ENG 395: TWENTIETH-CENTURY LITERATURE
FALL 2012 (CRN: 12807)

Instructor: Marcus Hensel
Email: MHENSEL1@uoregon.edu
Meeting: 395 Condon (MWF 9-9.50 pm)
Office: PLC 443
Phone: 346.1613
Office Hours: T, W, R (1-2pm) and by appointment

Hiroshima. 1945. August 6. Sixteen minutes past 8am. Who really gave that order?
Answer: Control. The Ugly American. The instrument of control.
Question: If control’s control is absolute, why does control need to control?
Answer: Control needs time.
Question: Is control controlled by its need to control?
Answer: Yes.

—William S. Burroughs, “Ah Pook, The Destroyer”

TEXTS AND SUPPLIES

• Required Texts and Supplies:
  o Ariel and Other Poems: Restored Edition by Sylvia Plath (not the 1965 edition)
  o House of Leaves by Mark Z. Danielewski (Remastered Full-Color edition)
  o Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut (Dell)
  o The Soft Machine by William S. Burroughs (Grove)
  o V for Vendetta by Alan Moore (Vertigo/Random House)
  o Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett (Grove)
  o Readings on Blackboard

• Optional/Recommended Texts:
  o Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison by Michel Foucault
  o Illuminations by Walter Benjamin
  o No Exit by Jean-Paul Sartre
  o A writing handbook (Rules for Writers and The Little Seagull are easily available)
  o College-level dictionary

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The animating theme for this course will be control and the way it is or is not exercised. We will explore the different effects it has on the works and the forms it takes in them; we will also explore the different views of and responses to control expressed by the authors (and, sometimes, others close to them). Our objective in this course is to consider how the idea and experience of control might help us frame and engage a wide range of literary works from the mid-twentieth to the early twenty-first centuries. Our goal in this course is to read and view these often difficult and disorienting texts closely and carefully so that we may understand the ends that these writers will go to in order to make us see and feel the exercise of control.

NB: You should know that some of what we will read in this course contains graphic language, sexual themes, illegal activity, and scenes of often obscene violence. If you believe that reading and discussing literary representations of graphic, disturbing, or offensive material will make it difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of this course, you should not take it. One of the other versions of ENG 395 offered regularly by the English department may be of more interest to you.
EVALUATION AND ASSIGNMENTS

20%—Edition of Ariel
20%—Analysis of Allusions in V for Vendetta
5%—Cut-Up Project
40%—Final Paper
15%—Daily Grades (Quizzes, Discussion Questions, etc.)

Edition of Ariel: This assignment will be to craft an edition of Sylvia Plath’s Ariel and Other Poems from the raw materials published in the two separate editions (Hughes’s 1965 US edition and the 2004 restored edition). More detailed information will be provided well in advance of the due date.

Analysis of Allusions in V for Vendetta: You will work in assigned groups to identify and explicate the various allusions in one of the three books of V for Vendetta, eventually giving a group presentation of ten minutes or so in which you explain a select few. This will be followed by a written analysis of one or two allusions and how they relate to the plot as it unfolds in the other two books. More detailed information will be provided well in advance of the due date.

Cut-Up Project: You will create a cut-up project in the style of Burroughs. More detailed information will be provided well in advance of the due date.

Final Paper: You will write a ten- to twelve-page researched analysis of one or two texts we read in the latter half of the class. More detailed information will be provided well in advance of the due date.

Daily Grades: Quizzes—both announced and unannounced—will always follow the readings they are to test, but may make use of material previously covered. Periodic Discussion Question assignments will also fall under this grading category.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance: You are responsible for all material covered and all assignments whether or not you are present. NB: my classes seem to be very dangerous for students’ family members—who die and fall ill at a much higher rate than those of everyone else I know. Enroll at your own risk and make plans to cover classes and assignments should the (apparently) inevitable happen. You have been warned.

Code of Courtesy: Arrive on time with your cell phone silenced. Bring the appropriate book, and give the instructor or classmate your full attention. Do not chat, text, or surf the internet. Remain in the room until the class meeting ends. Conduct yourself in a manner respectful to all present. Most importantly: never hesitate to ask a question, to express a doubt, or to request clarification.

Preparedness: Unless otherwise noted, all papers and out-of-class assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day stipulated in the Class Schedule. Formal assignments will be penalized one letter grade for each calendar day (whole or part) they are late, unless you have made prior arrangements with me. NB: I will not accept any assignment that is more than three days late. No other assignments (quizzes, discussion questions, etc.) will be accepted after the due date and cannot be made up.

Academic Integrity: All work submitted must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented in MLA style. Please refer to the summary of the Code of Student Conduct on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website: http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/programs/student_judi_affairs. In cases where plagiarism has been clearly established, the award of an F for the final course grade is standard practice.

Special Needs: If you have a disability (physical or learning) that you think may affect your performance in this class, please contact me before Week 2 so we can any necessary arrangements for your full access to all classroom activities.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS FOR YOUR SUCCESS

Email: I will be available not only through my office hours, but also through email. I encourage you to email legitimate questions or concerns, but do not abuse this privilege. Attached documents will be deleted unless you have made prior arrangements with me or you have a legitimate emergency that bars you from attending class on the day an assignment is due. I will not respond to emails sent on weekends or school holidays until the following business day.

Office Hours: I strongly encourage you to meet with me individually to better understand my expectations and discuss readings, paper topics, or other areas of interest. Either visit during my drop-in office hours or make an appointment if my normal hours are inconvenient for you.

Your continued attendance in this class is a binding agreement that both you and I will abide by the policies set forth above.

This document is subject to change with advanced notice.
CLASS SCHEDULE
The Schedule, as it is presented here, is subject to change with prior notice. Assignments and readings should be completed prior to the class period for which they are listed. Readings posted on Blackboard are labeled “on BB.”

WEEK 1
- 09.24: Introduction
- 09.26: Plath, *Ariel* (5-48)
- 09.28: *Ariel* (49-90)

WEEK 2
- 10.01: Hughes’s Foreword (xi-xxi); Lowell’s Foreword (on BB); Poems in the 1965 US edition (on BB)
- 10.03
- 10.05: Foucault, “Panopticism” in *Discipline and Punish* (195-228, also on BB)

WEEK 3
- 10.08: Moore, *V for Vendetta* (5-179)
  - **Due: Edition of Ariel**
- 10.10: *V for Vendetta* (182-265)
- 10.12

WEEK 4
- 10.15: Group presentations on allusions in *V for Vendetta*
  - **Due: Analysis of Allusions**
- 10.17: Ball, “Dada Manifesto”; Burroughs “K-9 was in Combat with the Alien Mind-Screens” and “Origin and Theory of the Tape Cut-Up”; Tzara, “Dada Manifesto” (all on BB)
- **10.19: NO CLASS MEETING**

WEEK 5
  - **Due: Cut-Up Project**
- 10.26: *The Soft Machine* (121-78)

WEEK 6
- 10.31: *House of Leaves* (41-79)
- 11.02: *House of Leaves* (80-152)

WEEK 7
- 11.05: *House of Leaves* (153-312)
- 11.07: *House of Leaves* (313-383)
- 11.09: *House of Leaves* (384-490)

WEEK 8
- 11.14: Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History” (253-64, also on BB); Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1-22)
- 11.16: *Slaughterhouse-Five* (23-86)

WEEK 9
- 11.19: *Slaughterhouse-Five* (87-135)
- 11.21: *Slaughterhouse-Five* (136-215)
- **11.23: NO CLASS MEETING (THANKSGIVING)**

WEEK 10
- 11.26: Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*
- 11.28: Sartre, *No Exit* (on BB)
- 11.30: Serling, “Five Characters in Search of an Exit” (on BB)

FINALS WEEK
- 12.05: **Due: Final Paper by 12.00pm**