

ENL 3: Introduction to Literature
Winter 2019
TR 10:00-11:50am
Wellman 25

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Office hours: T 2-3; R 3-4; and by appt.

Hyper-Contemporary Literature

How do we critically and responsibly attend to the present that we are not only so immersed in but also actively constituting all the time?

This course will provide you with tools to investigate our contemporary moment in all its popular and cultural manifestations. Our primary texts will include literature published on/after Jan 1, 2018. Reading poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and drama, we will try to unravel the threads that constitute 'contemporary' literature. At the same time, we will also attempt to map out the genealogies that feed this literary present. Our in-class readings will frequently include older texts in order to better historicize the present moment. In the words of literary critic Toril Moi, '[a]ttention works best in the space where everything seems new and fresh—not *too* new, but new *enough*.' It is this critically attentive space that we will endeavour to engender and foster in our class.

While literature will be our object of study, learning to pay close attention to language and express your thoughts on the page are skills that will help you succeed beyond the humanities and indeed beyond the university. The main goal of this class then is to not just make you better readers and writers, but also to introduce you to methods that you may apply to creatively and ethically critique the information you consume in your daily life.

Moving across time, place, genre (and even language), we will see how literature reflects, enriches, and changes our lives today. In doing so, we will ask ourselves: what does it mean to critique, observe, pay attention to, and live in our moment? How, after all, can we strive to become better readers, critics and citizens of this tumultuous day and age?

Readings

The required readings for this course will all be found on canvas approximately one week before the respective class discussion.

The following books will be available at the University Bookstore for purchase (or you may buy them from your favourite independent bookstore):

1. *There There* (ISBN 9780525520375) by Tommy Orange
Published by Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group
2. *Seasonal Associate* (ISBN 9781635900361) by Heike Geissler. Translated by Katy Derbyshire
Published by Semiotext(e)/Smart Art

Acknowledgment: This course was born out of my conversations with Aku Ammah-Tagoe and is inspired by her 'Very Contemporary Fiction' course at Stanford. I am also indebted to Benjamin Blackman for his inputs, and to all my academic social media networks for their reading suggestions.

Please note that *a lot* of readings in this class will be available to you in the form of PDFs. I *highly* recommend that you print out the readings and bring an annotated hard copy with you in class. This is even more important since laptops will not be allowed in the class. I am actively providing you with all the PDFs so that you don't have to spend more money buying the books. You are, however, welcome to buy all the books, of course. Please contact me if you have any issues acquiring materials for this class. My goal is to make sure that accessibility issues do not hamper your educational experience in any way.

Please do not read reviews and other criticism about the primary texts before you come to class, unless you are explicitly asked to do so.

Requirements and Grading

1) Participation (15%): You need to be in class prepared to discuss the readings assigned for a given session. Because this is a discussion-based course, your attendance and participation are both important and expected. All students get two free absences per quarter - no explanation necessary. However, you may not take your freebie absence on peer review days. You will still be responsible for the reading and assignments on days you miss.

If you are late or leave early, you may be marked absent for the day. Each day you are absent past the two free absences will result in a deduction of 1.5% (15 points) from your final course grade. If you miss more than 5 classes, you cannot earn a passing grade in the course. If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, you will be marked absent for that day at my discretion. If you are absent from classes for the first week, you may be dropped from the course.

Students should come prepared to class having done the reading and ready to participate. Students should additionally be ready to engage with in-class activities - with the material as well as group members. Participation includes asking or answering questions (mine or your peers'), commenting, voicing opinion/analysis, etc. The completion of in-class assignments will factor into the participation grade.

2) Blog Posts (15%): Over the term, you must submit 6 blog posts (out of the 8 possible). In your posts, don't worry too much about organization or the style of the prose; these are informal and exploratory responses meant for you to think critically about the reading, meditate on a question, or offer an analysis of a passage or word. I will occasionally provide prompts for you to respond to. Each blogpost should end with at least two discussion questions from that day's readings. Posts must be submitted by 8am before class in order to count for credit. Posts should be around 250 words. Each post is worth 25 points.

3) Two Papers (50%): You will write two papers in this course. The first paper will be between 1200-1500 words and will be 15% of the final grade. The second paper will be between 1700-2000 words and will be 35% of the final grade. These papers are formal writing assignments.

4) Midterm (10%): The midterm will consist of short answer questions related to the texts and our in-class discussions.

5) Final Exam (10%): The final exam can include some short answer questions related to the texts or may ask you to produce an in-class essay in response to a prompt.

The course contains a total of 1000 possible points; each section's weight corresponds accordingly (e.g., the midterm is 100 points, paper 1 is 200 points, etc.)

Grading Scale (1000 points possible):

970 - 1000: A+	870 - 899: B+	770 - 799: C+	670 - 699: D+
930 - 969: A	830 - 868: B	730 - 769: C	630 - 669: D
900 - 929: A-	800 - 829: B-	700 - 729: C-	600 - 629: D-
0-599: F			

Course Policies

You must have completed the Entry Level Writing Requirement to take this course, or you will not receive credit for it. If you do not know if you have fulfilled the ELWR, talk with your major advisor.

You must submit all major assignments, produce a minimum of 6000 words of original, graded written work, and earn a final grade of C- or higher to pass ENL 3.

Electronic tablets may be used for electronic note-taking. Laptops and cell phones, however, must be put away during class.

Late Work

- For each 24 hours that your paper is late, 25 points will be deducted.
- Late discussion posts will not be counted.

Getting Assistance and Other Details

- Office hours are a valuable resource to help you succeed in this class and throughout college. If you have questions about the syllabus, assignments, in-class discussions, or would simply like to talk about something we have read, office hours are the time to ask. If you're not available during office hours, email me and we can find a more convenient time to meet.
- Our Student Academic Success Center offers workshops, tutoring, and same-day appointments for drop-ins: <http://lsc.ucdavis.edu/writing.html> . Although we will discuss techniques for writing your essays, you should be aware from the start that this course is not a review of grammar and mechanics. If you do not own a reliable style guide, you should purchase one; I recommend either Michael Harvey's *The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing*, or Diana Hacker's *A Pocket Style Manual*.
- In this course we'll briefly discuss ethical citation and when and how to cite sources in academic writing. The Council of Writing Program Administrators defines plagiarism as occurring "when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or

other original (not common knowledge) material without acknowledging its source" (<http://www.wpacouncil.org/node/9>). Intentionally submitting a paper that's not your own work (such as a paper purchased from an online paper mill) is a serious offense with serious consequences. Suspected instances of intentional plagiarism on this scale will be reported promptly to OSSJA. The UCD Student Code of Conduct can be found at <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/cac.pdf>.

- You also have the Student Disability Center (SDC) as a resource. The philosophy of the SDC is to promote independence and integrated participation in campus life for students with disabilities. The SDC is staffed by professional disability specialists who specialize in different areas of disability: learning, vision, hearing, medical, psychological, and mobility. More information can be found at <http://sdc.ucdavis.edu/>. If you need any special accommodations to complete this course successfully, please provide me with the information and official written documentation as soon as possible.
- Please note that I may occasionally take up to 24 hours to respond to emails; so, email as soon as you have a problem and do not wait until the assignment deadline is close. Please resend your email if you haven't received a response from me in 24 hours.
- Rude, hostile, or inappropriate behavior toward your classmates or instructor can lead to a referral to the SJA. Please be respectful in the classroom.

Course Schedule

* Note that the schedule is subject to change; you will be informed accordingly.

UNIT ONE: POETRY

T Jan 8: **#1 (*Orality +*) Literature, or It Really Do Be Like That Sometimes**
Zaffar Kunial, *Us* [Poems: 'Hill Speak,' 'You,' 'Sparkhill,' 'Empty Words,' 'Tall Kahani,' 'Us,' and 'Ys'];
Fatimah Asghar, *If They Come For Us* [Poems: 'Kal,' 'From,' 'Partition,' 'Microaggression Bingo,' and 'If They Come For Us']
Mini Lecture on: models of texts, models of reading

R Jan 10: **#2 *Who? Where? What?***
Sophie Collins, *Who Is Mary Sue?* [Excerpts];
Sesshu Foster, *City of the Future* [Poems: 'it's not just you' and 'waking up postcard'];
Jennifer S. Cheng, *Moon: Letters, Maps, Poems* [Poems: 'Myth-Making (I)' and 'Myth-Making (II)'];
Bob Dylan, *Tangled Up in Blue* [via More Blood, More Tracks: The Bootleg Series Vol. 14]
Mini Lecture on: form and content

T Jan 15: **#3 *Bodies and Aesthetics***
Cecilia Vicuña, *New and Selected Poems of Cecilia Vicuña* [Poems: 'The Dream Company,' 'Word and Thread,' and "'hanging by a thread'"];
sam sax, *bury it* [Poems: 'Bildungsroman' and 'Bury'];
Justin Phillip Reed, *Indecency* [Poem: 'Gateway'];
Jericho Brown, *Hero* and *Token* [via Paris Review];
Fred Moten, *all that beauty* [Excerpts via Harper's Magazine, Poems titled 'Our Correspondence is an Accident' and 'Resistances']
Mini Lecture on: argumentation
Blog post one due

R Jan 17: **#4 *Hyperlocality, or You see Davis?***
Kristin George Bagdanov, *unfield* and *Proof of Hunger*.
Margaret Ronda, *For Hunger* [Poems: 'Sonnet,' 'Hatching,' 'What it's like to be a _____,' and 'Misspelled'];
Jamil Jan Kochai, *Nights in Logar* [Excerpt via A Public Space and The O Henry Prize Stories 2018];
Yiyun Li, *A Flawless Silence* [via New Yorker]
Mini Lecture on: complex arguments
Blog post two due

UNIT TWO: FICTION

T Jan 22: **#5 *Genres and Visuality***
Chris Sprouse and Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Black Panther 168*;
Nick Drnaso, *Sabrina* [Excerpt, pages 98-123];
Ursula K. Le Guin, *Firelight* [via Paris Review];
Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, *Friday Black* [Stories: 'Friday Black,' 'The Finkelstein 5,' and 'In Retail'].
Mini-Lecture on: genre theory and comics

R Jan 24: **#6 Revivals, or What makes today 'Today'?**
Lucia Berlin, *Evening in Paradise: More Stories* [Story: 'Lead Street, Albuquerque'];
Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis, *The Collected Stories of Machado de Assis* [Stories: 'The Mirror,' 'The Fortune-Teller,' 'The Secret Cause', 'Mr. Diplomat,' 'Midnight Mass,' and 'The Tale of the Cabriolet.'];
Fernando Pessoa, *The Book of Disquiet* [Excerpts, Preface + Sections 1-20 + Sections 425-438];
Sylvia Plath, *Mary Ventura and the Ninth Kingdom* [Excerpt via The Guardian]
Mini Lecture on: periodicity, periodization, and (post)modernisms
Blog post three due

T Jan 29: **#7 Fame, Prestige, and Globality**
Karl Ove Knausgård, *Spring* [Part One, pages 1-20];
Selections from *The Penguin Book of Japanese Short Stories* [Stories: Shin'ichi Hoshi, 'Shoulder-Top Secretary'; Banana Yoshimoto, 'Bee Honey', and Haruki Murakami, 'The 1963/1982 Girl from Ipanema'] + Haruki Murakami Introduces *The Penguin Book of Japanese Short Stories* [via Literary Hub];
Gerald Murnane, *Stream System* [Stories: 'Land Deal' and 'There Were Some Countries'];
'The Uneven U';
Bean, 'Old New Contract'
Mini Lecture on: paragraph structure
Blog post four due

R Jan 31: **#8 The Rise of (Creative) Non-Fiction? + Peer Review**
Elena Ferrante, Elena Ferrante's Weekend column [Selections from The Guardian: on writing and climate change];
Javier Marías, *Between Eternities and Other Writings* [Sections: 'No Narrative Shame,' 'Dusty Spectacle,' 'Who is Who?,' and 'Time Machines'];
Javier Cercas, *The Impostor* [Excerpt, Sections 1 and 2];
Richard Straub, "Responding, Really Responding"
Peer review of paper one
Mini Lecture on: creative non-fiction and (auto)biography
Bring in draft of paper one

- T Feb 5: **#9 *Contemporary Identities***
 Tommy Orange, *There There* [Parts One and Two].
 Mini Lecture on: sentence structure
 Blog post five due
- R Feb 7: **#10 *Representational Politics***
 Tommy Orange, *There There* [Parts Three and Four].
 Mini Lecture on: history of Objectivity
 Mini Lecture on: indigenous epistemologies
Paper one due at 11:59pm
- T Feb 12: **#11 *Bodies of Work, or Neoliberalism and Materiality***
 Heike Geissler, *Seasonal Associate* [Sections One to Six].
 Mini Lecture on: marxist theory
- R Feb 14: **#12 *sad reaxx onli, or Precarious Affects***
 Heike Geissler, *Seasonal Associate* [Sections Seven to Eleven].
 Mini Lecture on: affect theory
 Blog post six due
- T Feb 19: **#13 *Work/Course In-Progress (Mid Term)***
 Cristina Frías, *Dianita* [Draft courtesy the author]
 Mid-Term: In Class
- R Feb 21: **#14 *Dank Memes and Edgy Teens, or What is NOT Literature?***
 Spiciest Memes of the Week [Dealer's Stash, Dealer's Choice 😊]
 [ft. *Meme Insider* (+ Bonus material: e-lit.)]
 Mini Lecture on: circulation, mediation, and meme theory
- T Feb 26: **#15 *me we af, or Students' Choice***
 One/Two Texts TBD by voting: See Appendix A (or propose your own texts)
 Mini Lecture on: narratology

R Feb 28: #16 **Play (Class to be held in Modlab @ 234 Cruess Hall)**

Choose any one:

a) Lucas Pope, *Return of the Obra Dinn*;

b) Jan Willem Nijman, *Minit*;

c) Jason Rohrer, *One Hour One Life*

Mini Lecture on: game studies

Blog post seven due

UNIT THREE: DRAMA

T Mar 5: #17 **From Playing to Performing**

Martyna Majok, *Cost of Living*.

Mini Lecture on: performance and performativity

Blog post eight due

R Mar 7: #18 **Peer Review Day**

Peer Review of paper two

Bring in draft of paper two

T Mar 12: #19 ***i crie everitiem, or The ~~End~~ Eternal Return of History***

Dan O'Brien, *Plays One* [Play: *The Body of an American*]

Mini Lecture on: media history, media theory

R Mar 14: #20 ***Killing the Author?: Adapting, Bingeing, Cringing***

Eli Horowitz and Micah Bloomberg, *Homecoming* [Season 1- Episodes 1 and 2];

Elena Ferrante on the screen adaptation of her book [via The Guardian];

Elena Ferrante (with Francesco Piccolo, Laura Paolucci and Saverio Costanzo), *My Brilliant Friend* [Season 1, Episode 1]

Topic: resistance and remediation

Wrap-up and exam review

Saturday, Mar 16: ***Paper two due at 11:59pm***

Final Exam: ***Tuesday, March 19 -- 8:00am onwards***

Appendix A

1. Alfred Döblin, *Berlin Alexanderplatz*
2. Amitabha Bagchi, *Half The Night is Gone*
3. Amitava Kumar, *Immigrant, Montana: A novel*
4. Anna Burns, *Milkman*
5. Ben Marcus, *Notes from the Fog: Stories*
6. Bertolt Brecht, David Constantine (Translator) and Tom Kuhn (Translator), *The Collected Poems of Bertolt Brecht: 1st Edition*
7. Bogotá 39: New Voices from Latin America, ft. Brenda Lozano, Carlos Manuel Alvarez, Daniel Ferreira, Diego Erlan, Diego Zuñiga, Eduardo Rabasa, Emiliano Monge, Frank Báez, Giuseppe Caputo, Laia Jufresa, Martin Felipe Castagnet, Mauro Libertella, Mónica Ojeda, Natalia Borges Polesso, Samanta Schweblin, Valentín Trujillo, and Valeria Luiselli
8. Chris Kraus, *Aliens & Anorexia*
9. Christopher Soto (Editor), *Nepantla: An Anthology Dedicated to Queer Poets of Color*
10. Clarice Lispector, *The Chandelier*
11. Cristina Rivera Garza, *The Taiga Syndrome*
12. Esi Edugyan, *Washington Black*
13. Guadalupe Nettel and Rosalind Harvey (Translator), *After the Winter*
14. Haruki Murakami, *Killing Commendatore*
15. Ishmael Reed, *Conjugating Hindi*
16. Ivo Andrić, *Omer Pasha Latas: Marshal to the Sultan*
17. J. M. Coetzee, *The Schooldays of Jesus*
18. James Baldwin, *If Beale Street Could Talk*
19. Jamil Jan Kochai, *99 Nights in Logar*
20. Jeffrey Stewart, *The New Negro: The Life of Alain Locke*
21. Juan Gabriel Vásquez, *The Shape of the Ruins*
22. Julien Gracq, *Balcony in the Forest*
23. Karl Ove Knausgård, *My Struggle: Book Six*
24. Karl Ove Knausgård, *Winter*
25. Kendrick Lamar, DAMN.
26. Laszlo Krasznahorkai, *The Last Wolf & Herman*
27. Laura van den Berg, *The Third Hotel: A Novel*
28. Ling Ma, *Severance*
29. Lisa Halliday, *Asymmetry*
30. Mario Vargas Llosa and Anna Kushner (Translator), *Sabers and Utopias: Visions of Latin America*
31. Mario Vargas Llosa and Edith Grossman (Translator), *The Neighborhood: A Novel*
32. Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi and Michael Sells (Translator), *Bewildered: Love Poems from Translation of Desires*
33. N. K. Jemisin, *How Long 'til Black Future Month?: Stories*
34. Nicole Chung, *All You Can Ever Know: A Memoir*
35. Olga Tokarczuk, *Flights*
36. Olivia Lang, *Crudo*
37. Ottessa Moshfegh, *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*
38. Patrick Modiano and Mark Polizzotti (Translator), *Sleep of Memory*
39. Perumal Murugan, *Poonachi Or The Story of a Black Goat*
40. Rachel Cusk, *Kudos: A Novel*
41. Sergio Pitlor and George Henson (Translator), *Mephisto's Waltz: Selected Short Stories*
42. Shubhangi Swarup, *Latitudes of longing*
43. Sigrid Nunez, *The Friend*
44. Stephen King, *Elevation*
45. Stephen King, *The Outsider*
46. Ta Nehisi-Coates, *Black Panther Vol. 2: Avengers of the New World*
47. Terrance Hayes, *American Sonnets for My Past and Future Assassin*
48. Valeria Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive: A Novel*
49. Yoko Tawada, *The Emissary*
50. Zora Neale Hurston, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"*