



Studies in Narrative

EN13308 – Spring 2014

Class:
Stokes 201 North
Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:30-11:45

Office:
Richard Ford Burley
Stokes South Cube 470D

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Course Description

Studies in Narrative is designed to introduce students to the study of literature as a critical discipline. How do we understand literature? How do we read it, and how do we interpret it? This course will teach you how to ask the kind of questions that allow you to get a deeper understanding of a narrative, and how to go about answering those questions once you have them. We will begin with detailed, “close” readings of texts, and move on to readings that include secondary criticism so you can learn to take part in the larger discussions about literature that we call discourse.

Texts

There are four texts you must purchase for this course, as well as a series of shorter works that are available for download. You must purchase these specific editions of the texts (which are available in the bookstore as well as online at various retailers):

The Cheese Monkeys (ISBN: 978-0061452482)

Fight Club (ISBN: 978-0393327342)

In the Skin of a Lion (ISBN: 978-00679772668)

The Metamorphosis and Other Stories (ISBN: 978-0199238552).

All other texts will be available online.

A note regarding video material: we will be watching two video texts this semester: the 1999 film Fight Club, and the episode of Doctor Who entitled "Blink" (from Season 3). Both are widely available: Fight Club is available in the O'Neill Library, and is roughly \$6-10 for a copy from Amazon; "Blink" is available from both Netflix and Hulu Plus, and can also be seen for \$1.99 from Amazon Instant Video (among other sources). I will try to arrange common viewings for both, but it is ultimately your responsibility to see these in time to discuss them in class.

Assignments

There will be four written assignments for this class: two 4/5-page close reading assignments, one 4/5-page critical reading assignment, and one 7/8-page critical research paper. Detailed instructions will be available online as each is assigned.

Discussion

In addition to the four written assignments, there will also be a series of bi-weekly online discussion prompts, which you will be responsible for answering. Instructions for where to go, how to sign in, and how to post are all on the website in the "Discussion" section.

Evaluation & Grading Scheme

	A	94-100
	A-	90-93
10% - 1 st Close Reading Assignment	B+	87-89
20% - 2 nd Close Reading Assignment	B	84-86
15% - Critical Reading Assignment	B-	80-83
25% - Critical Research Paper	C+	77-79
15% - Online Discussion	C	74-76
15% - Studentship	C-	70-73
	D+	67-69
	D	64-66
	D-	60-64
	F	0-59

Studentship

You will notice that a sizeable amount of your grade falls under “studentship.” Good studentship means a number of things, including attendance, participation, and attitude. Good studentship entails the following: coming on time to class each day, with the day's readings in hand; making evident that you have read the material, by contributing meaningfully to in-class discussions and performing well on in-class work; and contributing meaningfully and with direct citation of the works discussed to online discussion prompts as they are assigned.

Class Schedule

Week 1:

Tuesday January 14: Introduction, Syllabus

Thursday January 16: Eco, Umberto. “On Some Functions of Literature”

Eco, Umberto. “How to Write an Introduction”

Eco, Umberto. “The Miracle of San Baudolino”

Week 2:

Tuesday January 21: Kidd, Chip. The Cheese Monkeys: A Novel in Two Semesters (1-74)

Thursday January 23: Kidd, Chip. The Cheese Monkeys: A Novel in Two Semesters (75-148)

Week 3:

Tuesday January 28: Kidd, Chip. The Cheese Monkeys: A Novel in Two Semesters (149-223)

Thursday January 30: Kidd, Chip. The Cheese Monkeys: A Novel in Two Semesters (223-274)

Week 4:

Monday February 3: First paper due -- Close Reading I

Tuesday February 4: Bradbury, Ray. “A Sound of Thunder”

Clarke, Arthur C. “Time's Arrow”

Thursday February 6: Doctor Who (episode): “Blink”

Heinlein, Robert A. “By His Bootstraps”

Week 5:

Tuesday February 11: Munro, Alice. The Love of a Good Woman (I)

Thursday February 13: Munro, Alice. The Love of a Good Woman (II)

Week 6:

Tuesday February 18: Munro, Alice. The Love of a Good Woman (III-IV)

Thursday February 20: Munro, Alice. The Love of a Good Woman (continued)

Week 7:

Tuesday February 25: O'Connor, Flannery. “A Good Man is Hard to Find”

Thursday February 27: Fight Club (Film)

Week 8:

Monday, March 3: Second paper due -- Close Reading II

Tuesday March 4: Spring Break

Thursday March 6: Spring Break

Week 9:

Tuesday March 11: Palahniuk, Chuck. Fight Club (pp. 1-55)

Thursday March 13: Palahniuk, Chuck. Fight Club (pp. 56-111)

Week 10:

Tuesday March 18: Palahniuk, Chuck. Fight Club (pp. 112-161)

Thursday March 20: Palahniuk, Chuck. Fight Club (pp. 162-218 – including “Afterword”)

Week 11:

Tuesday March 25: Borges, Jorge Luis. “The Aleph”

Eco, Umberto. “How to Travel with a Salmon”

Eco, Umberto. “Borges and My Anxiety of Influence”

Thursday March 27: Kafka, Franz. The Metamorphosis (I)

Week 12:

Monday March 31: Third paper due -- Critical Reading

Tuesday April 1: Kafka, Franz. The Metamorphosis (II)

Thursday April 3: Kafka, Franz. The Metamorphosis (III)

Week 13:

Tuesday April 8: Ondaatje, Michael. In the Skin of a Lion

Thursday April 10: Ondaatje, Michael. In the Skin of a Lion

Week 14:

Tuesday April 15: Ondaatje, Michael. In the Skin of a Lion

Thursday April 17: Easter

Week 15:

Tuesday April 22: Ondaatje, Michael. In the Skin of a Lion

Thursday April 24: Ondaatje, Michael. In the Skin of a Lion

Week 16:

Tuesday April 29: Ondaatje, Michael. In the Skin of a Lion

Thursday May 1: Ondaatje, Michael. In the Skin of a Lion

Friday May 2: Fourth paper due -- Critical Research

Policies

Attendance Policy :

Each class, attendance will be taken with a sign-up sheet or in-class assignment. It is your responsibility to ensure that your name is recorded. Students are allowed two unexplained absences without any affect to their grade. Any further unexplained absence without a documented medical excuse will be considered an unexcused absence, resulting in a percent loss from that student's final grade. Five unexcused absences will result in a student failing the course. Student athletes who inform me of anticipated absences will be excused, but will be required to keep up with any work missed (please see me).

Late Policy :

An assignment's grade will drop one third of a letter grade for each day late: for example a B+ paper will become a B paper, and then a B- paper, and so on. Work that is a week late will not be accepted, and will result in a grade of 0 for the assignment.

Academic Integrity:

The BC Policy on Academic Integrity states: "Plagiarism is the deliberate act of taking the words, ideas, data, illustrations, or statements of another person or source, and presenting them as one's own. Each student is responsible for learning and using proper methods of paraphrasing and footnoting, quotation, and other forms of citation, to ensure that the original author, speaker, illustrator, or source of the material used is clearly acknowledged." Always consult with me if you are in doubt. Any form of plagiarism will, at the very least, result in a failing grade in this class.

Accommodations for Disabilities :

If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with Kathy Duggan (kathleen.duggan@bc.edu), Associate Director, Academic Support Services, The Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities or ADHD) or Paulette Durrett (paulette.durrett@bc.edu) Assistant Dean for Students with Disabilities (all other disabilities). Advanced notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.