

<p style="text-align: center;"> Fall 2017 Department of English ENGL 3702A: American Culture Location: TB202 Time: 11:25-12:55 Precludes additional credit for ENGL 3703 (no longer offered) Prerequisite: Third-year standing or permission of the department Instructor: Rob Holton Phone: 520-2600 ext. 2308 Email: robert_holton@carleton.ca Office: 1919 Dunton Tower Office Hours: W 2 -3 </p>
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Conformism and Its Discontents

Since the mid-20th century, an intense debate has taken place in American culture on the subject of modern conformism. The debate was carried on in the pages of mass market magazines and in academic journals, in Hollywood movies and in literary fiction, with attention focused on the apparent cost of conformism to individual (usually masculine) identity, on the situation of those unwilling or unable to conform, and on the moral authority of mainstream American society itself. One result was a fascination with a range of eccentrics, misfits and non-conformists representing positions outside what appeared to be an increasingly homogeneous centre. This course will consider these issues through readings of a number of fictional and non-fictional texts, and class discussions will include the gender issues raised in conformism discourse, the nature of the self and the apparent threat to individual identity posed by modern culture, the place of literary writing and reading itself as an assertion of difference and more.

Texts

- The Giver* -- Lois Lowry (1993)
 - Revolutionary Road* -- Richard Yates (1961)
 - One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* -- Ken Kesey (1962)
 - The Catcher in the Rye* – J.D. Salinger (1951)
 - Housekeeping* -- Marilynne Robinson (1980)
 - Fight Club* -- Chuck Palahniuk (1996)
 - The Stepford Wives* (1975 dir. Bryan Forbes).
- The novels are available at Octopus Books (Bank & Third in the Glebe).

In addition, selections from Erich Fromm’s *Fear of Freedom* (or *Escape from Freedom*), Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* and Barbara Ehrenreich’s *The Hearts of Men* will be on reserve as well as poems by Adrienne Rich.

Evaluation

Short essay (6+ pages)	20%	Major essay (8+ pages)	35%
Scheduled Exam	35%	Attendance & Participation	10%

- Secondary sources are required for both essays
- The essay topics must be cleared with me well before submission.

- The essays should follow MLA format.
- If an assignment is lost, misplaced, or not received, you are responsible for having a backup copy that can be submitted immediately upon request.
- The participation mark will reflect both attendance and participation. Attendance is required. In my experience, there is a very close correlation between poor attendance and poor marks.
- All essays must be submitted by December 8.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Request for 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). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website (www.carleton.ca/pmc) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Plagiarism

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;

- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks.

Tentative Course Schedule

Sept 7	Introduction
Sept 12	Concepts and Context – “Automaton Conformity” in Erich Fromm
Sept 14	J.D. Salinger – <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>
Sept 19	J.D. Salinger – <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>
Sept 21	J.D. Salinger – <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>
Sept 26	Ken Kesey - <i>One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest</i>
Sept 28	Ken Kesey - <i>One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest</i>
Oct 3	Ken Kesey - <i>One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest</i>
Oct 5	Richard Yates - <i>Revolutionary Road</i>
Oct 10	Richard Yates - <i>Revolutionary Road</i>
Oct 12	Richard Yates - <i>Revolutionary Road</i>
Oct 17	Betty Friedan - <i>The Feminine Mystique</i> (selections) Barbara Ehrenreich – <i>The Hearts of Men</i> (selections)
Oct 19	Friedan & Ehrenreich continued. Adrienne Rich – Poems (Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers, Ghost of a Chance, Living in Sin, Snapshots of a Daughter in Law, Diving into the Wreck) and When We Dead Awaken (College English Vol. 34, No. 1, Oct 1972 (online))
Oct 23 - 27	Reading Week
Oct 31	Adrienne Rich continued
Nov 2	<i>The Stepford Wives</i> (1975 film)
Nov 7	Marilynne Robinson - <i>Housekeeping</i>
Nov 9	Marilynne Robinson - <i>Housekeeping</i>
Nov 14	Marilynne Robinson - <i>Housekeeping</i>
Nov 21	Chuck Palahniuk - <i>Fight Club</i>
Nov 23	Chuck Palahniuk - <i>Fight Club</i>
Nov 28	Chuck Palahniuk - <i>Fight Club</i>
Nov 30	Lois Lowry – <i>The Giver</i>
Dec 5	Lois Lowry – <i>The Giver</i>
Dec 7	Lois Lowry – <i>The Giver</i> & exam discussion
Dec 8	Essay submission deadline.