

Principles of Literary Study: Fiction

<http://principles-s14.blogs.rutgers.edu>

MTH 2 (Mondays and Thursdays, 9:50–11:10, a.m.) in Scott 203

Professor Andrew Goldstone (andrew.goldstone@rutgers.edu)

Office hours: Mondays 3–5 p.m. in Murray 031



COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the skills and concepts of the study of fiction, focusing on the novel in English since 1800. Class sessions and assignments concentrate on identifying and interpreting the components of fiction: plot, genre, character, point of view, and narrative voice. The course also introduces key critical debates about the novel and history, narrative and cognition, and the status of genre. The goal of the course is for every student to make the transition from talking about *what it says* or *what happens* to making interpretive arguments about *how it works* and *what its meanings are*. Readings include novels, short stories, and scholarly essays. The format of the class will be seminar-style discussion with occasional short topic lectures.

LEARNING GOALS

1. Master key concepts necessary to the analysis of fictional narrative in terms of form, genre, and style.
2. Develop proficiency in using detailed analysis of texts to support the interpretation of fictional narrative.
3. Master the conventions of written scholarly argument in literary studies.
4. Make convincing written interpretive arguments about fictional narratives.

This course satisfies the following Core Curriculum goals:

1. Arts and Humanities (AHp): Analyze arts and/or literatures in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies.
2. Writing and Communication (WCd): Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry.

REQUIREMENTS

PARTICIPATION (10%)

Attendance and active, thoughtful participation in discussion are required. Most of each class will consist of discussion in large or small groups. Discussion requires every student to take the intellectual risk of offering observations, ideas, and arguments in class in response to one another

and to me. You aren't supposed to know all the answers in advance—but you are required to make your best effort to figure things out as we go along, and to work with your classmates to help them do so as well. Lateness, lack of preparation, or disruptive behavior will affect the participation mark.

Two absences are allowed without penalty. If you fall ill or miss class for a family emergency, please contact me as soon as possible; you can make up for an excused absence. Students can do work to make up for unexcused absences only at my discretion. The *maximum* participation mark if you have three absences is 3.0; if you have four, 2.0. Missing more than four classes without excuse will normally result in a failing grade for the course (not just a zero for participation).

COMMONPLACING (5%)

Students are required to contribute to a coursewide blog on a weekly basis. This blog is a *commonplace book*—that is, a collection of lightly annotated excerpts from the readings. Commonplace-book entries are due by 11 p.m. on Wednesdays, and should consist of an excerpt from the reading assigned for Thursday. This assignment is detailed at principles-14.blogs.rutgers.edu/commonplacing/.

Grading: zero to two entries missing, 4.0; three to four entries missing, 2.0; five or more entries missing, 0.

EXERCISES (10%)

Multiple short writing assignments, due in Monday's class on most but not all weeks of the semester, require students to develop mastery of the concepts introduced in class. The typical assignment is a one-page paper answering a specific question with textual evidence, but there will be some variation.

Grading: assignments will be graded using only integers and half-integers between 0 and 4.

PAPER 1 (25%)

Five to six pages on a single text. Topics distributed in advance.

PAPER 2 (30%)

Six to seven pages on a single text, citing at least one secondary source appropriately. Topics distributed in advance.

FINAL EXAM (20%)

Short-answer questions on key concepts from the course, plus one essay question.

GRADING STANDARDS

Grades will be given on the four-point scale as specified [in the Undergraduate Catalog](#). In converting the final numerical score to a letter, the equivalents in the Catalog are taken as the *maxima* of intervals open on the left and closed on the right. Thus A corresponds to scores strictly greater than 3.5 and less than or equal to 4.0, B+ to scores greater than 3.0 and less than or equal to 3.5, B to scores greater than 2.5 and less than or equal to 3.0, and so on. There are no “minus” grades. The general standards for grades are as follows:

A range (3.5, 4.0]: Outstanding. The student’s work demonstrates thorough mastery of course materials and skills.

B range (2.5, 3.5]: Good. The student’s work demonstrates serious engagement with all aspects of the course but incomplete mastery of course materials and skills.

C range (1.5, 2.5]: Satisfactory. The student’s work satisfies requirements but shows significant problems or major gaps in mastery of course material.

D (0.5, 1.5]: Poor or minimal pass. The student completes the basic course requirements, but the student’s work is frequently unsatisfactory in several major areas.

F [0, 0.5]: Failure. Student has not completed all course requirements or turns in consistently unsatisfactory work.

The final grade will be based on a numerical score but is subject to my discretion. Unsatisfactory work in all areas of the course will result in an F even if the numerical score corresponds to a passing grade. It is not possible to pass the course without completing both papers and the final.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students and instructors have a duty to each other and to our community to abide by norms of academic honesty and responsibility. To present something as your own original writing when it is not is plagiarism. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are serious violations of trust. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will have severe consequences, in accordance with the University Policy on Academic Integrity and the Code of Student Conduct. For details about the University’s academic integrity policies, please see academicintegrity.rutgers.edu.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All reasonable accommodation will be given to students with disabilities. Students who may require accommodation should speak with me at the start of the semester. You may also contact the Office of Disability Services (disabilityservices.rutgers.edu; 848-445-6800).

SCHEDULE

See “Readings” for the bibliography of texts. The readings from Bal’s *Narratology* are all optional.

I. INTRODUCTION. STORY, NARRATIVE, FICTION

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23.

“The Ant and the Cricket” and “The Fox and the Grapes” in Gibbs, *Aesop’s Fables*.

“A Little Fable” and “Before the Law” in Kafka, *The Complete Stories*.

Painter, “The New Year.”

Bal, *Narratology*, 3–13.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25. BLOGGING TRIAL.

Make a commonplace-book entry by 11 p.m.

II. PLOT

MONDAY, JANUARY 27.

Conan Doyle, “A Scandal in Bohemia.”

Conan Doyle, “The Adventure of the Engineer’s Thumb.”

Bal, *Narratology*, 75–98.

III. GENRE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30. COMMONPLACE.

Conan Doyle, “The Adventure of the Speckled Band.”

Conan Doyle, “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle.”

Frow, *Genre*, 6–17, 124–31.

Bal, *Narratology*, 98–112.

IV. NARRATIVE DISCOURSE, IRONY

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3.

Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, vol. 1.

Bal, *Narratology*, 15–29.

Exercise due: Conan Doyle, sjužet, fabula.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6. CLASS CANCELLED. COMMONPLACE.

Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, through vol. 2, chap. 11.

Bal, *Narratology*, 48–56.

V. CHARACTER

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10.

Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, through vol. 3, chap. 5.
 Bal, *Narratology*, 112–33.
Exercise due: "Fiction" in the OED.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13. COMMONPLACE.

Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, complete.
 Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality."
 Bal, *Narratology*, 201–14.

VI. FRAMES AND TEXTUALITY

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17.

Shelley, *Frankenstein*, 3–68.
 Bal, *Narratology*, 48–56 (again), 56–71.
No exercise due.
Paper 1 topics distributed.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20. COMMONPLACE.

Shelley, *Frankenstein*, 3–118.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24.

Shelley, *Frankenstein*, complete novel.
Exercise due: the principled essay introduction.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27. COMMONPLACE.

Shelley, *Frankenstein*, appendices A and B.
 Mellor, "Choosing a Text of *Frankenstein* to Teach."
 Poovey, "My Hideous Progeny."

VII. POINT OF VIEW

MONDAY, MARCH 3.

James, *What Maisie Knew*, chaps. 1–8.
 Bal, *Narratology*, 145–65.
No exercise due.

THURSDAY, MARCH 6. NO COMMONPLACING.

James, *What Maisie Knew*, through chap. 15.

FRIDAY, MARCH 7. PAPER 1 DUE AT 5 P.M.

VIII. THEORY OF MIND

MONDAY, MARCH 10.

James, *What Maisie Knew*, through chap. 22.

Zunshine, *Why We Read Fiction*, 6–12, 16–36.

Exercise due: writing about knowing.

THURSDAY, MARCH 13. COMMONPLACE.

James, *What Maisie Knew*, complete.

(MARCH 15–23. SPRING RECESS.)

IX. IRONY REDUX

MONDAY, MARCH 24.

Joyce, “The Dead.”

Bal, *Narratology*, 31–48, is instructive by comparison.

X. STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

THURSDAY, MARCH 27. COMMONPLACE.

Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, pt. 1.

MONDAY, MARCH 31.

Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*. Continue reading.

Auerbach, “The Brown Stocking.”

Exercise due: Auerbach’s use of evidence.

XI. FICTION, HISTORY

THURSDAY, APRIL 3. COMMONPLACE.

Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, pts. 1–2.

Bal, *Narratology*, 181–201.

Paper 2 topics distributed.

MONDAY, APRIL 7.

Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, complete.
No exercise due.

THURSDAY, APRIL 10. COMMONPLACE.

Morrison, *Beloved*, 3–72.

MONDAY, APRIL 14.

Morrison, *Beloved*, 3–195.
Watkins, “The Slave Mother.”
May, *Fugitive Slave Law*, 37–45.
Exercise: plotting history.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17. COMMONPLACE.

Morrison, *Beloved*, complete.
Holloway, “*Beloved: A Spiritual.*”

MONDAY, APRIL 21.

Morrison, *Beloved*.
Alexandre, “From the Same Tree.”
Berger, “Ghosts of Liberalism.”
No exercise due.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24. NO COMMONPLACING.

Gibson, *Neuromancer*, chaps. 1–3.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25. PAPER 2 DUE.

MONDAY, APRIL 28.

Gibson, *Neuromancer*, chaps. 1–12.
Exercise due: Gibson, style.

XII. GENRE REDUX

THURSDAY, MAY 1. COMMONPLACE.

Gibson, *Neuromancer*, chaps. 1–16.

MONDAY, MAY 5.

Gibson, *Neuromancer*.

Summing up and plenary discussion.

MONDAY, MAY 12. FINAL EXAM, 8 A.M.—11 A.M.

Terms and one essay.

READINGS

ISBNs are included to help students ordering books online.

- Alexandre, Sandy. "From the Same Tree: Gender and Iconography in Representations of Violence in *Beloved*." *Signs* 36, no. 4 (Summer 2011): 915–40. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/stable/10.1086/658505>.
- Auerbach, Erich. "The Brown Stocking." In *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, translated by Willard R. Trask. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953. Online on Sakai.
- Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. In *The Novels and Letters of Jane Austen*, edited by R. Brimley Johnson. 3–4 vols. New York: Holby, 1906. Internet Archive. This is the least terrible online text. The novel is spread over two volumes: [vol. 3](#) and [vol. 4](#). The Oxford World's Classics print text is far superior.
- . *Pride and Prejudice*. Edited by James Kinsley. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. There are online texts, but you are strongly discouraged from using anything other than this edition, in the print version.
- Bakhtin, M. M. "Discourse in the Novel." In *The Dialogic Imagination*, translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.
- Bal, Mieke. *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. 3rd ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009. ISBN: 9780802096319. This text is not required, but I will be using its terminology. It is highly recommended.
- Berger, James. "Ghosts of Liberalism: Morrison's *Beloved* and the Moynihan Report." *PMLA* 111, no. 3 (May 1996): 408–20. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/stable/463165>.
- Conan Doyle, Arthur. "A Scandal in Bohemia." In *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Online alternative available.
- . "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle." In *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Online alternative available.
- . "The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb." In *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Online alternative available.
- . "The Adventure of the Speckled Band." In *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Online alternative available.
- . *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. New York: Harper, 1902. Internet Archive. <http://archive.org/details/adventuressherlo3doylgoog>. Print alternative available.
- . *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. New York: Dover, 2009. ISBN: 9780486474915. Online alternative available.
- Forster, E. M. *Aspects of the Novel*. Edited by Oliver Stallybrass. 1927. London: Edward Arnold, 1974.
- Frow, John. *Genre*. London: Routledge, 2005. Excerpt on Sakai.

- Gallagher, Catherine. "The Rise of Fictionality." In *The Novel*, edited by Franco Moretti, 1:336–63. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007. http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s17_8150.pdf.
- Gibbs, Laura, trans. *Aesop's Fables*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Excerpt distributed in class.
- Gibson, William. *Neuromancer*. New York: Ace / Penguin, 1986. ISBN: 9780441569595.
- Holloway, Karla F. C. "Beloved: A Spiritual." *Callaloo* 13, no. 3 (Summer 1990): 516–25. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/stable/2931334>.
- James, Henry. *What Maisie Knew*. New York: Scribner, 1908. Internet Archive. <http://archive.org/details/whatmaisieknewiojamegoog>. An acceptable online scan of James's revised edition of his novel. The Oxford World's Classics print edition is much better.
- . *What Maisie Knew*. New York: Stone, 1897. Internet Archive. <http://archive.org/details/whatmaisieknewoojamegoog>. This is *not* an acceptable text for this course, but it is an interesting document: James's first book edition of the novel.
- . *What Maisie Knew*. Edited by Adrian Poole. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. ISBN: 9780199538591. Online alternative available, but this print edition is superior.
- Joyce, James. "The Dead." In *Dubliners*. London: Grant Richards, 1914. Internet Archive. <http://archive.org/details/dublinersoojoycrich>. Much better to read this in print, if at all possible.
- . "The Dead." In *Dubliners*, edited by Jeri Johnson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. ISBN: 9780199536436. The best edition for study. The online alternative is poor.
- Kafka, Franz. *The Complete Stories*. Edited by Nahum N. Glatzer. New York: Schocken, 1971. Excerpt distributed in class.
- May, Samuel. *The Fugitive Slave Law, and Its Victims*. New York: American Anti-Slavery Society, 1856. Internet Archive. <https://archive.org/details/fugitiveslavelaw1856mays>.
- Mellor, Anne K. "Choosing a Text of *Frankenstein* to Teach." In *Approaches to Teaching Shelley's Frankenstein*, edited by Stephen C. Behrendt, 31–37. New York: Modern Language Association, 1990. Online on Sakai.
- Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. New York: Vintage, 2004. ISBN: 9781400033416.
- Painter, Pamela. "The New Year." In *Micro Fiction: An Anthology of Really Short Stories*, edited by Jerome Stern, 50–51. New York: Norton, 1996. Copy distributed in class.
- Poovey, Mary. "My Hideous Progeny: Mary Shelley and the Feminization of Romanticism." *PMLA* 95, no. 3 (May 1980): 332–47. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/stable/461877>.
- Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage, 1993.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein: A Romantic Circles Electronic Edition*. Edited by Stuart Curran. Romantic Circles, 2009. <http://www.rc.umd.edu/editions/frankenstein>. The only acceptable online text of the novel for this class. This is a scholarly edition with both the 1818 and 1831 texts. Students using this site should read [the 1818 version](#).
- . *Frankenstein, or, The Modern Prometheus: The 1818 Text*. Edited by Marilyn Butler. 1993. ISBN: 9780199537150. Strongly recommended print edition with good notes.
- Watkins, Francis Ellen [Francis Ellen Watkins Harper]. "The Slave Mother: A Tale of the Ohio." In *Poems on Miscellaneous Subjects*, 40–42. Philadelphia: Merrihew & Thompson, 1857. Internet Archive. <https://archive.org/details/poemsonmiscellanooharp>.
- Woolf, Virginia. *To the Lighthouse*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2005. ISBN: 9780156030472.
- Zunshine, Lisa. *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006. Excerpt on Sakai.

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