

English 132: Short Story and the Novel

Spring 2013-MWF 9:30-10:20 132.01 Armstrong 112

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“There is a face beneath this mask, but it isn't me. I'm no more that face than I am the muscles beneath it, or the bones beneath that.”

— Alan Moore, *V for Vendetta*

Introduction: Psychologist Erik Erikson theorizes that “ego identity,” or the self, is based on the psychological idiosyncrasies that separate one person from the next. It is a person's sense of self, their idea of who they are, their experiences not just as an individual, but also as members of various social groups that form collective identities. Psychologists and sociologists study identity as expressing personal conceptions of individuality or group affiliations (such as national identity, cultural identity, gender identity, race identity, or place identity), a study that emphasizes patterns, functions, and behaviors. In much the same way we will be looking at texts that explore identity to decide if we see any patterns, similarities, or behaviors that can help us to theorize what it means to be oneself. Questions about the role of the government, the role of the family,

the role of science, the function of the soul, and the limitations of biology as determining factors in individuation are entirely appropriate. Simply put, we will be asking the question--what makes us who we are?

To understand individual identity we must not only examine what helps construct identity, but also how individual identities might be regulated, controlled or restrained; for example, how might one's sense of national identity overwhelm one's individual identity? How might one's gender identity be constrained by social/cultural norms? Cultural identities can limit possibilities for individuals, particularly the ways in which culture influences how and what we understand to be “appropriate” identities. Tribal, local, national, religious—all of these groups can provide a different set of rules for determining identity, and it is for this reason that we will be studying as many perspectives as possible—five novels from five different cultures and an international anthology of short stories. I do not expect that we will end the semester with any definitive answers, but I do expect that we think very seriously about the crucial role identity plays in determining how we structure relationships (which include those relationships of power, access to resources, etc.) in Western society.

Goals: The WVU English department has outlined that students completing a B.A. in English should be able to:

1. Interpret texts within diverse literary, cultural, and historical contexts.
 - a. Identify genre conventions and analyze their effects.
 - b. Identify and analyze the effects of complexity or ambiguousness.
 - c. Locate the text in specific social, economic, political and literary history.
 - d. Connect the text to other literary or cultural text(s).
2. Demonstrate a general knowledge of the social and structural aspects of the English language.
3. Demonstrate a range of contextually effective writing strategies.

Throughout this course you will engage with a variety of authors to develop ideas not only about the short story and novel as a genre, but also about identity. Your experiences should foster thoughtful analysis about the elements of fiction (plot, character, symbolism, setting, etc.), while encouraging you to make connections to external influences (historical, social, economic or

political events). This course emphasizes skills in generating ideas, stating opinions clearly, developing and organizing cogent writing, and critical thinking—skills essential to success in *every* field of study and work. Every student is expected to be proficient in college level reading, writing, and analysis. By the end of English 132, you should be able to define and describe the short story genre, be able to define and provide example of basic literary terms, build skills in close reading and analysis, and learn to develop thesis-driven responses demonstrating clear, critical analysis and providing specific textual support.

Required Texts:

Alexie, Sherman. *Flight: A Novel*. New York: Black Cat, 2007. Print.

Echlin, Kim. *The Disappeared*. New York: Black Cat, 2009. Print.

Halpern, Daniel, ed. *The Art of the Tale: An International Anthology of Short Stories*. New York: Penguin, 1987.

Kazuo, Ishiguro. *Never Let Me Go*. New York: Vintage, 2006. Print.

Koestler, Arthur. *Darkness at Noon*. New York: Scribner, 1941. Print.

Roy, Arundhati. *God of Small Things*. New York: Harper Collins, 1997. Print.

Recommended:

Lunsford, Andrea A. *Easy Writer*, 4th Ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010. Print.

MIX account and WVU eCampus: I encourage you check your email before class each day. I regularly post class announcements through Mix. I will post links to reading assignments or PDF readings in ecampus at least 1 class period before they are due.

Thumb/Jump Drive

Printer or Mounty Bounty for library printing

Notebook (bring to class daily)

Policies and Procedures:

Attendance & Tardiness: Attendance is crucial in any course; this is particularly true in a course created to foster your active participation in discussions. **You may miss up to THREE classes without any adverse effects (this policy starts from the moment you are registered in the course). After three absences your final grade will be dropped by a half a letter grade for each day you miss class.** There are no excused/unexcused absences, so I strongly recommend that you save your absences for illnesses or emergencies.

If you know you will be missing class, I recommend that you use Mix or Ecampus to contact a fellow student for notes and class information.

Arriving late is stressful for you and for the class; please make every attempt to arrive promptly. Excessive tardiness will compromise your participation grade and will result in accumulating an absence(s). During attendance I do note if you are more than 10 minutes tardy to class.

Writing Concerns: I encourage students to take advantage of the multiple resources available on campus for help with writing. The Writing Center can provide guidance for any of the assignments. The Writing Center is located at G02 Colson Hall (lower level). Please call to make an appointment—304-293-5788. http://english.wvu.edu/centers_and_projects/wcenter/

Alternatively the Downtown library offers term paper clinics. You need to submit a request for a meeting; however, the librarians are flexible and would love to help with any writing concerns.

Homework: In a discussion-based course, preparation is the central component to a smooth and productive class. It is your responsibility to know and complete the reading (and writing) assignments due each class period. **Late work will not be accepted.** Arriving to class unprepared (i.e. not having completed reading assignments or homework) is the same as late work. If you do not have the materials prepared for class discussion I will ask that you leave class to catch-up and you will receive an absence for the day.

Communication: All written communication should follow professional guidelines. If you are not familiar with the standards for a professional email, please see me during office hours. ****Please note:** Be sure to read your syllabus thoroughly before emailing me questions about class policies or assignments.

All papers should use strict MLA formatting (see *Easy Writer* for directions). Unless otherwise directed, please submit hard copies of your work. **I will not accept emailed attachments.**

Electronic Devices: While you are in English 132 your focus should be on the material from the course. Please turn off your cell phones for the duration of class. **If your cell phone becomes a distraction you will be asked to leave and you will be counted absent for the day.** Keep other electronics put away while in class.

Cheating/Plagiarism: I am not interested in what Cliff, Spark, enotes or Wikipedia has to say about anything—I want to see and hear your great ideas. To that end, I take any form of plagiarism very seriously, that includes (but is not limited to) purchasing papers, copying others' work, missing citations and/or bibliographies, and “recycling” work from previous courses. If you have any questions about what might be considered plagiarism or cheating, please do not hesitate to talk to me before or after class during my office hours. Students are expected to be familiar with the sections on Academic Honesty in the University Student Conduct Code, Policy Bulletin 31, which is online at: <http://studentlife.wvu.edu/studentconductcode.html>. **If you feel unprepared to properly document your sources please come to my office hours.** Plagiarism and cheating are serious offences. Clear cases will result in an “F” for the assignment and appropriate academic discipline. See *Easy Writer* pgs. WVU-7-9.

Course Requirements:

Participation (25%): Attending is not enough (if it were we could all become millionaires). To earn your participation grade you should: come to class prepared and on time, bringing all necessary materials (**this includes: the reading assignment, discussion questions (2-3 well-developed questions, paper, pen, etc.)**), actively taking part in class discussions, asking critical and engaging questions, and contributing appropriate insights. Or as my high school students used to say: “Just try.” Participation includes demonstrating that you have thoroughly read and thought about the reading assignment (**Please note: unannounced quizzes are also part of your reading grade, frequency of these quizzes is directly related to the quality of discussion in the classroom). So we are clear from the beginning:

A: You are prepared for every class period and contribute to class discussion (almost ☺) everyday; this includes bringing the course materials on a daily basis. You have insightful and relevant contributions and go above and beyond an average engagement with the day's readings/activity. You respond to your peers comments and questions and help facilitate dialogue.

B: You are prepared for every class period and contribute to most class discussions; you usually have the course materials. Comments are relevant and insightful and demonstrate a careful reading of the texts assigned. You respond to other's comments on a regular basis and take on an active role in class activities.

C: You are typically prepared for class and contribute to class discussion approximately half of the time; you bring the course materials about half of the time. Sometimes your contributions are off-topic or prevent dialogue from moving forward. During group work, you take on a quiet role.

D: You rarely comment or add insight to class discussion; you rarely bring the course materials. You do not display your preparedness for class, which is reflected by class discussion and/or low quiz scores. You may show little interest in the material and are off task during class (reading non-relevant material, sending text messages, sleeping, etc.).

F: You arrive late to class, are unprepared for class discussion/activities, distract others, intentionally offend or become argumentative, fail to follow the classroom policies and procedures and/or have missed class excessively.

Essays (25%): I will provide essay prompts a week before the paper is due. Your paper should develop a critical response, which includes a thoughtful and significant thesis statement that answers the question provided in the prompt.

Midterm Exam (20%): This test will be a comprehensive exam based on the material given up to this point in the semester. You can expect an assortment of evaluative questions to include: short answer, essay, matching, recognition of passages of text, true/false, and multiple-answer.

Final Exam (30%): This is a two-part semester-comprehensive exam. Part I will include short answer, matching, recognition of passages of text, true/false, and multiple-answer. Part II will be essay focused. You will be allowed to use your text, printed copies of PDF stories, and your notes for Part II only.

Evaluation: My philosophy about grades is simple: I am very pleased to assign the grade that you *earn*. If you ever have any questions about your work or the course requirements please come and see me during office hours.

Written work is evaluated based on the following:

1. The thoughtfulness and thoroughness of your responses.
2. The effort reflected in the depth and critical analysis demonstrated in the work.
3. Clarity and effectiveness of responses.
4. Effective use of concepts discussed in class (bring in related prior knowledge of articles, issues, programs, experience).
5. Use of effective rhetorical strategies.
6. Meeting the assignment's criteria, which include use of MLA, standard grammar, and punctuation.

A: The writer's ideas are well-developed, original, and show critical analysis. The paper is clear and concise. The paper provides an appropriate level of context. There is a clear argument supported with close reading and research. Paper follows proper MLA citation format, includes a Works Cited page, and has few grammatical errors.

B: The writer's ideas show considerable care and attention; the paper show good development and provides important details. There is some context provided, and the writer provides a tentative argument, but ultimately the author needs to work on clarity and structure. There may be some grammar or syntax issues. The paper includes correct MLA format, citations, and a Works Cited page.

C: The writer's ideas and structure are acceptable, but may need more thought and development. The author may need to make more effort to master syntax, grammar, and argument structure and/or develop a thoughtful and focused analysis of the text. The author may not have included context to help develop ideas. The paper may have issues with MLA format, and includes a Works Cited page.

D: The writer has made an initial effort to meet the assignment requirements. The paper lacks a clear argument and shows little or no analysis of the text. The paper may propose an opinion rather than an argument supported with evidence, specifically a close reading of the text. MLA citations need improvement or may be missing.

F: The paper does not meet minimum assignment standards (does not achieve the assignment’s technical goals, does not present a focused or thoughtful analysis of the text, does not offer a clear argument supported with close reading or research, does not use MLA citation, and/or the reader summarizes others’ ideas rather than constructing his/her own argument).

Grade Scale: A (100-92) B (91-82) C (81-72) D (71-62) F (62 and below)

Extra Credit: As a general rule I do not provide extra credit. However, to encourage you to practice best-writing practices I will add 5 points to your participation grade if you complete a full peer review. The peer review must follow specific guidelines and WILL NOT COUNT if it does not meet all of the assignment criteria. The assignment is available on ecampus.

Semester Schedule

PLEASE NOTE: This schedule is subject to change according to class progress and performance. Homework may be added or deleted as determined by assessment throughout the semester. **If it is on the syllabus it is testable material (to include the introduction to the author and any handouts).**

Art of the Tale—AT PDFs can be found on ecampus listed with author’s last name and part of the title.

Date:	Reading Assignment:	Writing Assignments:
January 14 th	Review syllabus	
January 16 th	PDF: Stephen King: “Batman and Robin Have an Altercation” Review Literary Terms, part 1	
January 18 th	AT: Carver “Fat” (197-200) AT: Atwood “Hair Jewelry” (28-39)	
January 21 st	NO CLASS-MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY	
January 23 rd	<i>Never Let Me Go</i> (1-48)	
January 25 th	<i>Never Let Me Go</i> (49-99)	
January 28 th	<i>Never Let Me Go</i> (100-155)	
January 30 th	<i>Never Let Me Go</i> (156-203)	
February 1 st	<i>Never Let Me Go</i> (207-245)	
February 4 th	<i>Never Let Me Go</i> (246-end)	Essay #1 Due
February 6 th	AT: O’Connor “The Artificial Nigger” (533-547) Review Literary Terms, part 2	
February 8 th	PDF (ecampus): Klay “Redeployment” AT: Bowles “Greasy Lake” (133-140)	
February 11 th	AT: Malamud “The Last Mohican” (417-432) AT: Aichinger “The Bound Mand” (9-17)	
February 13 th	AT: Borowski “This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen” (110-121) Merwin “The Dachau Shoe” (PDF)	
February 15 th	CLASS CANCELED	
February 18 th	<i>The Disappeared</i> (1-77)	
February 20 th	<i>The Disappeared</i> (78-154)	
February 22 nd	<i>The Disappeared</i> (155-end)	
February 25 th	AT: Trevor: “Beyond the Pale” (711-729)	

February 27 th	Midterm Review	Essay #2 Due
March 1 st	MIDTERM EXAM	Midterm Assessment Due
March 4 th	PDF: Mootoo "Out on Main Street" AT: O'Brien "Sister Imelda" (519-531)	
March 6 th	PDF (ecampus): Mukerjee "The Management of Grief"	
March 8 th	<i>God of Small Things</i> Chapters 1-3 (3-83)	
March 11 th	<i>God of Small Things</i> Chapters 4-6 (84-147)	
March 13 th	<i>God of Small Things</i> Chapters 7-11 (148-216)	
March 15 th	<i>God of Small Things</i> Chapters 12-17 (217-272)	
March 18 th	<i>God of Small Things</i> Chapters 18-end (273-end)	
March 20 th	AT: Michael "The Deal" (453-458) AT: Fuentes "The Doll Queen" (294-304)	
March 22 nd	AT: Oates "The Tryst" (509-518) PDF (ecampus): Munro "Child's Play"	Essay #3 Due
March 25 th -31 st	SPRING BREAK- NO CLASS	
April 1 st	<i>Darkness at Noon</i> (1-57)	
April 3 rd	<i>Darkness at Noon</i> (58-122)	
April 5 th	<i>Darkness at Noon</i> (122-216)	
April 8 th	<i>Darkness at Noon</i> (216-end)	
April 10 th	AT: Mishima "Patriotism" (459-475)	
April 12 th	AT: Ford "Communist" (282-291) AT: Gallant "The Chosen Husband" (305-317)	
April 15 th	AT: Cheever "The Country Husband" (201-218) AT: Camus "The Adulterous Wife" (173-183)	
April 17 th	AT: Gordimer "The Life of Imagination" (131-140) AT: Rooke "In the Garden" (638-659)	
April 19 th	AT: Wright "A Big Black Good Man" (786-795) AT: Baldwin "Going to Meet the Man" (52-64)	Essay #4 Due
April 22 nd	<i>Flight</i> (1-58)	
April 24 th	<i>Flight</i> (59-117)	
April 26 th	<i>Flight</i> (118-end)	
April 29 th	PDF (ecampus): King "Borders"	
May 1 st	AT: McEwan "First Love, Last Rites" (445-452)	
May 3 rd	Review for Final	

Final Exam: 8am-10am Wednesday May 8th