

Carleton University
Fall 2017
Department of English

ENGL 5606 F: *Twentieth-Century Literature*
Topic: The Politics and Poetics of Time Travel

Thursday / 8:35 am – 11:25 am
Location: Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Adam Barrows
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Office Hours: Thursday 1-4

Course Description

This course will explore time travel in twentieth-century fiction. While most recognizably associated with science-fiction narratives and central to H.G. Wells's foundational novella *The Time Machine*, time travel has appeared in multiple literary genres, proving a remarkably useful device for writers to provocatively explore questions of historical memory, causality, ethical responsibility, and political agency.

Required Texts (all texts are available at Octopus Books - 116 3rd Ave (in the Glebe))

Octavia E. Butler, *Kindred*
Philip K. Dick, *Martian Time-Slip*
Audrey Niffenegger, *The Time Traveler's Wife*
Harry Turtledove, *The Best Time Travel Stories of the Twentieth-Century*
Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*
Wells, H.G., *The Time Machine*

Writing

There are two major assignments for this course: an annotated bibliography and a research paper. All assignments should be submitted **electronically** via CUlearn by **11:55pm** on the **due date**. I do not require printed hard copies. Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of 10 points deducted for each day the assignment is late.

Annotated Bibliography

In this assignment, you will present 8-12 secondary critical sources that you have read as part of your research for the final essay. For each bibliographical entry, you must provide a substantial

paragraph in which you summarize the thesis and major evidence of the critic, suggesting ways in which the source affirms or challenges the claims made by other critics included in your bibliography. This assignment will require intensive reading in the critical literature on your chosen author. Each source need not necessarily treat time travel as its main subject. You may, for instance, find substantive but passing references to the subject in longer book-length studies. Thus, physical sources (such as book indices) may be as useful to you as electronic search engines like the MLA International Bibliography. The source may not explicitly deal with your author, but in such cases you must provide a clear rationale in the annotation as to why the source is relevant.

Final Research Paper

This assignment asks you to make an argument about the role of time travel in the work of a twentieth-century author who may or may not be represented on the syllabus. The paper should be thesis-driven, and the argument must be supported by close textual evidence and situated within existing critical debate (which you will have summarized in your annotated bibliography). Your claim must be primarily based on close and original readings of representative texts by the author. The length, including notes and works cited, should be between 5,500 and 8,000 words.

Discussion

The course will be run as a discussion circle. You are expected to attend every class and to readily participate in the discussion. Participation includes having carefully read the assigned pages for the day and having prepared a list of discussion questions to bring to the group. In addition and in lieu of a seminar presentation, each student will have the opportunity to direct the opening discussion for one class period. For the day you are assigned to direct discussion, you should prepare a set of questions or discussion activities which effectively focus the discussion of the group for that day. Ideally, discussion topics should center on some aspect of time travel in the reading, but need not necessarily be restricted entirely to that focus. You will be evaluated on the basis of your demonstrated level of preparation and the pedagogical effectiveness of your approach.

Grading

Attendance: **5%**

Discussion leader exercise: **15%**

Annotated Bibliography: **30%**

Final Research Paper: **50%**