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ENG 1091G-096: Composition and Language (Honors)

Ruth Hoberman
Eastern Illinois University

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English 1091G

Fall 2014

Office hours: ~~M/W 2-4~~ M 2-4; W 2-5

Ruth Hoberman

Coleman 3755

rhoberman@eiu.edu

Texts:

Bechdel, *Fun Home*

Graff and Birkenstein, *They Say, I Say*

Hacker, *Pocket Style Manual*, 6th ed.

Markelis, *White Field, Black Sheep*

O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*

Turkle, *Evocative Objects*

Course description and learning objectives: Graded (A, B, C, N/C): A course in the reading and writing of expressive, expository, and persuasive essays. Attention is given to effective expression, clear structure, adequate development, and documentation of sources.

Reading and writing assignments will emphasize critical thinking skills and students' abilities to read carefully and closely and to write organized, informed, and persuasive papers. For each writing project, students will be required to produce multiple drafts, which instructors will evaluate based not only on content and development but also on the writers' prose styles. Students will also be required to make class presentations.

Student Learning Objectives

In successfully completing English 1001G, students will

- 1) write expository and persuasive papers throughout the semester (a minimum of 5,000 words) in which paragraphs, sentences, and words develop a central idea (writing, speaking, critical thinking)
- 2) write purposeful, adequately developed paragraphs and sentences that are direct, economical, free of ambiguity, and structurally appropriate for the ideas expressed and for the audience to whom they are directed (writing, speaking, critical thinking)
- 3) develop skills in critical reading and listening for understanding and evaluating culturally diverse course materials and for becoming more discerning readers (writing, critical thinking, citizenship)
- 4) develop research skills, including effective use of source materials and principles of documentation (writing, critical thinking)
- 5) develop skills in revising their own writing by participating in peer review workshops and by revising one of their essays for possible inclusion in their electronic writing portfolio (writing, critical thinking).

This class is particularly correlated to University learning goals related to critical thinking, writing and critical reading, speaking, listening, and responsible citizenship.

More specifically: you'll get practice generating, exploring, and organizing ideas. You'll be asked to think about your everyday environment in new ways, applying insights from major thinkers like Sigmund Freud, Karl Marx, and Walter Benjamin as well as from writers and visual artists. You'll be asked to see yourself as part of a scholarly conversation about the role of objects in our lives. This requires knowing how to develop and support a thesis; how to use and document research, and how revise and edit your own writing so as to reach your audience with maximum effectiveness. The result should be a deeper awareness of the complex ways in which we are shaped by and--if we know how to think and write critically--can respond to the material culture and physical world around us.

This is a writing-centered course. You may submit an essay from the class for your Electronic Writing Portfolio. For more information on the EWP, consult <http://www.eiu.edu/~assess/ewpmain.php>

Policies: English Department statement on *plagiarism*:

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) --has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up

to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of NC for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

If you have a *documented disability* and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

The Student Success Center: Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

Late work: will not be accepted except in cases of documented illness/emergency, or if you have consulted with me ahead of time. Brief writing and on-line assignments must be done for the assigned class to be acceptable. Essays a week or more late will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Attendance: Attendance at every class is expected. Note that a portion of the grade is based on class participation, in-class writing, and on-line postings, all of which require keeping up with the reading and being in class. *Excessive absences will result in a grade of 0 for the participation portion of your grade; missed peer editing sessions will result in a 5-point penalty on paper grade.* If illness or personal emergency keeps you from class, let me know. Needless to say, mobile phones should be silent and put away during class.

Requirements/grades: Five essays (3-6 pages each, typed, each revised at least once): 60%

Blog: 20%

In-class writing/involvement/participation/oral presentations: 20%

Essay grades will be based on Guidelines for Evaluating Writing Assignments in EIU's English Department. I plan to use number rather than letter grades; this will convert into your final grade as follows: 91-100=A; 81-90=B; 71-80=C. Note that to receive credit for the class, you must have a C average.

Blog: Blog entries should focus on the assigned reading as it relates to your own experiences. Plan on writing 250-500 words per entry. In the course of your response, *quote directly* from the reading at least once (provide p. number in parentheses after quoting). Think of the blog as a journal in which you chronicle your thoughts about the reading and class discussion as they relate to your daily life in the material world. Keep in mind that the class is part of your audience for the blog (keep your writing interesting, clear, and appropriate). Feel free to engage (respectfully) with comments made by classmates. I will grade your blog regularly, on a scale of 1-10, based on thoughtfulness, precision, punctuality, and completeness.

Readings on D2L: it's important to have assigned texts in front of us while we discuss them. When the assigned readings are on D2L please bring either a laptop with access to the readings or print versions.

Tentative Syllabus

I. Objects and psychology

Tues August 26: Intro to course; in-class writing

for Thurs 28: Read O'Brien 1-38. Blog #1 due. Exploratory writing.

Tues Sept 2: Read *Evocative*, 170-76; 184-192; 226-30. Blog #2 due for Tu or Th.

Thurs Sept 4: Read Freud, "Sex in Dreams" and pp. 12-16 of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (both on D2L under "relevant reading"). Print out assigned portions and bring to class.

Tues Sept 9: Read Bechdel, chapter 1 (3-23) and Baudrillard pp. 1-4 on collecting (D2L). Blog #3 due.

Thurs Sept 11: Essay #1 due in conference.

II. Objects and technology

Tues. Sept 16: Hand in final version of essay #1. *Evocative*, 152-60. Informative writing.

Thurs Sept 18: *Evocative*, 62-69; 87-91; 93-99. Blog #4 due.

Tues. Sept 23: group presentations

Thurs Sept 25: peer editing: bring three copies of essay #2 to class.

III. Objects and commodification.

Tues. Sept 30: Hand in final version essay 2. Read Woolf, "Solid Objects" and Walker, "Everyday Use" (both on D2L; print out and bring to class.) Blog #5 due.

Thurs Oct 2: Read essays by Rushkoff, Twitchell, and O'Neill (HO). Blog #6 due.

Tues. Oct. 7: Marx on commodity fetishism (D2L). *Evocative* 136-42. Blog #7 due.

Thurs. Oct 9: Barthes, "Toys" and "Plastic" from *Mythologies* (D2L). Blog #8 due.

Tues Oct 14: Story of Stuff project: <http://storyofstuff.org>. Persuasive writing.

Thurs Oct 16: peer editing: bring three copies of essay #3 to class.

Tues. Oct 21: Hand in final version essay #3. Meet in library. Research.

Thurs Oct 23: Research proposal due. Write a 1-page explanation of a scholarly conversation related to your topic, explain your own approach, and attach a 5-item annotated bibliography for essay #4.

Tues. Oct 28: *They Say* ch. 4-7.

Thurs Oct 30: oral presentations

Tues. Nov. 4: oral presentations

Thurs Nov 6: Essay #4 due in conference.

Tues Nov 11: Hand in final version essay #4. Begin Markelis, *White Field, Black Sheep*. Blog #9 due Tu or Th. Personal narrative.

Thurs Nov 13: Markelis

Tues Nov 18: Markelis. Blog #10 due Tu or Th.

Thurs Nov 20: Peer editing: bring three copies of essay #5 to class.

Thanksgiving break

Tues Dec 2: Hand in essay #5. Finish reading either O'Brien or Bechdel.

Thurs Dec 4: O'Brien or Bechdel. Optional extra blog for EC. In-class writing.

There is no final exam for this class.

