Spring 1-15-2019

ENG 5061Z-601: Topics in Literature and Literary Theory

Melissa Caldwell
Eastern Illinois University

<div align="center">

Twice Told Tales and Theories of Adaptation: Recycle, Produce, Reuse
ENG 5061D, Section 600
Online/Spring 2019

</div>

Instructor: Dr. Melissa Caldwell
Email: mcaldwell@eiu.edu
Office Hours:
      In person: M 11-1, W 11-12, F 11-1, or by arrangement
      Virtual: Via D2L chat room by arrangement

Required Course Texts**

Atwood, Margaret. *Penelopiad*. (2015)
Homer. *The Odyssey*. Trans. Fagles. (8th century BC ?)
Kingston, Maxine Hong. *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts*. (1976)
Kurosawa, Akira. *Ran*. (1985)
Mulan. (various text and film versions)
Shakespeare, William. *King Lear*. Ed. Hunter. (1608)
Smiley, Jane. *A Thousand Acres*. (1991)
Spiegelman, Art. *Maus*. Vol. 1 & 2. (1991)

**All films will be available via D2L. Other materials, as noted in the course calendar, will also be made available via D2L. Suggested additional reading listed below is *not* required.

I. Course Description and Expectations

Course Description
In our instant-on culture, we have come to value immediacy, perhaps above and beyond creativity. This environment of constant stimulation has put incredible pressure on artists working in all forms of media to produce at a breakneck pace—to get the all-powerful "Like" on Facebook, or the impulse buy on Amazon, On Demand, or Netflix. The paradox of this cultural moment is that even while we crave the new, our attention span is retracting, and repetition and looping becomes comforting, perhaps even necessary. One need only to watch the endless repetition of footage in any reality television show to see the odd juxtaposition of novelty and recycling that has become the standard formula, or notice how often successful novels are quickly turned into films that are then turned into Broadway plays, or the endless streams of sequels (*Fast and Furious 8*, anyone?). Even as the internet has made the possibilities for artistic expression boundless, to some degree we live and consume art in a giant feedback loop.

In this online graduate course, we will consider the theories, conditions and results of adaptation. Examining a variety of texts and their various afterlives—whether they be canonical literary works, graphic novels, music, film, etc.—we will explore why and how adaptation is such an enduring creative mode.

Our exploration of adaptation this semester should be valuable to students from a wide-range of graduate concentrations including, but not limited to, literary study, creative writing, multimedia and cultural studies, pedagogy, and rhetoric. Participants will be encouraged to develop a final project on adaptation suited to their individual interests.

Questions we explore will include the following:

- What is the difference between allusion and appropriation? When does an analogue take on a life of its own and gain an independence from its antecedent?
- How are we to understand and theorize the relationship between the "original" story and its successors? Does the former have a purity that is lacking in the latter? What is the line between literary hack-work (not to say plagiarism) and imitation?
- What gets sacrificed in translation between media? Between genres? Between high culture and pop culture? Do these distinctions matter anymore?
- Does appropriation speak to literature's universal qualities or its limitations? Its situatedness in time and place? Do retellings suggest that something is "broken" about a story or text that needs to somehow be repaired so as to make it relevant again, to let us see it "anew"?
- What affects do capitalism, a gimmick-driven contemporary marketplace, and/or a publisher's desire to acquire works that will sell have on creative endeavors and literary production? Is the vogue for adaptation ultimately driven by consumerism and if so, is this a spur or a threat to creativity?
- What happens when works deviate from the comfort of generic conventions? Where/how does that deviation take place and to what end? And why does this deviation sometimes make us uncomfortable and sometimes delight us (and sometimes both at once)?
- What are the ethics of appropriation? To what social and political ends have writers and artists appropriated texts to repurpose seemingly antiquated or to restore marginalized narratives?

Minimum Technological Requirements for English 5061D**
- Reliable access to the Internet
- Ability to navigate various aspects of D2L, our learning management system
- Ability read documents using Word, PowerPoint, and Adobe Acrobat
- Ability to create and post documents using Microsoft Word or a comparable format
- Ability to record and post a short video of yourself and/or create PowerPoint with voiceover

**If you need help with any of these technological requirements, please contact me ASAP.

Course Expectations and Netiquette
Please note that while the timeline for this course offers some flexibility, there are weekly deadlines for coursework. Please be prepared to devote considerable time to the reading,

writing, and other assignments listed below. If you need help, you have several options for contacting me. I will answer queries both via D2L email and Panthermail (mcaldwell@eiu.edu), typically within 24 hours, sometimes sooner. You may also ask me questions during my virtual office hours via the Chat function in D2L (see your navigation bar). If you have questions, concerns or find yourself falling behind, please **do not wait** to contact me.

Regarding course netiquette, I ask you to observe the following policies:

1.) Be considerate of other discussion participants when interacting via the discussion board or any other electronic form for the duration of this course. Remember that often a writer's intention and tone can be lost in electronic formats. Err on the side of too much courtesy rather than too little.

2.) Dismissive, malicious, or otherwise inappropriate comments will not be tolerated.

3.) You are *absolutely* welcome to express your own ideas and opinion *and* to agree *or* disagree with your peers, I ask only that you do so courteously.

4.) If you do not respect your classmates or your tone is inappropriate, you may be asked to redo an assignment and/or lose credit for the assignment entirely. In particularly severe cases, you may fail or be dismissed from the course at my discretion.

5.) Read all feedback you receive from me and discuss any questions you have about your feedback. If you are ever in doubt about whether a post violates course netiquette, please email me *before* you post it.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the course, the students will be able to:

1. discuss, examine, and debate current issues in literary theory and cultural studies;
2. apply current theories to pertinent primary texts and/or contexts;
3. demonstrate competencies in a topic or theory to enable participation in professional or public setting (such as submit a seminar paper for a conference presentation).

II. Course Assignments and Grading Distribution and Scale

Brief Descriptions of Assignments (detailed descriptions and rubrics on D2L)

1. *Discussion Forum:* Most weeks you will be required to post a response to a question I will pose to you in my written online lecture. Your response should engage substantially with the texts we are reading or viewing that week. Whenever possible, bring specific ideas/evidence into your posts. Posts can make an argument, raise a question, point out an ambiguity, challenge an idea you encountered during the week, etc. Original posts are due by Wednesday by midnight; responses are due by Sunday at midnight. If I respond to your post (and I will at least once during the semester), you are required to respond to me. While quality is infinitely more important than quantity, original posts should be roughly between 500-750 words; responses should be at least 150 words.

2. *Homework Assignments*: Early in the semester, there will be a few brief homework assignments as indicated on the course calendar. You will turn these in to me via Dropbox by the date assigned.

3. *Writing Group Tasks*: Around the 6th week of the semester, you will be put into writing groups. The purpose of this group is manifold: to provide you with a resource or sounding board as you develop and craft your independent project for the semester, to keep you motivated and on task to complete your project, and to give you an opportunity to hone and reflect on your own writing process. For detailed description of these tasks, see the Independent Project Assignment.

4. *Independent Project*: You will complete an independent project this semester. You are responsible for your project design, but you will meet with me twice this semester to discuss your project. See assignment for full description.

5. *Presentation*: You will create a presentation for your project (a screencast or some other presentation format that works best for your project) that will be viewed by the entire class. You will also be responsible for viewing and offering feedback other participants' projects.

Grade Distribution
Grades will be made available via D2L Gradebook. If you have any questions about your grade at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Assignment	Points	Final Grading Scale	
Discussion Forum Posts and Responses (12 total, 5 points each)	60	180-200	A
Homework and Writing Group Tasks (8 total, 5 points each)	40	160-200	B
Final Project	60	140-200	C
Presentation on Final Project	40	120-200	D
Total Points possible	200	Below 120	F

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php). The English Department's policy on plagiarism states the following:

"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 assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Office of Student Standards."

To put this another way: plagiarism absolutely will not be tolerated in this class. Plagiarists will be reported to the Office of Student Standards and will fail the course. If you are confused about plagiarism at any point in the semester, it is your responsibility to ask me about it before you turn in an assignment.

ENG 5061D / Spring 2019
Caldwell

Outline of Course Content

Module & Dates	Topic Covered	Reading	Assignment
Module 1: Course Introduction and D2L Orientation 1/7 – 1/13	• Introductions • Theoretical groundwork • Key terms: adaptation and appropriation	Selected readings posted on D2L: • Hutcheon, ch. 1 • Sanders, ch. 1 & 2 • Benjamin, "Work of Art.."	• D2L post with responses • Homework assignment 1: Reading response
Module 2: Shakespeare's *King Lear* 1/14 – 1/20	• Drama and adaptation • Theatrical performance as adaptation	• *King Lear* • Any film version (or portion thereof) of *King Lear* that is available to you	• D2L post with responses
Module 3: Shakespeare and his sources 1/21 – 1/27	• Early "adaptation" • Early modern *imitation* • The nature of creativity and originality	• Selected readings of Shakespeare's sources (on D2L) • Sanders, ch. 3	• D2L post with responses; this week your post will be a group post, while your response to posts will be individual • Homework Assignment 2: beginning investigations for semester project
Module 4: Film as Adaptation 1/28 – 2/3	• Impact of form and media on adaptation • Some aspects of cross-cultural adaptation	• Watch Kurosawa's *Ran* (on D2L) • Hutcheon, ch. 2 (on D2L) • Note: because reading is light this week, you may want to start next week's novel now	• D2L post with responses
Module 5: Shakespeare Goes Pop 2/4 – 2/10	• Impact of genre • Movement from "high" culture to "low" (pop) culture • Assets and liabilities of	• Smiley, *A Thousand Acres* • Carlson, "King Lear in Zebulon County" (on D2L)	• D2L post with responses • Homework assignment 3: Tentative abstract of semester

			project (500-1000 words)
Module 6: Independent Project 2/11 – 2/17	• Define independent project for the course • Begin work in Work Groups	• Virtual conference with Caldwell	• Work Group introductions on discussion forum
Module 7: Visual Adpatations 2/18 – 2/24	• Understanding the comics form • Impact of visual on adaptation	• Spiegelman, *Maus*, vol. 1 • McCloud, selections in *Understanding Comics* (on D2L)	• D2L post with responses; this week your post will be a group post, while your response to posts will be individual • Work Group task
Module 8: Historical Representation as Adaptation 2/25 – 3/3	• Personal narrative vs. lived experience • History and memoir as adaptation • The problem of representing trauma	• Spiegelman, *Maus*, vol. 2 • Caruth, selections from *Unclaimed Experience*	• D2L post with responses
Module 9: Feminist Retellings 3/4 – 3/10	• The importance of point of view • Rewriting marginalization • Adaptation and social justice	• Homer, *The Odyssey*, books 1 and books 17-23 • Atwood, *Penelopiad* • Sanders, from ch. 6 (on D2L)	• D2L post with responses • Work Group task
SPRING BREAK **3/11 – 3/17**			
Module 10: Intra-Cultural Adaptation 3/18 – 3/24	• Adaptation within a single culture • Adaptation in context: social, political, religious	• Selected Chinese versions of the Mulan story • Watch *Mulan: Rise of a Warrior* (Chinese film on D2L)	• D2L post with responses • Work Group task
Module 11: Cross-Cultural Adaptation	• Western appropriation	• Disney's *Mulan* (on D2L) • Hutcheon, ch. 5	• D2L post with responses

3/25 – 3/31	• Adaptation and cultural misunderstanding		
Module 12: Adaptation and Identity Construction

4/1 – 4/7 | • Adaptation and identity
• Intersectionality | • Kingston, *Warrior Woman* | • D2L post with responses
• Work Group task |
| Module 13: Independent Project Work

4/8 – 4/14 | • Finish writing and revising semester project
• Prepare presentations | • Conferences with Caldwell | • Submit rough draft to Caldwell |
| **INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATIONS**
WEEKS 14 - 15 | | | |

There is no final exam for this course.