

ENGL 204: Thematic Approaches to Literature
Drug Culture in 20th Century Fiction
Fall 2015 – 4:00-5:20 – M/W, SE 118

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: #204F15

Course questions: How important are drugs to cultural establishments? What is counterculture? What is stream of consciousness? Can “trips” be relayed fictionally? 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. Please note that you are never under any circumstance expected to self-disclose any information you do not want to. As a member of this class, you must also respect others who do self-disclose information (this includes but is not limited to sexual orientation, gender identification, social and personal experiences, etc.). Confidentiality is an important aspect of our classroom experience.

Required texts to purchase: These texts have been ordered at the bookstore, but feel free to shop around online for the cheapest price. There are many different versions of these texts, but it does not matter which one you purchase. Also, feel free to use e-books.

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

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

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

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

Charles Bukowski, *Post Office* (ISBN: 978-0061177576)

Readings on Canvas (these are fairly 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”

Del Close and John Brent: “How to Speak Hip”

Barry Miles: excerpt from *Hippie*

Anna Kavan: “Julia and the Bazooka”
 Raymond Carver: “What We Talk about When We Talk about Love”
 Irvine Welsh: “The Acid House,” “Granny’s Old Junk”
 Other readings about stream of consciousness, modernism, psychological realism, etc.

Films (do not purchase these—we will watch these together in-class):

A Scanner Darkly
Go
Magic Trip

Course requirements:

Controversy Anthology Project: 12%
 Historical Significance Paper: 12%
 Midterm Exam: 15%
 Final Exam: 15%
 Reading quizzes: 15% (5% each)
 Discussion questions and responses: 24% (see below)
 1 question = 1% (8% total)
 1 response = 2% (16% total)
 Professional in-class work ethic (see below): 7%

Discussion Questions and Responses: Throughout the semester, you will be responsible for posting **two** questions by the following due dates. You will also be responsible for answering **two** questions by the following due dates. The questions you answer cannot be the ones you post! If you answer your own questions, you will not receive credit for that part of the assignment.

Your questions should be the kind to generate discussion—ones that people might disagree. Please don’t post “yes or no” type questions, but rather you might ask about the application or extension of a concept or theory or even the symbolism of a certain theme. I refer to these as “philosophical or deeper meaning questions.”

	2 Questions Due	2 Responses Due
Part I	Wednesday, September 9	Monday, September 14
Part II	Monday, September 21	Monday, September 28
Part III	n/a	n/a
Part IV	Wednesday, November 11	Monday, November 16
Part V	Wednesday, December 2	Monday, December 7

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 204 means being present in class through active participation, sharing insightful ideas, completing homework, and willingness to ask questions. I do not take attendance in this course, but please be aware that this course thrives on your in-class participation. 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 in-class work.

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: #204F15. 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	Assignments Due
Part I: Turn of the 20th Century		
M, 8/31	Intro to class Video that simulates hallucination “Hot Dog Acid Trip” Melodramatic scenes from <i>Reefer Madness</i>	
W, 9/2	Introductions Course questions Isabelle Eberhardt: “The Oblivion Seekers” Edith Wharton: from <i>The House of Mirth</i>	
M, 9/7	University Closed: No Class	
W, 9/9	Hemingway (~23 pages): “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place”; “Three-Day Blow”	Part I Questions Due
M, 9/14	Dorothy Parker (~30 pages): “Just A Little One”; “Big Blonde” F. Scott Fitzgerald (~9 pages): “An Alcoholic Case”	Part I Responses Due
Part II: Post WWII through the late 1950s		
W, 9/16	Close and Brent: “How to Speak Hip” <i>Junky</i> : 1-50	Reading Quiz #1
M, 9/21	<i>Junky</i> : 50-150 (end)	Part II Questions Due
Part III: 1960s Flower Children, Counter-Culture, and Psychedelics		
W, 9/23	Anna Kavan (4 pages): “Julia and the Bazooka” Selections from <i>Hippie</i> (94-129)	
M, 9/28	In-class: Start watching <i>Magic Trip</i>	Part II Responses Due
W, 9/30	In-class: Finish watching <i>Magic Trip</i>	
Part IV: Disillusionment in the 1970s		
M, 10/5	<i>Fear and Loathing</i> : 1-81	
W, 10/7	<i>Fear and Loathing</i> : 83-127 Gonzo Journalism reading	
M, 10/12	<i>Fear and Loathing</i> : 129-204 (End)	

W, 10/14	In-class: Start watching <i>Scanner Darkly</i>	Controversy Anthology due on Canvas by 11:59 pm
M, 10/19	In-class: Finish watching <i>Scanner Darkly</i>	
W, 10/21	<i>Requiem</i> : 3-46 Stream of Consciousness reading	Reading Quiz #2
M, 10/26	<i>Requiem</i> : 46-156	
W, 10/28	<i>Requiem</i> : 157-203	
M, 11/2	<i>Requiem</i> : 203-274 (end) Raymond Carver: "What We Talk about When We Talk about Love"	Mid-term due on Canvas by 11:59 pm (Mid-term covers everything through <i>Scanner Darkly</i>)
W, 11/4	<i>Post Office</i> : 13-77	
M, 11/9	<i>Post Office</i> : 77-196 (end)	
Part V: End of the 20 th Century		
W, 11/11	<i>American Psycho</i> : April Fools-Tunnel (3-63)	Part IV Questions Due
M, 11/16	<i>American Psycho</i> : Office-Killing Dog (63-166)	Part IV Responses Due
W, 11/18	<i>American Psycho</i> : Girls-Nell's (166-214)	
M, 11/23	<i>American Psycho</i> : Paul Owen-Rat (214-309)	
W, 11/25	University Closed: No Class	
M, 11/30	<i>American Psycho</i> : Another Night-At Harry's (309-399, end)	Historical Significance Paper Due on Canvas by 11:59 pm
W, 12/2	Welsh: "The Acid House," "Granny's Old Junk"	Reading Quiz #3 Part V Questions Due
M, 12/7	In-class: Start watching <i>Go</i>	Part V Responses Due
W, 12/9	In-class: Finish watching <i>Go</i> Last day of class	
W, 12/16		Final exam due on Canvas by 11:59 pm (Final covers <i>Requiem-Go</i>)