

Narratives and Narratology T / Th, 2-3:15 / Mod Lang 413

Professor Eric Hayot
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Office hours: T/Th 9:30-11 and by appointment
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Texts:

Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (1972)
Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot* (1984)
Wallace Martin, *Recent Theories of Narrative* (1987)
Mieke Bal, *Narratology* (1985; new ed. 1997)
Janet Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck* (1997)
Mark Turner, *A Literary Mind* (1998)

Jeanette Winterson, *Sexing the Cherry*
Fernando Pessoa, *The Book of Disquiet*
Michael Joyce, *Afternoon*

Also, we will be using these three texts as touchstones for our discussion:

Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way*
Orson Welles, dir., *Citizen Kane*
Infogrames, *Civilization 3*

In addition to these books, we will have two readings on e-reserve, and one available online.

Course description:

Does the meaning of a story depend on how one tells it? Do physical forms of narration (paper, voice, screen) affect how, or what, a story means? Is there a grammar of narrative, and if so, what does it look like? This course aims to answer those questions by looking at the history of the discipline known as "narratology," tracing it from its early-ish beginnings with structuralism through to its later manifestations in the field of cyber-literature and cognitive science. We will take the different objects of our narratological analysis, from Proust to Welles to the computer game *Civilization 3* to the structure of the human mind, and rub them against the grain of the theories we read, so that the media can frustrate or extend, as it were, the narrative theories we read. When, in a final gesture of self-reflexive fun, we turn our narrative eyes to the narrative theory itself, we will consider "theory" as yet another iteration of narrative possibility, one that may or may not, in the cases of the texts we read, practice what it preaches.

Assignments and grading:

Weekly one-page short essays due on Thursdays (50 percent), plus a 5-8 page paper (20 percent), plus a 10-15 page paper (30 percent).

Lateness and absences:

You get two classes off free. The third absence costs you 5 percent of the final grade, the fourth another 5 percent; five absences gets you a D, and six absences an F. There are no excused absences unless you need to represent the university in some official way (as an athlete, for instance) or it is a religious holiday for you. Also, don't be late to class.

I don't accept late work unless you talk about it with me in advance. Unexcused late work will receive a grade of 0. If you are not in class when something is due (or when we take an exam), you will receive a grade of 0.

Plagiarism and academic honesty:

If you use someone else's ideas, whether through direct quotation or paraphrase, you need to say so. Use parenthetical references and a works cited list (as explained in the *MLA Style Guide*, available in the library or at the bookstore) to credit your sources. I expect you to abide by the university's code of academic integrity.

Daily syllabus. Have everything read *before* coming to class.

August 26 / 28

Genette, 7-32

Thursday evening *Citizen Kane* is showing downtown at La Placita.

Sept 2 / 4

Genette, 33-112

Genette, 113-161

Sept 9 / 11

Genette, 161-268

Brooks, 3-112

Sept 15 / 17 (no class)

Brooks, 113-237

Sept 23 / 25 (no class)

Brooks, 238-324

Sept 30 / Oct 2

Winterson, *Sexing the Cherry*

Oct 7 / 9

Martin, 7-106

Martin, 107-190

First paper due Oct 7

Oct 14 / 16

Bal, ix-113

Bal, 114-174

Oct 21 / 23

Bal, 175-225; also read Bordwell and Thompson, 89-127 (on e-reserve)

Pessoa, *Book of Disquiet*, introduction-85.

Oct 28 / 30

Pessoa, *Book of Disquiet*, 85-end.
Murray, 1-86.

Nov 4 / 6
Murray, 87-213
Murray, 214-250

Nov 11 / 13
Murray, 251-284
Michael Joyce, *Afternoon*

Nov 18 / 20
Joyce, *Afternoon*
Aarseth, *Cybertext*, 1-23 (on e-reserve) (please have played *Civilization 3* by now as we will be discussing it in class on Nov. 20 and Nov. 25).

Nov 25 / (Thanksgiving)
Jesper Juul, "Computers Telling Stories?" (<http://www.gamestudies.org/0101/juul-gts/>)
Bo Kampmann Walther, "Playing and Gaming" (<http://www.gamestudies.org/0301/walther/>)

Dec 2 / 4
Turner, 3-168

Dec 9
debriefing
final paper due around Dec. 15