

Rhodes College Digital Archives - DLynx

ENGL 190-01, What it Means to Walk Upright: Readings in Obedience and Authority, Fall 2011

Item Type	Syllabus
Authors	Molinary, M.
Publisher	Memphis, Tenn. : Rhodes College
Rights	Rhodes College owns the rights to the archival digital images in this collection. Objects are made available for educational use only and may not be used for any non-educational or commercial purpose. Approved educational uses include private research and scholarship, teaching, and student projects. Original copies of the programs are stored in the Rhodes College Archives. In all instances of use, acknowledgement must be given to Rhodes College Archives Digital Repository, Memphis, TN. For information regarding permission to use this image, please email the Archives at archives@rhodes.edu
Download date	2026-03-16 12:19:05
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/10267/15327

Syllabus, Rhodes College, Fall 2011
ENG 190-01 TOPICS IN LITERATURE
T/TH 11am-12:15pm
Clough Hall 100

Professor Molinary
Palmer Hall, 304
843-3246
molinarym@rhodes.edu
Office Hours: (with noted exceptions)
Tuesdays & Thursdays 2-4pm or by appt.

What it Means to Walk Upright: Readings in Obedience & Authority

The night sings, sings, sings, sings
She sings, sings, sings beneath the earth
—Raúl Zurita, Song for His Disappeared Love

NO
—Caesar, Rise of the Planet of the Apes

REQUIRED TEXTS

Lucretius, On the Nature of the Univers [LUCRETIUS]
Calvino, Cosmicomics [COMICS]
Berger, Ways of Seeing [BERGER]
Ferdinand the Bull [FERDI]
Sophocles, Antigone [ANTIGONE]
Stevenson, Jekyll and Hyde [J&H]
Melville, Billy Budd [BILLYBUDD]
Darwish, Mural [DARWISH]
Djafer, Wail of the Arab Beggars of the Casbah [WAIL]
Spahr, well then there now [SPAHR]
Appiah, Honor Code [APPIAH]

The above texts have all been ordered through the Rhodes Bookstore. Please buy immediately.

REQUIRED TEXTS **NOT** ORDERED THROUGH RHODES

Carson, Anne. Men in the Off Hours [CARSON]
Zurita, Raúl. Song of His Disappeared Love [ZURITA]
Beloit Poetry Journal, Fall 2011: “The Logic of Yoo” [BPJ]

***Order, buy, borrow, or obtain these three as soon as possible. More info during the first class.

Additionally, students will be provided with handouts. These will be required reading. Moreover, a number of films will be shown (or made available via Moodle or both) for which the students will be responsible. The filmography will be provided during Week 2.

DESCRIPTION/OVERVIEW

We come into the world / We come into the world and there it is ... Thus begins Juliana Spahr’s poem, “Gentle Now Don’t Add to the Heartache”. But we don’t simply come into the world, we come into

a particular world during a specific geological/natural epoch & we come into Culture—a specific culture at a particular time in natural & human history. From the moment of our entry into that world, enculturation begins. Words are spoken to us, we speak back, & so it goes. Much of the socialization that follows has to do with rules. We learn the rules & we learn to obey them. In short, we learn how to see & experience the world according to a culture & its language/s & metaphors. This class looks at that aspect of becoming socialized. This class has questions.

Who or what & why do we obey? How are we encouraged or discouraged to obey in literature & art? What are the implications of our obedience? What does it mean to be autonomous. Can we be free? Are we doomed to be (free)?

Using the literary corpse of one female child as a springboard metaphor into relationships of obedience, authority, & subjectivity, this class will inspect the body, will read it closely for what may be inscribed thereon & will ultimately seek to discover the cause of death. In order to build more focused critical perspective/sight & interpretive skill, this class will concern itself with the topic of obedience as it relates to subjectivity & as it is played out from cultural metaphors of nature to individual freedom to states of terror. The semester's readings are divided into five delineations: Nature; Father Figures & Honor Codes; Education & Enculturation; The State; & Circling Back for Survivors. In literature, primarily, but in visual art & film also, students will investigate etymological & critical questions of obedience & authority & will respond in weekly, brief critical (& creative) exercises & writings, culminating in a final project.

COURSE OBJECTIVE & STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

If a student enters into & completes the class with proper measures of humility, curiosity, & passionate engagement with all the course material, required & suggested, that student will exit the course with increased measures of humility, curiosity, & passionate engagement with the world; that student will have affianced herself or himself, in permanent compact, to the bright lights of imagination, intelligent inquiry, & critical understanding.

Students will be responsible for coming to each class meeting on time having completed all reading & writing assignments & fully prepared to the space of learning in a most lively, generous, & courteous manner.

GRADING

<u>Reading & Daily Participation</u>	<u>30%</u>
<u>Weekly Writing Assignments</u>	<u>50%</u>
<u>Final Project</u>	<u>20%</u>

Grade Ranges:

F = Work incomplete &/or attendance issues.

D = Work complete but lacking any obvious sign of curiosity or effort; participation lackluster; &/or attendance issues.

C = Fine. All work complete with signs of curiosity & effort; attendance & participation also fine. Good.

B = Very good verging on excellent. All work completed with verve & curiosity. Passionate engagement is evident.

A = Above & beyond. All assignments completed with flair; impeccable participation; evidence of further work, i.e. suggested reading or work beyond the basic requirements.

POLICIES

- In any space of collective learning, but in a humanities class in particular, generosity, courtesy & respect are, perhaps, the most important policies.
- Attendance is crucial, but keep in mind that “attendance” means more than the presence of your physical body in the classroom; your mind & voice need be present & active as well. To count you “present” for any given day, I’ll need to see evidence of a heartbeat—of blood coursing through your veins, lungs taking in air supplying oxygen to your brain & your mouth with words. The classroom is a space of collective learning & it may be a dying breed. Take advantage of this space—actual human bodies in a room, engaged together in human thought, imagination, & the history of ideas.
- No whining or public displays of disaffection. See me straight away if you have a problem. Trust. Trust that there are reasons for everything we do in class even if you can’t yet imagine how or why. Trust that this class is designed to help you become better writers, readers, thinkers—better humans. In that spirit, attempt everything. Don’t simply dismiss any given exercise or assignment. **See me about any documented disability.
- Generally speaking, no late work will be accepted.
- This classroom is a “safe zone.”
- Professor reserves the right to expel from the class any student who behaves like a troglodyte. The interpretation of “troglodyte” is in the sole purview of the professor.
- Antithetical to the current climate, in the realm of this course, all students are considered adults & all will be treated as such & expected to act as such. You choose to learn or not.
- Please review the Rhodes Honor Code pertaining to plagiarism &tc.
- Finally: because words & their meanings are arbitrary & because one of the purposes of this course is to help students think more deeply, imaginatively, & critically about languages & their implications, the professor retains the right to cuss &/or use language in colorful manner in order to make students think about words.

DAILY SCHEDULE

***Please note that the daily schedule is subject to change. It is the student’s responsibility—within reason—to stay abreast. I like to leave room for spontaneity. ***I will be adding film viewings times once we discuss in class.

In general: Primary assignments will be due on Tuesdays. Secondary, or suggested, smaller writings or projects will be due on Thursdays. NOT doing secondary assignments CANNOT hurt your grade. Secondary assignments are offered only to help you should you miss or blow a primary assignment. There will be a primary assignment almost every week. Secondary assignments will be offered spontaneously. There will be reading every week.

The following weekly schedule is comprised of only the first two weeks. The rest will be handed out once we discuss film viewings.

NATURE

Week 1. Introduction to the class

8/25: Syllabus & film discussion. Gould & Lucretius selections assigned.

Week 2.

8/30 & 9/1: Gould & Lucretius discussed. Taxonomies due Tuesday.
Cosmicomic selections discussed Thursday.

FATHER FIGURES & HONOR CODES

Week 3.

Week 4.

Week 5. Anthony Appiah

EDUCATION & ENCULTURATION

Week 6.

Week 7.

Week 8.

THE STATE

Week 9.

TU 10/18 = FALL BREAK NO CLASS

Week 10.

Week 11.

TU 11/1: CLASS CANCELLED

Week 12.

Week 13. Antje Krog

Week 14.

11/24; THANKSGIVING NO CLASS

CIRCLING BACK FOR SURVIVORS

Weeks 15 & 16.