

**Carleton University
Fall 2014
Department of English**

**ENGL 3915A
Special Topics in Writing:
Literary Hybrids: Mixing Prose and Other Media
Fridays 11:35-2:30
*Please confirm location on Carleton Central***

**Instructor: Nadia Bozak
Email: nadiabozak@connect.carleton.ca**

**Office: Dunton Tower 1918
Hours: Friday 10:00-11:00 or by appointment**

Note: I don't often answer email weekends or evenings (no internet at home!)

This creative-writing seminar explores/ supports narratives that employ more than written words and/or more than just a single genre of writing (or other medium) within a single piece.

In order to situate “hybrid” works within a cultural, historical, and theoretical context, students will read and discuss theories of hybridity as well as exemplary works that merge two or more forms (or mediums) such as fiction with poetry, words with graphics, music, drama, or mix thereof.

Over the term students will produce their own pieces which might merge narrative prose with either:

- a) another media, such as photography, fine art, music, moving or graphic images
- b) another written form, such as poetry or dramatic works
- c) a combination of the above

The parameters for students to explore remain open. Mash-ups and graphic novels/ comics (whatever term you prefer) are encouraged. So are works in more than one language (linguistic languages, computer codes, etc.)

Yes, we will be reading theory and works by other writers in order to explore possibilities and gain a sense of the hybrid's historical precedents (and the future to come); but as this is a workshop the majority of sessions will be spent critiquing each others' "manuscripts." You will have the opportunity to share and receive feedback on your project twice within the term. You will also read and critique the work of your colleagues on a weekly basis, as well as keep up with assigned readings and your own writing schedules.

Required Reading:

Andrew, Dudley. "Adaptation." (selections)

Anzaldúa, Gloria. "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," from *Borderlands/ La Frontera: The New Mestiza* **CR**

Cardiff, Janet. *Forty-Part Motet*. (2001) National Gallery of Canada (current exhibit)

Carson, Anne. *Autobiography of Red: A Novel in Verse* (1998)
--- *Nox* (2010) **CR/ Haven Books**

Grahame-Smith, Seth. *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2009) (Excerpts) **CR**

Marker, Chris. *La Jetée (cine-roman)* (1992) **CR**

McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. (1993). **CR**

Shapton, Leanne. *Important Artifacts and Personal Property from the Collection of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris, Including Books, Street Fashion, and Jewelry* (2009) **CR**

Tamaki, Mariko. *Skim*. (2008) **CR**

Villacis, Eduardo. *El espejo humeante/ The Smoking Mirror* (2009) **CR**

Ward, Lynd. *God's Man*. (1929) **CR**

Yazdiha, Haj. "Conceptualizing Hybridity: Deconstructing Boundaries through the Hybrid" in *Formations* (2010) (online)

Supplementary/ Recommended Reading:

Clarke, George Elliot. *Wylah Falls*.

Fleener, Mary. *Life of the Party* (2003) **CR**

Hernandez, Gilbert. *Julio's Day*. 2013

Kahlo, Frieda. *The Diaries of Frieda Kahlo: An Intimate Portrait*. **CR**

Ondaatje, Michael. *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid: Left Handed Poems*. (1970) **CR**

--- *Running in the Family* (1982) **CR**

CR= Course Reserves Room at MacOdrum Library, 2nd Floor.

Items can be checked out for two hours at a time. The items can be found in the catalogue by title, my name, or course code.

Learning outcomes: students will emerge from this workshop with an analytical, historical, practical and creative understanding of what it means to combine one or more genres/ mediums/ languages into a single work. Skills in close-reading and analysis (of one's own work and of others) will be further sharpened. Students will have produced a polished, quality project in the "tradition" of the hybrid. Students will also present/ exhibit their projects in some public capacity at the end of term and, to that end, craft an effective "writer statement" and bio.

Assignments:

-**Presentation** of a weekly reading, including a **formal mini-essay** of the presentation. The presentation will be no more than ten minutes. The mini-essay is 2-3 typed, double-spaced pages and is due the day of the presentation.

-**Creative project** presented in/ work-shopped in class (on two separate days)

-**Reflection paper** on the experience of writing/ revising your project. 2-3 typed, double-spaced pages. Due two weeks after your 2nd workshop

-**Writer's statement and bio** to accompany the reflection paper described above.

-**Participation:** **a)** coming to class having done the assigned readings (demonstrated in the ability to comment on the reading) **b)** quality of feedback/ analysis given to colleagues (demonstrated in taking at least one turn at leading the critique) **c)** quality of the comments written on the manuscripts you return to your colleagues and that I will also evaluate

Grading:

- Presentation and formal mini-essay = **20% (10% x 2)**
- Creative project = **50%**
- Final Reflection paper, including writer's statement and bio = **15%**
- Participation: **15%**

Workshop Logistics:

Each week, three or four designated students will submit in hardcopy a "manuscript" of their project to each of their classmates. These manuscripts will be taken home, read closely and commented upon in preparation for in-class critique (i.e. workshop) the following week. Over the term, students will submit their project twice; the second submission being a substantially revised and/or re-visioned version. Students will also critically analyze the manuscripts of fellow students each and every week. To formalize this process, students will take turns leading the critique of two separate manuscripts.

Note well: Students are responsible for photocopying and distributing their manuscripts the week before it is workshopped. Students will cover the costs of printing and photocopying their own manuscripts.

Manuscripts will be in hard copy only, typed in 12-pont font, double spaced, with one-inch margins. Unless it is a formal aspect of the project, hand-written or electronic submissions will not be accepted. Your fellow students will not read anything beyond 10-12 manuscript pages.

The goal of this class is to produce quality creative writing; the process of revision and editing is a fundamental part of that. Please be prepared to revise your work after it is critiqued by your classmates. A 2-3 page "reflection paper" on the revisions you did will be handed in with your revised manuscript for the instructor to grade. Further guidelines on this will be provided in Week 1.

No mobile phones, texting, or internet during the workshop.

A student who misses more than 2 classes without documented evidence of an applicable medical, professional, or personal circumstance will receive at grade of zero.

With the assistance of students, the instructor will maintain a supportive, respectful class environment that encourages all students to share insights, ask questions, express themselves creatively, and contribute to balanced discussions.

Weekly Course Schedule—Fall 2014

Week 1: Introduction and mechanics / What is a hybrid? Sept. 5

- *Sign up for presentations, workshops, critique leadership*
- In-class screening, Chris Marker, *La Jetée* and/or Jack Chambers, *Hybrid*
- Reading: Chris Marker, *La Jetée, a cine-roman*
Haj Yazdiha, “Conceptualizing Hybridity: Deconceptualizing Boundaries through the Hybrid.”

Week 2: Borders/ Language/ Identity Sept. 12

- Presentations: **A)** Discuss Anzaldua’s use of Spanish and English **B)** Discuss how Anzaldua’s identity as a hybridity vs. a dichotomy
- In-class writing exercises
- *First submissions by 3 participants are due; copies of manuscripts are to be handed out to the group in order to be critiqued in class during Week 3*
- Reading: Yaz Yazdiha, “Conceptualizing Hybridity: Deconceptualizing Boundaries through the Hybrid.” 31-38
Gloria Anzaldua: “How to Tame a Wild Tongue”

Week 3: Anne Carson/ The Literary “Whatever” I Sept. 19

- Presentations: **C)** What is a novel in verse? Or is it a novel “inverse”? **D)** Discuss the relationship between form and content in Carson’s literary “whatever”
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Anne Carson, *Autobiography of Red*

Week 4: Anne Carson/ The Literary “Whatever” II Sept. 26

- Presentations: **E)** Discuss Carson’s work as a “cross-over” between both scholarly and literary modes **F)** Discuss how Carson crafts Geryon as a hybrid, a metaphor, and a relatable sympathetic character
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Anne Carson, *Autobiography of Red*

Week 5: Writing without Words/ Comics and Graphic Novels I Oct. 3

- Presentations: **G)** Discuss the experience of “reading” Ward. **H)** Discuss Scott McCloud’s notion of “the gutter” in relation to Ward

- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Lynd Ward, *God's Man*
Scott McCloud. *Understanding Comics*, "Blood in the Gutter," 60-93

Week 6: Writing without Words/ Comics and Graphic Novels II **Oct. 10**

- Presentations: **I**) Discuss Skim's character development in terms of visuals, referencing McCloud and/or Ward
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Mariko Tamaki, *Skim*
McCloud. *Understanding Comics*, "The Vocabulary of Comics," 24-59

Week 7: Elegy in a Box **Oct. 17**

- Presentation: **J**) Discuss Carson's understanding of translation as "groping for a light switch in the dark" and the elegy form **K**) Discuss the physical experience of reading *Nox*
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Anne Carson, *Nox*

Week 8: Sound and Audience Interaction **Oct. 24**

- Presentation: **L**) Discuss the role of the audience in shaping Cardiff's installation
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Janet Cardiff, *Forty Part Motet* at the National Gallery

-----**OCTOBER 31, FALL BREAK, UNIVERSITY CLOSED**-----

Week 9: Questions of Commerce/ Recycling **Nov. 7**

- Presentation: **M**) Discuss the "mash-up" as a hybrid and/or shameless cash-grab
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (selections)

Week 10: Biology, Adaptation, Survival**Nov.14**

- Presentation: **N)** Discuss Dudley Andrew's concept of adaption as "changing yourself in order to persist as yourself" in relation to any literary text covered this term
- Screening: Jack Chambers, *Hybrid*
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Dudley Andrew "Adaptation" (selections tba); Jack Chambers *Hybrid*

Week 11: Novel as Auction Catalogue**Nov. 21**

- Presentations: **N)** Discuss Shapton's character building **O)** Discuss the relationship between narrative and artifact in Shapton
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Leanne Shapton, *Important Artifacts and Personal Property from the Collection of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris, Including Books, Street Fashion, and Jewelry*

Week 12: Inverting History**Nov. 28**

- Presentation: **P)** Discuss Villacis' use of museum conventions as he revisions history
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading: Eduardo Villacis, *El espejo humeante/ The Smoking Mirror*

Week 13: Final thoughts**Dec. 5**

- Workshop manuscripts
 - Prepare/ practice for final performance or presentation of creative pieces
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Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation.

If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable).

After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request

accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).