader* totaling 200 pages. Discuss what elements of discourse were new or interesting to you. Also feel free to weigh in on the arguments made in the pieces you read, whether or not you agree.

Mon Apr 3 phone chat

Fri Apr 14 Assignment #6: Read first 500 pages of *Far From the Tree*. Read especially for how the author tells individual stories while maintaining an overarching theme. How does he make the book feel cohesive even as he gets very specific?

Mon Apr 17 phone chat

Fri Apr 28 Assignment #7: Finish *Far From the Tree* with new reading journal objectives agreed on during our 4/17 discussion. Also, discuss where you plan to take your reading/research from here, on your own.

Mon May 1 phone chat

Interactions

The student will send reading journals every other Friday night. The journals will be the springboard for discussion of each book/article. The student and teacher will chat on the phone every other Monday at 10am pacific time.

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Accommodations

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Genre History, Criticism, and Theory:

A Critical Review of the Suspense/Thriller Genre and the

Feminist Role

Under the guidance of a professional writer / scholar in the writing field, the student will design a specific curriculum for achieving a working awareness of the history, range of criticism, and critical theory associated with the mystery genre.

Student: Kathy Beall

Faculty Member: Onnesha Roychoudhuri

Course Number: WRT-539-02

Semester and Year: Fall 2016

Credit Hours: 4

Course Description:

This course focuses on the suspense/thriller genre and the role women have played in it by reading and responding to critiques and theories regarding girl detectives, crime fiction since the 1800's, female power protagonists and feminists in a tenured position. The student will see what techniques authors use in creating female characters and their place in the suspense/thriller genre. The emphasis, however, is on how the genre developed and changed, examining origins and development, changing techniques, and the implications for contemporary novels.

Requirements:

1.) The student will read critical essays and theory texts to gain an overview of the genre and how it has developed. The student will then write 4-5 page personal response to each book read, due on the dates noted below.

Questions used to guide reading:

1. What are characteristics of female sleuths/detectives and how have they evolved?
2. How have female characters gained power in a male-dominant detective world?
3. What hasn't changed in the role of the female detective character and why?
4. How do authors craft a female detective? What are an author's priorities in creating a female sleuth/detective protagonist?
5. What writing techniques does the author use to create a "likeable" female character who essentially "gets in the way" in a male-dominated world?

2.) *In addition*, the student shall write either a scene from her novel-in-progress, a creative short story, or character sketch of at least 5 typewritten pages 4 times during the course that is influenced by the completed readings.

Learning Outcomes

Student will be able to:

- Chart the evolution of the mystery genre and the female role
- Identify key elements and techniques utilized by authors of mystery novels
- Identify specific tools that will aid in the student's creative process
- Utilize creative writing exercises to employ these tools and further the student's creative projects

Due Date	In addition, student will write a Creative Piece	Book	Author	Purpose/Goal
Monday, Sep. 5	In addition, a creative piece	Feminism in Women's Detective Fiction	Glenwood Irons	Essays of issues important to female sleuths
Monday, Sep. 19		Nancy Drew and Her Sister Sleuths	Michael G. Cornelius	Essays on the fiction of girl detectives
Monday, Oct. 3	In addition, a creative piece	Murder by the Book? Feminism and the Crime Novel: Narrative Forms and Social Formation	Sally Rowena Munt	Feminism in the Crime Novel
Monday, Oct. 17		Plotting and Writing Suspense Fiction	Patricia Highsmith	History and Theory of Suspense Fiction
Monday, Nov. 7	In addition, a creative piece	The Feminist Alcott: Stories of a Woman's Power	Louisa May Alcott	Woman's Power/Feminism
Monday, Nov. 28		Crime Fiction Since 1800: Detection, Death, Diversity	Stephen Knight	History of Crime Fiction
Monday, Dec. 5	In addition, a creative piece	Carolyn G. Heilbrun: Feminist in a Tenured Position	Susan Kress	Feminist Issues

Evaluation:

The student will be evaluated on the strength and quality of her insights as presented in her essays. The mentor will provide feedback on writing assignments, discuss student's

progress midway through the course, and will give one final grade at the end of the semester.

Interactions:

Primary interactions between student and faculty member will be through emails according to the schedule.

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Student: Benjamin J. Chase

Faculty Member: Brian Clements

Course Number: WRT 539

Semester and Year: Spring 2016

Credit Hours: 4

Subtitle for Course: Poetry and Poetics of 19th-Century to Present (English-Writing) Masters

Course Description:

This course will focus on major poetic theory written by some of the 19th to 21st century (English-speaking) poetry masters. The major texts will be Jon Cook's *Poetry in Theory: An Anthology 1900-2000*, Hart Crane's *The Bridge*, Robert Bly's *Leaping Poetry* and *The Urge to Travel Long Distances*, and a few additional articles (accessed and cited separately).

Every three weeks during the course, the student will turn in a packet responding to poetic theory articles and poems written by 3 of the poets from the reading list. The written responses in the packet will be comprised of a 3-4-page essay responding to the theory and poems of the selected poets and at least one original poem inspired by the theories, forms, thematic concerns, and poems of the poets.

Requirements:

- There are no internships, practicums, or external arrangements for this course.
- Every three weeks the student will turn in a packet responding to articles and poems written by 3 of the following poets.
- The written responses in the packet will include a 3-4-page essay responding to the theory and poems of the 3 poets and at least one original poem inspired by the ideas, forms, poems, and themes of the poets.
- There is no prescribed writing process for this course.

Deadlines:

For the specific articles/books to be read, see the reading list.

1. The first packet will cover the articles and selected poems of Wordsworth, Keats, and Yeats, and it will be due via email on **2/7/2016**.
 2. The second packet will cover the articles and selected poems of Pound, Eliot, and Williams, and it will be due via email on **2/28/2016**.
 3. The third packet will cover the articles and selected poems of Breton, Crane, and Hughes, and it will be due via email on **3/20/2016**.
 4. The fourth packet will cover the articles and selected poems of Frost, Stevens, and Olson, and it will be due via email on **4/17/2016**.
 5. The fifth packet will cover the articles and selected poems of O'Hara, Bly, and Rich, and it will be due via email on **5/8/2016**.
 6. The student will submit a semester-end reflection of no less than five pages. The reflection will range over the entirety of the semester and draw conclusions and make observations about the evolution of poetry theory and craft over the time period covered in the course. **Due via email on 5/13/2016**.
- All packets will be submitted via email in the form of Word Documents by the required due date.
 - Response-essays will be written in first-person and will respond primarily to the theory articles and secondarily to poems illustrating (or failing to illustrate) the principles discussed in the articles.
 - All packets will be sent back to the student (with electronic comments and suggestions for revision) via email within a week of their submission. The instructor will likely have follow-up questions for the student, which will be sent by email with the expectation that the student will engage in discussion.
 - A brief written midterm evaluation with a letter grade will be provided after completion of the second packet.

Reading List:

1. Articles (some from *Poetry in Theory: An Anthology 1900-2000* by Jon Cook and others accessed elsewhere and cited in forthcoming packets) arranged chronologically:

- a. William Wordsworth's "The Preface to Lyrical Ballads" (1800) and 3 Wordsworth poems. The instructor suggests that these poems include "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey..."
 - b. John Keats' "Negative Capability Letter" (1817) and 3 Keats poems. The instructor suggests that these poems include "Ode on a Grecian Urn" and "Ode to a Nightingale".
 - c. W.B. Yeats' "The Symbolism of Poetry" (1900) and 3 Yeats poems
 - d. Ezra Pound's "A Retrospect" (1919) and 3 Pound poems. The instructor suggests that these poems include "The River Merchant's Wife," "In a Station of the Metro," and "Mauberly."
 - e. T.S. Eliot's "Hamlet and His Problems" (1919), "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1920), and 3 Eliot poems
 - f. William Carlos Williams' "Prologue to *Kora in Hell*" (1920) and 3 Williams poems. The instructor suggests the entirety of *Spring and All*.
 - g. Andre Breton's "Surrealist Manifesto" (1924) and 3 Breton poems
 - h. Hart Crane's "General Aims and Theories" (1925) and Crane's *The Bridge* (1930)
 - i. Langston Hughes' "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain" (1926) and 3 Hughes poems
 - j. Robert Frost's "The Figure a Poem Makes" (1939) and 3 Frost poems
 - k. Wallace Stevens' "The Noble Rider and the Sound of Words" (1942) and 3 Stevens poems. The instructor suggests that these poems include "The Snow Man."
 - l. Charles Olson's "Projective Verse" (1950) and 3 of Olson poems. The instructor suggests that these poems include "The Kingfishers."
 - m. Frank O'Hara's "Personism: A Manifesto" (1961) and 3 O'Hara poems. The instructor suggests that these poems include "Having a Coke with You"
 - n. Robert Bly's "A Wrong Turn in American Poetry" (1963), *Leaping Poetry* (2008), and Bly's *The Urge to Travel Long Distances* (2005)
 - o. Adrienne Rich's "Blood, Bread, and Poetry" (1984) and 3 Rich poems. The instructor suggests at least a sampling of poems from *Atlas of the Difficult World*.
2. Biographical sketches of above poets from PoetryFoundation.org

Supportive Reading:

1. *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* as a resource text
2. *Poetry Speaks* as a resource text
3. *Ambition and Survival: Becoming a Poet* as a resource text

Learning Outcomes:

- The student will gain deep knowledge of the poetic theories of 15 important English-writing poets from the 19th-Century to the present.
- The student will learn to recognize and analyze elements of poetic theory, forms and structures, thematic concerns,
- The student will develop ideas about the role of the poet and matters of composition.

- The student will further develop his own poetic voice and better understand his own relationship to the world of poetry of the recent past and present.
- The student will produce poems with the intent of publishing them in literary journals.

Evaluation

- 50% of grade will be determined by on-time submission of assignments as described in this syllabus.
- 25% of grade will be determined by engagement of student in the assignments (that is, as measured by depth and accuracy of observations and analysis).
- 25% of grade will be determined by progress of the student as demonstrated in all work submitted over the course of the semester and in conversations with the instructor regarding that work.

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Student: Melissa Johnson

Faculty Member: Onnesha Roychoudhuri

Course Number: WRT 539

Semester and Year: Fall 2016

Credit Hours: 4

Subtitle for Course: Literary Journalism: History, Criticism and Theory

Course Description

Literary journalism is a relatively new form of nonfiction with a fair share of both critics and proponents. Through this course, the student will become familiar with the history of literary journalism and the techniques it uses to meld the genres of literature and journalism. The student will explore whether and how literary journalism fills a void in the ever-evolving tastes of readers and writers. The student will also examine what critics believe are negative aspects of literary journalism and consider how writers can address, or have addressed, those.

Requirements

The student will read history, criticism, and theory books from the list below and will reference the points these books make using excerpts from the accompanying genre text in a 3- to 5-page paper due every other Thursday starting Sept. 1 for a total of at least 35 pages. As listed above, the student will address such topics in her papers as, What techniques does this work use to blend literature and journalism? How might a journalist with a more stripped down technique have written the work? What might critics of literary journalism/creative nonfiction see as a negative aspect of this work?

Reading List

1. *Bending Genre: Essays on Creative Nonfiction* by Margot Singer Nicole Walker with reference to *Where the Lightning Strikes: The Lives of American Indian Sacred Places* by Peter Nabokov (paper due 9/1)
2. *Writing Creative Non-Fiction: Determining the Form* by Kapka Kassabova et al with reference to *The Situation and the Story: the Art of Personal Narrative* by Vivian Gornick (paper due 9/15)
3. *The Nonfictionist's Guide: On Reading and Writing Creative Nonfiction* by Robert L. Root with reference to essays in *Literary Nonfiction: Theory, Criticism, and Pedagogy* 1st Edition by Chris Anderson (paper due 9/29)
4. *The Art of Fact: A Historical Anthology of Literary Journalism* by Kevin Kerrane, Ben Yagoda with reference to *Settling the Borderland: Other Voices in Literary Journalism* by Jan Whitt (paper due 10/13)
5. *Real Life Writings in American Literary Journalism: A Narratological Study* by Gurpreet Kaur with reference to essays in *Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary Creative Nonfiction: Work from 1970 to the Present* by Lex Williford and Michael Martone (paper due 10/27)
6. *A History of American Literary Journalism* by John C. Hartsock with reference to essays in *The Far Edges of the Fourth Genre: An Anthology of Explorations in Creative Nonfiction* by Sean Prentiss Joe Wilkins (paper due 11/10)

7. *Reinventing the Feature Story* by Stephanie Shapiro with reference to *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* by Norman Sims (**paper due Tuesday, 11/22 due to Thanksgiving holiday**)
8. *Literary Journalism on Trial: Masson V. New Yorker and the First Amendment* by Kathy Roberts Forde with reference to essays in *Literary Journalism in the Twentieth Century* (Medill School of Journalism Visions of the American Press) by Norman Sims (Editor), John C. Hartsock (Foreword) (paper due 12/8)

Note: Another book for this class or another, as suggested by the professor:
The Boys of My Youth by Jo Ann Beard

Interactions

The student will email papers following the schedule set above to onneshatao@gmail.com. The student or professor may plan to talk via telephone if either party deems it necessary or more efficient than email. The student may email the professor at any time with questions.

Learning Outcomes

- The student will become well-versed in the history of literary journalism, especially in regard to when and why it branched off from traditional journalism and literature.
- By the end of the course, the student will be able to explain how her planned thesis compares to similar works in literary journalism and creative nonfiction.
- The student will be able to discuss widely held negative beliefs about the genre and how writers can and have overcome or at least addressed these beliefs.

Evaluation

The professor will return graded papers in a timely manner, within a few days unless otherwise noted, using Track Changes in Microsoft Word for her edits and comments.

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