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ENG 3504-001: Graphic Novels, Children's Literature and Adaptation: Animation and Beyond

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English 3504, Film and Literature: Graphic Novels, Children’s Literature and Adaptation: Animation and Beyond

Dr. Robin L. Murray Fall 2009, Thursday, 6:30-9:00
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Office Hours: T/R 9-9:30, R 1:30-3:30 and W 1-3
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Course Description:

In Animation and America, Paul Wells draws on Gene Youngblood’s concept of “expanded cinema” and suggests that “art-works transcend ... paradigm[s] by using their aesthetic specificity to create symbolic interpretations of more complex and contradictory aspects of human experience.” This section of 3504 will explore the boundaries of children’s literature, graphic novels, animation, and adaptation as interpretive “artworks” in multiple genres of film and literature. (old curriculum Group 6; new curriculum Group 5)

Texts:

Bordwell and Thompson, Film Art
Carol, Lewis. Alice in Wonderland
Moore, Alan and Gibbons, Dave. Watchmen
Moore, Alan and Lloyd, David. V For Vendetta
Satrapi, Marjane. Persepolis
Talbot, Bryan. Alice in Sunderland
Yang, Gene Luen. American Born Chinese

Course Requirements:

1. **Weekly Responses and Participation**: Responses are about two pages typed and reflect careful reading and synthesis of course materials and/or films. Your responses will serve as a source for discussion in class as a whole or in small groups so are part of your participation grade. Responses should analyze, critique, argue for or against, or evaluate—they should not summarize except to make the writer’s point(s). You must be in class to receive credit for your response or for any in-class work.

2. **Midterm**: This exam will provide an opportunity to internalize material all students read for class and to carefully read the first films in the class.

3. **Group Novel Teaching and Presentation**: Members of four different groups will each read a different graphic novel and be responsible for teaching it to the rest of the class (with my help). Film clips from films that build from the novel(s) should be included in your presentation—as well as information about author/director.

4. **Final Exam**: This exam will not be cumulative. It will provide an opportunity to internalize material read for class as a group and as a class from Midterm forward and carefully to read the last films in the class.
5. **Final Paper**: The final paper should either expand one of your responses—which you focus and then develop using information from the film and/or literature—or revolve around a film you have chosen on your own. For the second option, choose an adaptation of a graphic novel, with my approval, and write a detailed and focused analysis of its form and style. This paper should be approximately 6 pages long.

**Grades**: Grades will be determined as follows for a total of 100%:

- **Weekly Responses and Participation**--------------------------------- 20%
- **Midterm**----------------------------------------------------------20%
- **Group Teaching/Presentation**---------------------------------------20%
- **Final Exam**--------------------------------------------------------20%
- **Final Paper**--------------------------------------------------------20%

**Grading of Responses, Presentation, and Paper:**

Response grades will be based on analytical complexity. Each will be worth twenty points. If a response only summarizes a film or novel, the response gets only half credit. Adequate analysis (or argument or critique) will result in 14 points (C level). Good analysis, etc., in 16 points (B level). Great analysis, etc., from 18-20 points, depending on clarity, precision, and sense of voice.

Paper grades will be based on the following areas: Audience awareness, organization, development, sentence structure, word choice, grammar/usage/mechanics. The first three areas will be weighted more heavily than the second three (60% vs. 40%). I will also distribute the English Department’s grade analysis in class.

Presentations will be evaluated according to a rubric I will distribute in class. Groups should also turn in any class handouts or visuals with novel responses.

**Students with Disabilities**: 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.

**Plagiarism**: The English Department states, "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' -- 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" in the course."

**Electronic Writing Portfolio**: This class is a writing intensive class, so you may submit your paper as a writing portfolio sample, following the instructions on the CASL Website. Submissions must be made during the course of the class to receive my approval. Please note that the Writing Center is available for help with all writing assignments, as well. Take advantage of this free service.
Tentative English 3504 Calendar--Subject to Change

**August**
27 Introduction. How to read a film. Film Narrative. View animated narratives. Read handouts on reading graphic novels and adaptations for September 3.

**September**
3 **Response due.** How to read graphic novels discussion. Comic books and comic book films. Sign up for graphic novel presentation and film introductions. Read sections of Film Style in Film Art for September 10.

10 **Response due.** Film Art discussion. View cinematography documentary. Read The Watchman for 9/17

17 **Response due.** The Watchman discussion. Student introduction to film. Read American Born Chinese for 9/24

24 **Response due.** Discuss American Born Chinese. View Fire Ball: Journey to the West. Read Persepolis for 10/1

**October**
1 **Response due.** Discuss Persepolis and view with student introduction. Read V for Vendetta for 10/8

8 **Response due.** Discuss V for Vendetta/ View with student intro. MT Overview.

15 Midterm. Read Alice in Sunderland for next week

22 **Resp due.** Alice in Sunderland: An Entertainment. View Alice with stu. intro

29 **Resp due.** Group I Presentation—Film of students’ choice

**November**
5 **Resp due.** Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland discussion/film with stu intro

12 **Young Mr. Lincoln** and Library of Congress Presentation

19 **Resp due.** Group II, Lincoln Graphic Novel group—Film of students’ choice

23-27: Thanksgiving Break

**December**
3 **Optional Response due.** Group III Presentation—Film of students’ choice

10 **Optional Response due.** Group IV. Stus’ choice flm. Final Paper Due (exam rev)

17 Final Exam!