

ENGL 204: Thematic Approaches to Literature
Drug Culture in 20th Century Fiction
Fall 2014 – 10:00-11:20 – M/W, SE 119

Professor: Dr. Kim Lacey (please, call me Kim!)

In-person office hours: M/W 12-2 pm
and by appointment

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Course hashtag: #204F14

Course questions: How important are drugs to cultural establishments? What is counterculture? What is stream of consciousness? What is modernism? How do writers convey hallucinatory experiences? Do drugged up narrators make reliable storytellers?

Course style: This course will be conducted as a seminar, meaning you are expected to come to class ready to participate. There will be very few lectures—your inquiry, confusion, and interests will drive our in-class conversations. Be ready to talk each day we meet.

A note about the content of our course: We will be dealing with very complex and mature subject matters this semester. A lot of the content we read is *extremely profane, graphic, violent, and sexually explicit*. If such topics bother or deeply offend you, this is probably not a course that best fits your needs. Please know that I do not expect you to agree with everything we read, but I do ask that you have an open mind and engage with the texts in an appropriately professional and academic manner.

Required texts to purchase: These texts have been ordered at the bookstore, but feel free to shop around online for the cheapest price.

William S. Burroughs: *Junky* (ISBN: 978-0802120427)

Hunter S. Thompson: *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (ISBN: 978-0679785897)

Tom Wolfe: *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (ISBN: 978-0312427597)

Philip K. Dick: *A Scanner Darkly* (ISBN: 978-0547572178)

Herbert Selby Jr: *Requiem for a Dream* (ISBN: 978-1560252481)

Denis Johnson: *Jesus' Son* (ISBN: 978-0312428747)

Bret Easton Ellis: *American Psycho* (ISBN: 978-0679735779)

Irvine Welsh: *Ecstasy* (ISBN: 978-0393315813)

Readings on Canvas (these are very short):

Isabelle Eberhardt: "The Oblivion Seekers"

Edith Wharton: excerpt from *The House of Mirth*

Ernest Hemingway: "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place"; Three-Day Blow

Dorothy Parker: “Just a Little One”; “Big Blonde”
F. Scott Fitzgerald: “An Alcoholic Case”
E.B. White: “The Second Tree from the Corner”
Linda Rosenkrantz: from *Talk*
Anna Kavan: “Julia and the Bazooka”
Multiple authors: from *El Perfecto Comics*
Maya Angelou: from *Gather Together In My Name*
Raymond Carver: “What We Talk about When We Talk about Love”
Other readings about stream of consciousness, modernism, psychological realism, etc.

Course requirements:

Historical Significance Paper: 15%
Controversy Anthology Assignment: 15%
Midterm Exam: 15%
Final Exam: 15%
Pop quizzes: 15%
Discussion questions: 15% (see below)
Professional in-class work ethic (see below): 10%

Discussion Questions: For 10 of our class meetings (a little less than once per week), prepare at least two questions (20 total for the semester) you have about the material. Questions will be used as the basis for our discussion of the readings. These questions must be submitted to the appropriate discussion board on Canvas by the beginning of class. I will accept no more than two questions per week (one of each kind), thus you must be proactive and not wait until the end of the semester to submit all 20 questions.

The first question should focus on fact or understanding. I refer to these as “content questions.” Questions of this type might be:

- “I don’t understand _____”
- “What is meant by _____”?
- “Can someone explain the background of _____ to me”?

The second question should focus on the application or extension of a concept or theory. I refer to these as “philosophical or deeper meaning questions.” Questions of this type might be:

- “Who is included or excluded from this perspective on ___ and what difference does that make”?
- “How does the concept of _____ alter our understanding of social construction”?
- “What examples of this concept do we see in the world around us”?

Professional In-Class Work Ethic: As a member of this course, you are responsible for participating responsibly. This means coming to each class with the reading completed and with interesting ideas to contribute to our conversation. Confusion is welcomed! Don’t feel that you have to understand everything—being a professional member of a group includes

understanding that learning is a process. In addition, you should show up on time and respect others' opinions while in class. Opinions of all kinds are welcome, but disrespect will not be tolerated.

Grading Scale

↑95%: A
↑90%: A-
↑87%: B+
↑83%: B
↑80%: B-
↑77%: C+
↑73%: C
↑60%: D
0%: F

Course Policies: The decision to take this course is yours, but once you make that decision, you have responsibilities to everyone else in this community of learners. It is your responsibility to abide by the following course policies in order to contribute to our classroom's productivity.

Attendance: It is in your best interest to attend class regularly. Attendance means much more than simply showing up to class. Attendance in ENGL 202 means being present in class through active participation, sharing insightful ideas, completing homework, and willingness to ask questions. Attendance will be taken during each class meeting. You are allowed two free absences. On your third absence, 2% will be deducted from your final grade. On your fourth absence, and additional 4% will be deducted from your final grade. If you miss more than four classes, you will be asked to drop and/or fail this course. Please find a classmate and exchange e-mail addresses. In case you miss class, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate to find out what you missed. My office hours will not be used as a "make-up" class period. You cannot make-up pop quizzes.

Situations that Count as Absences:

- Arriving more than 10 minutes late or leaving more than 10 minutes early
- Coming to class unprepared to participate

E-mail: Check your SVSU e-mail daily. It's the university's official mode of communication, and there is no excuse why you shouldn't check it often. You need to have internet access for this course. Our campus is wireless and many other locations off campus also have free Wi-Fi, so be sure to take advantage. If you are having difficulty connecting, make sure you call my office (989-964-2016). Not having access is not an excuse.

Grade postings: All grades will be posted on Canvas.

Prerequisite: All reading and writing Basic Skills requirements must be completed before enrolling in this course.

Technology Policy: I encourage you to use whatever note taking system you prefer. If, however, you choose to use a personal computing device, you are asked that it be used for class work only. Phones must be turned to silent during class time. If you are expecting an important phone call during class, please sit near the door so you can leave the room without disrupting others. I understand the need to feel connected, so cell phones are not banned in our class. However, you are required to be an active member of our learning community. If you feel that you can multi-task effectively and participate in class discussions, then feel free to do so. You are highly encouraged to Tweet during class with our course hashtag: #204F14. Just be aware that I will call on people at random if the discussion is dead. If you are not prepared to participate because you are distracted, this may affect your final professionalism grade.

Late Work: Late work is unacceptable. Please ensure that your work is submitted on time. The deadlines are clearly marked on all assignments and on the syllabus. If you know a due date conflicts with something outside of class, plan ahead and submit your assignment early. I will send a confirmation e-mail by 8 am the next morning. If you do not receive a confirmation e-mail, I did not receive your paper.

Disability and Non-Discrimination Clause: Students with disabilities which may restrict their full participation in course activities are encouraged to meet with the instructor or contact the SVSU Office of Disability Services, Curtis Hall, Room C-112, Phone: 989-964-4168. SVSU does not discriminate based on race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical impairment, disability, or veteran status in the provision of education, employment, and other services.

Academic Integrity Policy: According to the *SVSU Student Handbook*, “Academic integrity is undermined whenever one is dishonest in the pursuit of knowledge. Dishonesty takes many forms, including cheating, plagiarism, and other activities for undermining the educational process.

“**Cheating** occurs whenever one attempts to gain an advantage through a violation of rules regarding the relevant behavior. It should be assumed that collaboration is cheating unless explicitly authorized” (16).

“**Plagiarism** involves intentionally or unintentionally presenting another person’s expressions – ideas, opinions, illustrations, data, style – as one’s own expression” (16).

Forms of plagiarism include directly transcribing (copying) without quotation and attribution, summarizing without attribution, paraphrasing or patchwork paraphrasing without attribution, patching electronic materials (including pictures, graphs, and/or charts) without attribution.

In ENGL 204 deliberate plagiarism or cheating in any form will result in the grade of zero (0) for the entire assignment and will be reported to the Academic Conduct Board for further sanctions.

In ENGL 204, any student who engages in any of these behaviors that undermine the educational process will be asked to leave the class immediately, and lose any possible credit for that class period. To return to the class, the student will be required to schedule a meeting with the instructor to discuss his or her plans for modifying their behavior in question.

Writing Center Information: One of the many advantages of this University is the Writing Center. You are strongly encouraged to meet with a tutor to discuss your writing. Sessions at the Writing Center are available on a first come, first serve basis. Please stop by the Writing Center anytime you need additional help.

Writing Center Hours: M-R 9am-7pm; F 10am-2pm

Location: Zahnow 308 (3rd floor of the library)

Phone: 989-964-6061

Website: www.svsu.edu/writingcenter

Course Schedule

All readings must be done before class

This schedule might change. If it does, I will notify you in class and in writing.

Date	Reading
Part I: Turn of the 20 th Century	
M, 8/25	Intro to class Video that simulates hallucination Isabelle Eberhardt: "The Oblivion Seekers" Edith Wharton: from <i>The House of Mirth</i>
W, 8/27	Introductions Hemingway (~23 pages): "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place"; "Three-Day Blow"

M, 9/1 (no class)

W, 9/3 Dorothy Parker (~30 pages): "Just A Little One"; "Big Blonde"
F. Scott Fitzgerald (~9 pages): "An Alcoholic Case"

Part II: Post WWII through the late 1950s

M, 9/8 E.B. White (~4 pages): "The Second Tree from the Corner"
Junky: 1-100

W, 9/10 *Junky*: 100-150 (end)

Part III: 1960s Flower Children, Counter-Culture, and Psychedelics

M, 9/15 Linda Rosenkrantz (3 pages): from *Talk*
Anna Kavan (4 pages): "Julia and the Bazooka"
Electric Koolaid: 1-50

W, 9/17 *Electric Koolaid*: 50-100

Part IV: Disillusionment in the 1970s

M, 9/22 *Fear and Loathing*: 1-120 (Part 2, Ch. 3)

W, 9/24 *Fear and Loathing*: 121-160
Stream of consciousness (on Canvas)

M, 9/29 *Fear and Loathing*: 161-204 (end)
from *El Perfecto Comics*
Stream of consciousness (on Canvas)

W, 10/1 Maya Angelou: from *Gather Together In My Name*
Controversy Discussion: Bring in two summaries from your anthology and be ready to read and discuss them

Controversy Anthology due (on Canvas by 11:59 pm)

M, 10/6 *Scanner Darkly*: Ch. 1-7 (1-121)

W, 10/8 *Scanner Darkly*: Ch. 8-11 (122-188)

M, 10/13 *Scanner Darkly*: Ch. 11-17 (189-275 end)

W, 10/15 *Requiem*: 3-46

M, 10/20 *Requiem*: 46-156

W, 10/22	<i>Requiem</i> : 157-203
M, 10/27	<i>Requiem</i> : 203-274 (end) Raymond Carver: "What We Talk about When We Talk about Love"
Part V: End of the 20 th Century	
W, 10/29	<i>American Psycho</i> : April Fools-Pastels (3-51)
M, 11/3	<i>American Psycho</i> : Tunnel-Business (52-111)
Mid-term due (on Canvas by 11:59 pm)	
W, 11/5	<i>American Psycho</i> : Video Store Then D'Agostino's-Killing Dog (111-166)
M, 11/10	<i>American Psycho</i> : Girls-Detective (166-278)
W, 11/12	<i>American Psycho</i> : Summer-Girl (278-329)
M, 11/17	<i>American Psycho</i> : At Another New Restaurant-end (330-399)
W, 11/19	From <i>Jesus' Son</i> "Car Crash While Hitchhiking" (3-14) "Out on Bail" (35-44) "Emergency" (69-90) "Steady Hands at Seattle General" (129-136)
M, 11/24	<i>Ecstasy</i> "The Undefeated" Part 1: 151-220
W, 11/26	(no class)
M, 12/1	<i>Ecstasy</i> "The Undefeated" Part 2 and Epilogue (221-end)
Historical Significance paper due (on Canvas by 11:59 pm)	
W, 12/3 (last day of class)	Course Evaluations Historical Significance Discussion: Bring in 2 examples from your paper and be ready to discuss them.
M, 12/8	Final exam due (on Canvas by 11:59 pm)