

Introduction to Fiction and Poetry
Section CRWRI-UA 815.024
Instructor: Prof. Daniel Antoszyk
Meeting Time: Spring Semester 2019, Mon/Wed: 2 PM - 3:15 PM
Classroom:
Office Hours: By email appointment & TBD
Email: da1879@nyu.edu

PROVISIONAL SYLLABUS

The Basics

First things first: Your grade will start out as an “A” and remain an “A” as long as you show up, show effort, and show respect. With that said, expectations regarding attendance, effort, and respect will be high. In the words of bell hooks: “Do not mistake lack of formality for lack of seriousness.”

Our focus will be on both the craft of writing and the practice of workshopping your own creative output. You can expect weekly reading assignments, informal verbal reports, and to have your poems and stories carefully read by myself and your peers. This will be an exhilarating, nerve-wracking, and totally worthwhile experience.

Writers and thinkers we will read and discuss include:

Kaveh Akbar, June Jordan, Terrance Hayes, Rebecca Solnit, Lorrie Moore, Tayeb Salih, Mahogany L. Browne, Caridad De La Luz (AKA La Bruja), M.F.K Fisher, Danielle Dutton, Chen Chen, Maggie Nelson, Claudia Rankine, Renee Gladwell, Robert Walser, Richard Simic, Elizabeth Bishop, Nick Laird, Zadie Smith, Elfriede Jelinek, László Krasznahorkai, Fran Ross, Eimear McBride, Clarice Lispector, Seamus Heaney, Richard Brautigan, David Foster Wallace, Mary Karr, William Butler Yeats, and the list goes on. Your own input as a student will also be highly valued.

If you are still unsure if this class is for you, check to see if you meet any 5 of these 7 criteria:

- You have no experience writing
- You have some experience writing
- You have lots of experience writing
- You want to be an active member of a supportive and progressive writing community
- You like to read, think, and ask questions
- You are interested in the intersection between art, politics, and identity
- You want to challenge yourself

Did you get to 5?

Materials

Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief (3rd Edition) by David Starkey

The Policies

On Taking Care of YOU:

Your health comes first. Please take your physical and mental wellness seriously. NYU offers *FREE* services to support you, including the Wellness Exchange: **The Wellness Exchange is your key to accessing the University's extensive health and mental health resources designed to address your needs.** You can call a private hotline (212-443-9999), available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, which will put you in touch with a professional who can help to address day-to-day challenges as well as other health-related concerns. These might include: medical issues, academic stress, depression, sexual assault, anxiety, alcohol and other drug dependence, sexually transmitted infections, eating disorders. . . The hotline is also available if you just need to talk or want to express concern about a friend. You can also stop by the center in person at 726 Broadway or message them at wellness.exchange@nyu.edu

On Difficult Material in Class:

(In Your Work)

As this is a fiction & poetry course, unless there is specific and explicit evidence to suggest otherwise, we will assume all speakers, characters, and events in your submitted creative writing pieces are fictional. Intense themes such as murder, suicide, violence, rape, etc. are sometimes addressed in our writing and that is okay. However, if I am concerned I will reach out to you via email to check in. If I am still concerned, or I don't hear back from you, I will reach out on your behalf to the Wellness Center and/or your advisor. This will only be done with the utmost respect and privacy and only out my concern for your health and safety. If you are struggling, please feel safe to reach out to me and I can help guide you to the available resources.

(In Assigned Readings and/or Class Discussions)

Tough subjects will come up. Racism, misogyny, homophobia, and other painful types of hate are real and hard to face. These are themes that will come up in some of our readings and discussions. I will do my best to give you a heads up with regards to these themes in assigned readings, but may not be able to anticipate how a discussion will go. We're in this together and we will work to build trust as the semester progresses.

On Plagiarism:

Don't do it. We will discuss this in class. If you are ever confused come talk to me.

On Attendance:

Communicate with me. I operate under the assumption that everyone wants to come to class every day. If something comes up, let me know. If I don't hear from you I will be very concerned and will attempt to get in touch. Even if I do hear from you, I will be concerned. But don't worry! Someone in class will be assigned to take notes for you and I will find a time for us to meet during office hours so we can make up material if necessary. Of course, if I feel like you are taking advantage of our classroom community by not showing up or by repeated tardiness I will have to reflect that in your grade.

On Participation:

Communicate with me. I assume that everyone wants to be prepared and participate in class. It is especially crucial in a creative writing class for everyone to bring their knowledge and opinions to the table. If you come to class unprepared and/or do not participate (i.e. you didn't do the reading or you do not engage in class), I will be very concerned and ask you in private if you are doing okay. If I feel like you are taking advantage of the classroom community it will negatively impact your grade.

On Electronic Devices:

No phones, no iPads, no Kindles, etc unless they are necessary for your learning. This class depends on each of us engaging with the readings, our writing, and each other. That won't happen if we have screens between us. On a related note, it is required that you have hard copies of all of our assigned readings/fellow writers' writings as part of workshop assignments and to develop your close reading abilities. Electronic versions are not acceptable for our purposes.

Conferences: I highly suggest you stop by office hours at least once during the semester. It can be simply to say hello, or it could be for a one on one discussion about your work, or for any other reason! There will be "office afternoons" throughout the semester, and I will be available via email to schedule meetings. Keep in mind that the last weeks of class are often a popular time so don't wait until then as I may not be able to accommodate you.

Grades:

40% Attendance & completion of assignments
40% In-class participation and communication with me
20% Final Portfolio and Project

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Bullet points indicate assignments **due the following class.**

Week 1: Welcome

Monday, January 28th: Syllabus & Questions

- David Starkey, "A Few Things You Should Know About Creative Writing"
- David Starkey: Bio
- Writer's Inventory
- Our class story

Wednesday, January 30th: Workshop Etiquette & Questions

- Rebecca Solnit, LitHub: "Women's Work and the Myth of the Art Monster"
- Lorrie Moore: "How to Become a Writer Or, Have You Earned This Cliche?"
- Poetry Terms Student Report
- The New Yorker Fiction Podcast: Kaveh Akbar Reads Ellen Bryant Voigt

Week 2: How to Read Poetry

Monday, February 4th

- Poetry Forms Student Report
- William Butler Yeats: "The Lake Isle of Innisfree"
- June Jordan: "Song of the Law Abiding Citizen"
- Terrance Hayes: "I Lock You in an American Sonnet. . ."
- June Jordan: Bonus Essay!

Wednesday, February 6th

- Pick a form, any form (2). . .
- Poetry in music - find and share
- The New Yorker Fiction Podcast: Nick Laird Reads Elizabeth Bishop
- David Starkey, "Writing Poetry"

Week 3: Slam and Beyond

Monday, February 11th

- Mahogany L. Browne "Pizzly"
- Caridad De La Luz aka La Bruja: "Nuyorico"
- Tyehimba Jess TBD
- John Trudell TBD
- Hedwig Gorski TBD

Wednesday, February 13th

(Poetry Workshop Group 1)

- Zusha Elison: "Slam Poetry is Not Art"
- Jeremy Richards: "Performing the Academy"

- Jesse Lichtenstein: “How Poetry Came to Matter Again”
- New Yorker Poetry Podcast: Mary Karr reads Terrance Hayes

Week 4: Poetry and Prose

Monday, February 18th NO CLASS SCHEDULED

Wednesday, February 20th

(Poetry Workshop Group 2)

- Danielle Dutton
- Maggie Nelson
- Claudia Rankine
- David Starkey “Prose Poem”

Week 5: Exploding Form

Monday, February 25th

- Layli Long Soldier
- Renee Gladman
- “Publishing ASL Poetry”

Wednesday, February 27th

(Poetry Workshop Group 3)

- William Carlos Williams
- John Ashbery
- Charles Simic
- Robert Lowell
- Theodore Roethke
- Seamus Heaney
- Patrick Kavanaugh
- John Donne
- Philip Larkin

Week 6: Exploding Form Cont.

Monday, March 4th

- Translating poetry

Wednesday, March 7th

(Poetry Workshop Group 4)

- Prepare an oral story

Week 7: Storytelling

Monday, March 11th

- Writing exercise
- Artists we hate to love

- “What Do We Do With the Art of Monstrous Men?”

Wednesday, March 13th

- Imitation exercise
- M.F.K Fisher: Selection from *A Cordial Water*
- R.K. Narayan: *Ramayana* Prologue and Chapter 1
- Tayeb Salih: *Doum Tree of Wad Hamid*
- Selma Lagerlöf: *The Löwensköld Ring* Chapter 1 and 2
- Jenny Curl: “Remaking the World”
- Richard Brautigan “The Kool-Aid Wino”
- New Yorker Fiction Podcast: Mohsin Hamid reads Borges “Book of Sand”

SPRING BREAK

Week 8: Flash Fiction

Monday, March 27th

- David Starkey: 102-114 on Fiction
- David Foster Wallace: “Incarnations”

Wednesday, March 29th

(Fiction Group 1)

- Zadie Smith “That Crafty Feeling”
- The Guardian: “Ten Rules for Writing Fiction”

Week 9 The Rules of Writing

Monday, April 1st

- New Yorker Fiction Podcast: Wildcard

Wednesday, April 3rd

(Fiction Workshop Group 2)

- László Krasznahorkai
- Elfriede Jelinek
- Felipe Alfau
- Robert Walser

Week 10: Breaking the Rules

Monday, April 8th

- Fran Ross
- Eimear McBride
- Clarice Lispector

Wednesday, April 10th

(Fiction Workshop Group 3)

- Lindsey Ellis on Romance, Science Fiction, Fantasy, YA, and *Twilight*
- Stephanie Burt: “The Promise and Potential of Fan Fiction”

Week 11: “Genre”

Monday, April 15th

- Nalo Hopkinson: “Something to Hitch Meat To”
- J.G. Ballard: “The Terminal Beach”
- Robert Sheckley: TBD

Wednesday, April 17th

(Fiction Workshop Group 4)

- Benjamin Bagby: *Beowulf*
- Poems: TBD
- New Yorker Fiction Podcast: Michael Andreasen “The King’s Teacup at Rest”
- Write Your FanFic/Sci Fi/Fantasy/Romance (Fiction or Poetry)
- Michael Chabon: “A Model World”

Week 12: Crafty Tips and Clever Tricks

Monday, April 22nd

- N/A

Wednesday, April 25th

(Workshop Group 1)

- Team Project
- Heather Sellers on Revision

Week 13: Revision

Monday, April 29th

- Team Project & Portfolio

Wednesday, May 1st

(Workshop Group 2)

- Heather Sellers on the writing life

Week 14: The Writing Life

Monday, May 6th

- Portfolio

Wednesday, May 8th

(Workshop Group 3)

- Portfolio

Week 15: FINAL CLASS: YOUR PORTFOLIO & ESSAY RESPONSE IS DUE

Monday, May 13th