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Office: Palmer 319  
 Office Hours: MWF 12:30-2:00  
 and by appointment

Advanced Fiction Writing ENG 301  
 Tuesday and Thursday 11:00-12:15: Palmer 211  
*Nine Stories*, J. D. Salinger  
*The Stories of John Cheever*, John Cheever  
*A Blind Man Can See How Much I Love You*, Amy Bloom  
*Where I'm Calling From*, Raymond Carver  
*The Collected Stories of Amy Hempel*, Amy Hempel  
**Assignments**

Jan	10	Intro	14	<i>Workshop, Group 4, Story 1</i>
	15	Cheever, "Goodbye, My Brother," "The Enormous Radio," "Torch Song," "The Day the Pig Fell Into the Well"	19	Salinger, "A Perfect Day for Bananafish," "Uncle Wiggily in Connecticut," "Just Before the War with the Eskimos"
	17	Cheever "The Five Forty Eight" "The Housebreaker of Shady Hill," "The Wrysons," "The Worm in the Apple" "The Country Husband"	21	<i>Workshop, Group 1, Story 2</i>
	22	Cheever, "The Brigadier and the Gold Widow," "A Vision of the World," "Metamorphosis" "The Geometry of Love," "The Swimmer"	26	Salinger, "The Laughing Man," "Down at the Dinghy," "For Esme—with Love and Squalor"
			28	<i>Workshop, Group 2, Story 2</i>
			March 1	<b>NARRATIVE # 2</b>
			4-6	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
	24	<i>Workshop, Group 1, Story 1</i>	11	Salinger, "Pretty Mouth and Green Eyes," "De Daumier-Smith's Blue Period," "Teddy"
	29	Carver, "Bicycles, Muscles, Cigarettes," "Fat," "Are These Actual Miles?" "Gazebo," "Why Don't You Dance?"	13	<i>Workshop, Group 3, Story 2</i>
	31	<i>Workshop, Group 2, Story</i>	18	Hempel, TBA
Feb	1	<b>NARRATIVE #1</b> ( <i>Group 3 due on Feb. 8</i> )	20	<b>EASTER BREAK</b>
			25	Hempel, TBA
			27	<i>Workshop, Group 4, Story 2</i>
			28	<b>NARRATIVE #3</b>
Feb	5	Carver, "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love?" "So Much Water So Close to Home," "Vitamins," "Where I'm Calling From"	April 1	Hempel, TBA
			3	<i>Workshop, Group 1, Story 3</i>
	7	<i>Workshop, Group 3, Story</i>	8	Bloom, pp. 1-74
			10	<i>Workshop, Group 2, Story 3</i>
	12	Carver, "Feathers," "Cathedral" "A Small Good Thing" "Elephant"	15	Bloom, pp. 75-end
			17	<i>Workshop, Group 3, Story 3</i>
			22	<i>Workshop, Group 4, Story 3</i>

**English 311 Policies**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** In this class we will read, discuss, write, and revise **literary short fiction**. Literary fiction discloses truths about human experience in a moving and artful way. It strives for seamless mimesis while simultaneously making resourceful and aesthetically sound use of all the various aspects story telling, including language, point of view, plot, character, setting, metaphor, symbolism and tone. In short, you will endeavor to write *literature*. For the purposes of the class, you cannot write genre fiction—that is, fantasy, science fiction, mystery, children’s fiction, young adult fiction, and so on.

**WRITING LOAD:** Each of you will write and revise three (3) complete short stories during the course of this semester. Each story *submitted for discussion* must consist of *at least* 8 double-spaced pages and should be complete, with a worked out ending—even a bad one. (Coming up with better endings is one of the things workshop is for.) **I will not accept any story shorter than 8 double-spaced pages.** If you are working on a novel or a novella, you may submit installments, yet these, too, must consist of self-contained units (i.e., “chapters” or “parts”). At the end of the semester, you will gather these revised stories into a portfolio, which you will submit to me for final evaluation. While there is no page limit on the *total* number of pages you write, there is a minimum requirement of 25 typewritten, double-spaced pages. I reserve the right to withdraw stories submitted for workshop that display egregious spelling, mechanical, and/or punctuation errors. Your *final portfolio grade* will be docked a *full letter grade* for each story that I elect not to include in a workshop packet.

Everyone will also write three (3) two-to-four page narratives, either a complete "short-short" or self-contained episode from some story that might or might not someday exist. The narratives work as follows:

**Narrative #1 [Feb. 1]:** Write a one-to-two page introduction to a story about a divorce in a narrative voice, either in the first or the third person, directly reminiscent of Cheever’s. You can pay homage to Cheever’s style or parody it, but the key is to capture the tone, the rolling Fitzgeraldian diction, the wry irony, the milieu, and so on. Then, in a second one-two-page opening, retell roughly the same set of events in a voice, again either in the first or the third person, reminiscent of Carver’s, again paying attention to Carver’s particular diction, his characteristic settings, and so on. Obviously, the two characters functioning as your protagonists should reflect the socio-economic backgrounds pertinent to the respective authors you are invoking, but you can play with the similarities and differences however you wish—or find artistically and sociologically interesting.

**Narrative #2 [March 1]:** Using the third-person objective point of view in the present tense, write a 3-5 page episode cast entirely in dialogue in which two lovers engage in a civilized but still intense argument in the course of which person one either discovers something about the other that he/she didn’t know and which causes a change of heart, or inadvertently reveals something about him/herself that causes a reevaluation of the terms of the argument. Use no quotation marks to distinguish between text and speech, and keep expository prose down to no more than a sentence or two per paragraph.

**Narrative #3 [March 28]:** Write a 3-5 page piece (or “short short”) that exhibits all the primary components of narrative art—point of view, character, narrative, conflict, resolution—but which has been cast in one of the following forms: the script for a television commercial; a group of questions from the SAT, LSAT, GRE, or the equivalent; a student essay with the teacher’s comments attached; a letter, or series of letters, of complaint to a company regarding that company’s faulty product (and the letter writer’s experience with same); an annotated “discography” of someone’s CD collection.

These narratives will be graded. I will evaluate them according to how accurately and resourcefully they follow the assignment, and by how good they are, as a whole, basically. These narratives can be used, in whatever way you deem fit, in subsequent stories, though they may not be culled from stories already submitted for workshop.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** We will workshop four stories per week. Your stories will be due according to a rotating system, so that you come up for discussion about every five weeks. You will submit your stories electronically to me as an email attachment on the Tuesday preceding that Thursday's workshop. **Please use your last name as the title for each submission!** I will then compile all four pieces into a single anonymous document, which I will then email back to you. Each of you is responsible for printing out that week's packet. Moreover, you will write *at least* a half-page of single-spaced comments for each story up for discussion. You can either write these comments on the packet printout itself or type them out on your own: the former method is easier, the latter option is more conscientious. These comments—both those you compose and those you verbalize in class during workshop—will factor into my evaluation of your final fiction portfolio, so take this process seriously.

I will also begin most Tuesday classes with a brief “pop quiz” on the assigned reading. A failed grade on one of these quizzes will result in an unexcused absence *on top of any other absences you might already have accrued*. If you miss class on a day on which a pop quiz has been assigned, then, clearly, you cannot make it up, for your absence will cover that “missed” grade. Failure to arrive at Thursday workshop with a carefully annotated story packet will also result in an absence.

**ATTENDANCE:** You may miss two classes, totally free of charge. An F on a pop quiz will count as an absence, as will failure to bring to class your book or a carefully annotated workshop packet. Absences after those initial two will result in a tier reduction in your fiction portfolio grade (B+ becomes B, B becomes B-). If you miss more than seven (7) classes, you will fail the course.

<b>GRADING:</b>	Fiction Portfolio	70%
	Narratives	30%

**PLAGIARISM:** All work submitted for this course must be not only new but also your own. If you want to turn in a revised version of a story you wrote for another fiction-writing class here at Rhodes or elsewhere, *you must get permission from me in advance*. This is very important. The stories are, without caveat, subject to the Honor System.

**STORY GROUPS**

**GROUP 1**

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**GROUP 2**

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**GROUP 3**

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**GROUP 4**

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