ENGL 303.901: Race, Literature & Medicine - Professor Michael Collins

Race has been one of the fundamental organizing principles of post-Enlightenment Western society. It is inevitable, therefore, that ideas about race and racial differences should have affected medical concepts and medical practice. This course will use literature and selected texts from or about the history of medicine to explore some of race’s effects on medicine, medical practice, particular groups of patients, the experience of doctors from underrepresented groups, and questions of medical ethics.

ENGL 303.902: Work of World Literature - Professor Ira Dworkin

English 303 is an introduction to English Studies for English majors. In this writing-intensive class, we will become acquainted with the many different methodologies professional scholars use to read, discuss, and write about literature and other important cultural texts. What kinds of questions do we ask in the discipline of English Studies, and what approaches and tools do we use to answer those questions? Moreover, we will consider the relevance of English Studies to the wider world within which readers read and writers write. What do the questions and critical methodologies we bring to texts have to offer to the culture at large? Throughout the semester, we will practice the basic skills essential to more advanced study in English: close reading, clear writing, and the formulation of fertile, well-informed research questions.

ENGL 303.903: Art or Trash? - Professor Sally Robinson

In this section of ENGL 303, we will focus on cultural hierarchy in American culture and explore how aesthetic judgments about the relative value of different forms of cultural production always carry with them social judgments. From the cultural gatekeepers who review books and movies in publications like The New Yorker, to participants in internet chat rooms, we all tend to perpetuate the idea that there are qualitative differences between “good” books or movies and bestsellers or Hollywood blockbusters. But these apparently simple distinctions emerge from a history of struggle over who gets to define the terms of American cultural value.

ENGL 318: Utopian Literature in the English Tradition - Professor Apostolos Vasilakis

Utopia, as a literary genre, has been with us since Thomas Moore's Utopia was first published in 1516. Written as a travelogue, Moore's Utopia reveals roots of the utopian: the impulse to look over the next rise, to imagine life is better in another valley, to wish for a future where things can be better. Though the 20th and 21st century have seen a proliferation of dystopian texts that seem to dismiss the notion of a better place as no fit place at all, even dystopian texts engage with this impulse in their own obverse way. In this course, the primary focus will be on utopian, dystopian novels, and theoretical readings.

ENGL 342: The Rhetoric of Gender and Health - Professor Sara DiCaglio

How are our bodies effected by the stories we tell about them? How do these stories—these rhetorical moments—intersect with constructions of gender, and what does that intersection have to do with our larger ideas of health? This course examines the intersection of gender and health as a rhetorical object—something that is crafted and shaped through specific choices in language, writing, and other modes of discourse. We will attend to a variety of texts and moments in cultural discourse, focusing on how communication, expertise, and knowledge work in the creation of ideas about health and gender. We will also attend to how those discourses and practices—and the care they are entangled with—intersect with factors such as race, sexuality, and class.

ENGL 343: Fairy Tales in the English Tradition - Professor Elizabeth Robinson

This course will explore the history of fairy tales, largely from Europe and the United States, from their oral (traditional) roots to modern re-tellings of traditional tales. Our study will include significant European publications of traditional tales. We will also read selected tales from other countries and cultures to explore the way that these tales have been told in various cultures, how they are shaped by their cultures, and how they shape their cultures. We will also discuss the history of their reception through the centuries and explore significant historical events surrounding fairy tales. We will explore how fairy tales have been used in film by film makers such as Disney and Pixar, and in musicals by composers such as Stephen Sondheim (Into the Woods), and how the tales appear in pop culture (music, advertising, etc.). In our exploration of re-tellings, we will be especially interested in how these re-tellings often appropriate fairy tales for specific purposes.
ENGL 390: Digital Modernism - Professor Shawna Ross
This course examines both the ways in which British and American modernist writers responded to emergent digital technologies and networked communication practices and to the ways that modernist literature is perpetuated into the 21st century through the Internet by way of digital editions, viral culture, and amateur digital scholarship. A unit defining modernism precedes units on Telephony and Telegraphy; Writing Machines; Industrial Machines; Early Theories of the Internet; Digital Editions; and Viral Cultures.

ENGL 395: Topics in Literature and Medicine - Professor Mary Ann O’Farrell
Tiny Tim is only the most famous of the nineteenth century’s disabled characters, who include among them men and women who are blind, deaf, or lame; who are psychologically or cognitively afflicted; who are amputees or stutterers; or who are mysteriously “disfigured.” Our job in this class will be to think about these characters in the context of the nineteenth century’s understanding of the disabilities its literature examines. In doing this, we will explore the evident fascination of disabled bodies for British writers in the nineteenth century and consider the cultural desires and anxieties reflected in these depictions of disability. Course readings and discussions will also lead us to consider the ways these representations of disability interact with the lived experiences of disabled men and women in the nineteenth century and in our own time.

ENGL 481.901/905: Chicano Literature – Professor Juan Alonzo
Examines Chicano literature after the Chicano Movement (mid-1980s), particularly emergent themes and styles of expression. Not limited to traditional texts (novels, poetry); includes multi-disciplinary art forms, such as theatre, graphic novels, and film and television.

ENGL 481.902: Utopia & Dystopia – Professor Donald Dickson
This seminar will study works describing an ideal commonwealth or “utopia” in the pre-industrial world of early modern Europe (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) and the post-industrial world (nineteenth and twentieth centuries). We will also examine the intellectual frameworks (provided by Plato and Marx) of these works and their historical contexts: some of these ideal worlds are feminist; some are based on religious models; some are totalitarian. In addition, we will look at several “dystopias.” One of the overarching issues we will address is the tension between the individual and the community in each utopia—that is, how much must the individual surrender for the “good” of the community.

ENGL 481.904: Early Cinema - Professor David McWhirter
Focused on films dating from the origin of motion pictures in the late nineteenth century to the end of the silent period (roughly 1930), this course will examine the ways in which early cinematic productions simultaneously symptomatize, thematize, and shape modern culture and society. The rapid emergence of the movies as the dominant medium of the twentieth century is in part a reflection of the medium’s entanglement with the rapid historical, social and technological developments that shaped modernity. Cinema, for example, was both an example and a reflection of a historical moment marked by the rise of multiple new technologies. The movies are closely tied to the increasing urbanization of ordinary lives, to the new experiences of time and space that big cities imposed on human subjects; indeed the movies helped make new forms of experience possible, helped structure new forms of distraction, attention, and consciousness – new ways of seeing and being in a newly structured or (some felt) fragmented world.

ENGL 481.906: Dickens and Dickensian - Professor Mary Ann O’Farrell
This class will take as its subject the popularity of Dickens. If the Victorians loved Dickens’s novels, as they manifestly did, what was it they loved, and what does their love tell us about them? What does our culture’s continuing attachment to the idea of Dickens say about us? Thinking about orphans, Christmas, disability, sentimentality, romance, destitution, bodies, disease, and death, we will also talk about the role of illustration and serial publication in the history of the novel, about majority and minority of character, about the nineteenth century’s interest in the idea of realism, and about Dickens’s capacity for visualization: what people mean when they suggest, as some do, that Dickens invented the movies. Some part of our attention will turn to the ways our culture continues to refer to Dickens and to what we mean to say when we describe something as Dickensian.
'Twas All Hallows Eve and all through the hamlets, every creature was stirring, even the spirits.

Those who wished not to die in a horrible way were in their cellars, doors locked, praying the night would not stay.

The tavern was empty; all had gone home, as the barkeep cleaned up, he heard the wind moan.

With a horrible crash the front door burst open, and a stranger appeared; his cloak dripping with substance unspoken.

The man was tall, hooded, and scary. He shook his head and spoke, “I’m not here for the whiskey.”

“I’ve come here this night with an agenda you see, someone’s looking for you and they sent me.”

The barkeep was stunned, said, “You’ve got it all wrong.” The man’s laugh was a scythe as he shut the door strong.

“I can’t be your man, I’ve paid all my debts, they took everything, I’ve got nothing left.”

The man in black grinned, that’s what he was hoping to hear, he loved to explain when his master was near.

“I’ve got the right man, your debts are not cleared, you’ve got just one left, and that’s why I am here.”

The barkeep’s heart radiated despair, a melodious symphony to the hooded man’s ear.

“You’ve a debt that cannot be paid off in gold, you’ve committed an atrocity, all we want is your soul.”

The man threw off his hood and the barkeep screamed, for underneath was a terror he couldn’t have dreamed.

The man in all black was nothing but bone; he had no hair, lacked flesh, and was missing his soul.

On this night, the devil grew near and collected his fees, his servant formidable and strengthened with greed.

The barkeep was evil, down to his core, his soul was tarnished and broken and despicably poor.

The barkeep would find his own special Hell, this All Hallows Eve he would pay for his deeds, yet it would not be enough for him to just bleed.

The barkeep had sinned far past reconciliation, his soul certainly destined for eternal damnation.

Some dark deeds even the devil won’t allow, the village girls will not fear the barkeep now.

The barkeep will die, his soul’s torture imminent, because Hell punishes those who lay hands on the innocent.
Deer Diary!
Today me and Mommy are going on a trip! I am so excited to go because we NEVER get to go on trips! Mommy always says we don't have money to go on trips but now we are but I don't know why? Maybe it's because my birthday is coming in a few days? That must be it. Mommy hasn't told me why though so I better keep it a secret. I can trust you though.

Deer Diary.
Mommy and me were driving for a long time before we stopped at a hotel. We never get to go to hotels so this is really exciting! I don't know how far this surprise is but I'm even more excited now! I asked Mommy about my birthday and she said we would not have a cake because of the trip! Mommy is great at keeping secrets but I know I just wish Daddy could have come.

Deer Diary-
I heard Mommy crying last night but when I asked her what was wrong she said she wasn't crying. Why is she sad? Are we not getting to my surprise on time? I tried to hug her but she wouldn't let me. I should tell her that I will love her even if I don't get a surprise. We stayed another night in the hotel and she said we might be staying for a while.

Deer Diary.
Mommy won't let me come in the room so I'm sitting this outside. The maid lady came by and gave me a mint and asked me if I couldn't get in my room but I said it was fine and that my Mommy wanted to be alone for a while. If I press my ear real hard against the door I can hear Mommy talking to someone but I can only hear a couple words. I think I heard she and Daddys name and my name but I wasn't sure. I wish Daddy could be here for the surprise but we left so fast he must not have known we left! It's cold out here.

Deer Diary.
Me and Mommy left the hotel today but Mommy isn't looking very good. Her face is milky and her hair is tangled and her clothes are ruffled. But I know Mommy likes to look beautiful for me so she must be in one of her bad moods. Daddy always said to be real nice to Mommy if she was in a bad mood but how can I be nice if she won't talk to me? I can always talk to you diary.

Deer Diary!
Mommy and me finally got to the surprise! It may be a few days after my birthday but I don't mind. I told Mommy that she just kept looking at the ocean and breathing real hard. We ate some apples and punch for lunch and Mommy told me to take a nap in the car while she made a call but I'm writing in you instead! Mommy will be so happy that I kept you so we talk about this when I'm older. I think Mommys done with her call and she's getting in the car. I'm gonna pretend to sleep and hopefully well go somewhere fun after! I'm sleepy now. Good night diary.

This diary was found in the backseat of a red Chevrolet Malibu at the bottom of Wakano bay alongside the bodies of Janine and Alice Carlyle. This is currently serving as evidence in the murder of Franklin Carlyle by his wife Janine.

EXIT DOCUMENT
1. Read What You Write
Because the desired effect of horror fiction is so specific, gaining an understanding of how the genre works is critical to writing an effective horror story. Reading the work of other horror fiction authors will help give you an idea of which writing strategies—for example, point-of-view, characterization, structure, etc.—make for a terrific horror story. That said, there's no one right way to write horror fiction. For that reason, you'll want to read pieces from a variety of different authors, time periods, and sub-genres (e.g. sci-fi horror, paranormal horror, existential horror) to determine which elements to include in your own writing. Here are a few examples of popular horror stories and authors to get you started: "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" by Washington Irving, "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe, "The Outsider" by H.P. Lovecraft, "I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream" by Harlan Ellison, and authors Stephen King, Neil Gaiman, Joyce Carol Oates, and Ramsey Campbell.

2. What's Your Fear?
Horror is subjective; it's possible that what one reader finds terrifying might be entirely lost on another. Allowing your own fear to come across in your writing is what's going to make your story most realistic, and make it resonate with the most people. That's not to say that supernatural, mystical, or grotesque elements in your writing should be abandoned in favor of realism, but if readers can't imagine or relate to the situation you're describing, your story won't yield its intended effect. Draw inspiration from what truly frightens you or take an ordinary scenario and twist it into something horrifying. Allow that to do the bulk of your story's work.

3. Create Extreme Emotions
The ultimate goal of your horror story will be to evoke fear in your reader. However, fear may take many forms, including dread, shock, revulsion, or paranoia. Understanding subtle differences between these forms of fear will make it much easier to produce them in your reader. Dread might involve creating the unshakable sense that terrible things are about to happen; to shock your readers, you might make sudden and extreme revelations apparent in a dramatic turn of events or horrifying image. Don't underestimate the efficacy of the gross-out factor in unnerving your reader; play on his or her instinctive fear of bodily harm or mutilation. Elicit doubt in your reader by making them question characters, surroundings, your narrator, or even their own perception of the world. Make your strategies emotionally impactful.

4. Use Strong Descriptive Tone & Language
One might say the "show, don't tell" rule is even more important in writing horror fiction than in other genres. As a horror fiction author, you won't necessarily be calling on your reader to analyze or interpret the story for it to produce fear but, rather, on your reader's immediate, primal reaction to what's on the page. That means that descriptions of settings, characters, and movements should all be infused with a sense of danger, darkness, or eeriness. Fear should follow naturally in your reader.

5. Keep Your Characters, & Your Reader, in the Dark
Have you ever found that, by explaining the punchline to a joke, you've actually undermined its effect? The same principle applies to horror. A story will only work if certain details are left unknown to the reader—an abandoned house with no dark corners or locked doors leaves nothing to be feared or discovered, which will work against you as you try to incite dread in your reader.

6. Create Characters That The Reader Cares About
Like others on this list, this piece of advice does not apply only to the horror fiction genre. Any character you write should appeal to your reader on some level. But this rings especially true in horror, mainly because your reader won't experience dread, shock, or anxiety if they don't care that bad things are happening to your characters. Your reader must have at least some desire for your characters to overcome the threat or challenge they might be facing, or else nothing in your story will be at stake. Force your reader to invest in your characters—even evil characters—by providing realistic and intriguing backstories, motivations, and quirks and allowing your readers to suffer when your characters do.

7. Set Clear, Extreme Stakes
Make sure your reader knows what characters have to lose. Is it their lives? Their sanity? Their humanity itself? If your readers don't understand the consequences of a situation, it's unlikely they're going to experience any unease reading your story. And while stakes should be high, remember that there are fates worse than death. Get creative when brainstorming consequences for characters, and remember that the worst thing that can happen to one is not necessarily the worst thing that can happen to another.

8. Humor & Moments of Relief
Horror tends to lose its effect when it is unrelenting. Imagine a roller coaster with only drops and turns: no pauses, no buildup, no suspense. You wouldn't leave that experience feeling much of anything other than exhausted. Leave room for moments of anticipation, hope, or catharsis after a horrific turn of events to keep your reader engaged and guessing. Allow him or her to relax, even if that means nothing in your story is physically happening. The contrast that these moments of relative calm will create is what's going to make the rest of your story so terrifying.

9. Read Your Story Out Loud
First and foremost, reading your writing out loud will help you evaluate its overall flow. Identify areas where you might need to slow the plot down or add action. Reading your story out loud—ideally in front of someone else—will especially allow you to determine if your dialogue is believable. If something sounds strange when you say it out loud, it's likely that it can be revised to be more effective. Find a few pairs of ears to sample your story, and get to editing.
• Be sure to check Howdy for your assigned registration time and date.
• Check for holds in Howdy that may block your registration and get them cleared as soon as possible.
  ◦ All students who are U2, U3, & U4 must submit their annual degree planner.
  ◦ All new students (everyone enrolled in ENGL 303) must attend a mandatory advising session.
  ◦ All students must complete the online Title IX training.
• We will not be filling out new degree plans for students during preregistration advising sessions. You must bring an updated copy of your degree plan with you to be advised.
• If you plan to graduate in May or August 2020, we strongly recommend that you come in for advising before registration and check with us after registration to make sure you will clear for graduation. Please do not assume you will clear your evaluation!
Science Fiction and Fantasy Creative Writing Contest

Attention All Undergraduate Texas A&M Students

Join us in our quest to discover the winner of the written word.

Submit up to 3000 words by **February 11, 2020** for a chance to perform at a public reading and win cash prizes!

We accept all forms of speculative fiction.


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