Reading, Watching, Listening – An Introduction to Fiction & Poetry
Course Number: CRWRI-UA.815.006
When: TR: 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM
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Reading, Watching, Listening
In this course we’ll analyze written works that have transcended the page: poetry, books, short stories, and a memoir that were made into movies and songs—and let’s throw in some stage time, too, with stand-up comedy. Reading allows you to live words in your own way as you turn the page, while via watching and listening you take in specific interpretations of words. Through this well-rounded art intersection and exploration, you’ll become familiar with various creative writing elements: context, rhythm, repetition, narrative, scene, characters, dialogue, and more. Also, many cracks at writing will be made here. By you.

Objective
Fun. What’s the point, otherwise? Through equal parts craft and workshop, we’ll figure out and cultivate your creative strengths through experimentation and discover the art forms that await your words.

Atmosphere
Everyone must feel safe to share and discuss their observations, so no personal attacks against another peer are allowed. We’ll be freely exchanging ideas without fear; fear is the ultimate enemy of creativity.

Attendance
Writing is about showing up. But you’re allowed two absences, because the common cold is common, we love our families, life. After that point, if you miss a class, you’ll see one full letter grade tumble off your final grade.

Reading
Why are the greats the greats? Reading in this course is enveloped in a concept called craft—how great writing is written. All material will be given to you either in class or via e-mail. Please bring printed copies to class. Each week you’ll submit three lines you found interesting from the reading and write two to three sentences as to why the sentences engaged you so.

Writing
Writing in this course is enveloped in a concept called workshop. You’ll submit your words for your peers to workshop, which is to say they’ll note where they laughed, where they cried, where they think you should perhaps not write the day after partying. Bring a copy for everyone the week before you’re to be workshopped. We’ll work out a submission schedule, and length will be ten (10) pages max for fiction and two (2) pages for poems.
Submissions
Your print-outs should be 12-point font in Times New Roman, single-spaced (not the norm), and page numbers included.

Critiques
You’ll learn how to provide constructive feedback. As a starting point, you should read each piece two times: first as a reader and the second time as a writer.

Class Participation
Get ready to share cogent thoughts about what you’ve read, seen, and heard. You’ll be expected to contribute and often.

Expression & Wellness
You’re encouraged to write everything and anything you imagine, and oftentimes this process is cathartic and we go dark. This is part of the human condition; however, darkness can also reveal warning signs regarding a person’s mental health. Work that features depression, suicide, or dangerous threats will be immediately addressed. Please send an upfront e-mail if dark material is coming our way, explaining your creative approach and state of mind. The NYU Wellness Exchange Hotline can be reached 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at (212) 443-9999.

Technology
We’re going to dial it back to another, arguably more solid century. No laptops, phones, and tablets are allowed. Bring a notebook to write like they did in the olden days.

Food
Sure. But loud chewing…never met a fan. Also: sharing is caring.

Final Portfolio
You’ll submit a portfolio comprised of revised versions of your work completed throughout the semester: one (1) revised poem, one (1) revised short story, one (1) writing prompt from homework or class.

Office Hours
By appointment. Please e-mail to arrange.

Plagiarism
Mom’s policy on cheating is probably the same as New York University’s, except New York University will probably expel you while Mom will just be disappointed in you for life.

Grades
Your Writing Submissions (40%)
Critiques & Participation (30%)
Attendance (10%)
Final Portfolio (20%)

**Reading, Watching, Listening List** (subject to change)

**Novel Excerpts, A Memoir & Short Stories – Movies**

*Jesus’ Son* / Denis Johnson – *Jesus’ Son* (1999) / Dir: Alison Maclean

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*Ripley’s Game* / Patricia Highsmith - *Der amerikanische Freund (The American Friend)* / Dir: Wim Wenders
*Push* / Ramona Lofton (Sapphire) – *Precious* (2009) / Dir: Lee Daniels
“Killings” / Andre Dubus – *In the Bedroom* (2001) / Dir: Todd Field
“The Killers” / Ernest Hemingway – *The Killers* (1964) / Dir: Don Siegel

*Double Indemnity* / James M. Cain – *Double Indemnity* (1944) / Dir: Billy Wilder
“Beware of the Dog” / Roald Dahl – *36 Hours* (1964) / Dir: George Seaton
*Orlando* / Virginia Woolf – *Orlando* (1992) / Dir: Sally Potter
*Short Cuts* / Raymond Carver – *Short Cuts* (1993) / Dir: Robert Altman
*Tender Is the Night* / F. Scott Fitzgerald – *Tender Is the Night* (1962) / Dir: Henry King
“Rashōmon” / “In a Grove” / Ryūnosuke Akutagawa – *Rashōmon* (1950) / Dir: Akira Kurosawa

**Lyrics & Poetry**

Bob Dylan
John Lennon
Syd Barrett
Stevie Nicks
David Bowie
Marvin Gaye
Joni Mitchell
Common
Jim Morrison
Zack de la Rocha / Rage Against the Machine
Josh Bell
Ocean Vuong
Ada Limón
Ross Gay
Gwendolyn Brooks
Anne Carson
Claudia Rankine
Zachary Schomburg
Raymond Carver
Denis Johnson

**Inspired-By Songs**

*Diamond Dogs* – David Bowie – 1984, George Orwell
“Animal in Man” – Dead Prez – *Animal Farm*, George Orwell
“Pigs (Three Different Ones)” – Pink Floyd – *Animal Farm*, George Orwell
“Banana Co.” – Radiohead – *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Gabriel García Márquez
“The Drowning Man” – The Cure – *Gormenghast*, Mervyn Peake
“Charlotte Sometimes” – The Cure – Penelope Farmer’s 1969 novel of the same name
“End of the Night” – The Doors – *Journey to the End of the Night*, Louis-Ferdinand Céline
“No Love Lost” – Joy Division – *The House of Dolls*, Yehiel De-Nur (Ka-Tsetnik 135633)
“Ol’ Evil Eye” – Insane Clown Posse – *The Tell-Tale Hearts*, Edgar Allan Poe
*The Raven* – Lou Reed – Edgar Allan Poe’s short stories and poems
“Pattern Recognition” – Sonic Youth – William Gibson’s 2003 novel of the same name
“Scentless Apprentice” – Nirvana – *Perfume*, Patrick Süskind
“Sympathy for the Devil” – The Rolling Stones – *The Master and Margarita*, Mikhail Bulgakov
“Tales of Brave Ulysses” – Cream – *The Odyssey*, Homer
“Venus in Furs” – The Velvet Underground – Leopold von Sacher-Masoch’s 1870 novel of the same name

**Stand-Up Comedians**

Phyllis Diller
Richard Pryor
George Carlin
Bill Hicks