

Honors Inquiry 105:

Duquesne University

Spring 2015 CRN: 22616, Section # 7, 11-11:50am, MWF, Location: 707 Fisher Hall

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Office Hours: MWF 11:55am-12:55pm

Multi-Ethnic Literature and the Bildungsroman

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the “bildungsroman” is “a novel that has as its main theme the formative years or spiritual education of one person.” In essence, it is a novel about growing up and often has as its protagonist a younger person who undergoes a transformative experience. With the rise of the novel in the eighteenth century, the bildungsroman began to appear in British fiction like Henry Fielding’s *Tom Jones*. In this course, we will be exploring the contemporary bildungsroman as it appears in multi-ethnic literature. We will begin the course with a discussion of the traditional bildungsroman as well as read some critical work on the topic. We will then pose the following questions: How does race and/or ethnicity affect the traditional narrative of the bildungsroman? How might gender play into one’s experience of growing up? To that end, we will be reading Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake*, Junot Diaz’s *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Americanah*, Gary Shteyngart’s *Absurdistan*, Sherman Alexie’s *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Edwidge Danticat’s *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, and Jessica Hagedorn’s *Dogeaters*.

Required Texts

Primary Readings

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Americanah*. New York: Knopf Doubleday, 2014. Print. (ISBN: 9780307455925)

Alexie, Sherman. *Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. New York: Little Brown, 2009. Print. (ISBN: 9780316013697)

Danticat, Edwidge. *Breath, Eyes, Memory*. New York: Knopf Doubleday, 1998. Print. (ISBN: 9780375705045)

Diaz, Junot. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. New York: Penguin USA, 2008. Print. (ISBN: 9781594483295)

Hagedorn, Jessica. *Dogeaters*. New York: Penguin USA, 1991. Print. (ISBN: 9780140149043)

Lahiri, Jhumpa. *The Namesake*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2004. Print. (ISBN: 9780618485222)

Shteyngart, Gary. *Absurdistan*. New York: Random House, 2007. Print. (ISBN: 9780812971675)

Wilson, Willow. *Ms. Marvel, Volume 1: No Normal*. Marvel, 2014. Print. (ISBN: 9780785190219)

Course Policies

Attendance:

Attendance is expected in my class; however, I do understand that certain life events might make missing class necessary, including illness, personal emergency, or active military duty. To that end, a student may miss up to **6** classes without affecting the attendance policy. For each absence after **6**, the student’s final grade will be dropped by **ONE grade level**. At **9** absences, the student

automatically fails the course. In addition, excessive tardiness will result in an “F” in your in-class participation grade, which is 10% of your overall grade for the course.

PLEASE NOTE: You are expected to be in class every single day. The attendance policy is meant to accommodate emergencies and illnesses. **These are NOT skip days.** Let me repeat. These are only to be used for emergencies.

Late Work:

As a rule, I do not accept late work except under extreme emergency situations. Work is due at the beginning of class on the listed due date. **If you come to class late and the assignment has already been collected, I WILL NOT accept it.** Your work should be collected, stapled/paper clipped, and ready to turn in at the start of class. Also, if you miss class, you are still responsible for any work due at the next class that you attend. Assignments, due dates, and a course schedule are all included in this syllabus, so missing class is not an excuse for missing work due at the next class that you attend.

I also **do not** accept e-mailed work for missed classes unless arrangements have been made with me in advance. **DO NOT** e-mail me the work if you are not coming to class. **I would strongly encourage you to befriend a peer in your class who you might call upon and make arrangements to turn in your work for you if you would need to miss a class.**

PLEASE NOTE: The failure of a printer to work or a computer crash does not constitute an emergency. Be sure to save your work often and in multiple locations. Dropbox.com is a great online resource where you can save your work and avoid missing work due to a computer crash.

Office Hours and E-Mail:

Office hours (listed above) provide a great chance to talk one-on-one. Please stop by to ask questions—or to just say hello. You may drop in during these times or make an appointment with me to talk about any questions or comments you have about your progress in the course. I’d be happy to talk with you via e-mail as well, and you can expect that I will respond to you (in email or in class) within 48 hours Monday through Friday.

In addition, this is a writing class. Improperly formatted e-mails are not acceptable. In every e-mail, you must have an opening remark (Dear so and so), the body of the e-mail, a closing remark (Sincerely, etc...), and your full name (first and last) written at the bottom. In addition, e-mails should be properly formatted—meaning using proper sentence structure, capitalization, and the absence of text/IM language (like **u** for **you**). **THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IF YOU E-MAIL FROM A CELL PHONE.** If you do not follow proper e-mail format, then you forfeit the opportunity of receiving a response from me.

Also, the syllabus contains the majority of the information that you need for this course. **Please, review the syllabus before e-mailing me a question**—especially about length requirements. If the answer to your question can be found on the syllabus, I will simply refer you to the syllabus for the first e-mail, and thereafter, I maintain the right to not e-mail you back if the information can be found in the syllabus.

Cancellations:

In the event that I would need to unexpectedly cancel class, I will contact the class via e-mail. I do commute to campus, so on days of inclement weather, especially heavy snow, be sure to check your e-mail before coming to class. If class is cancelled, I may request that you e-mail work or give

information about changes in the course schedule, so if class is cancelled, you are responsible for checking your e-mail and following any included instructions before the next class.

Electronic Devices:

I embrace technology. I know that many of you will bring your syllabus to class on cell phones, laptops, or tablets. As long as they are used for course related materials (i.e., taking notes, viewing reading assignments, consulting the syllabus), these devices are free for you to use during class. **However, cell phone ringers should be turned to silent, and if any device is used for anything other than class related work, I have a one strike policy. You will immediately lose your class privileges for electronic devices, and you will receive a “0” for class participation that day. If you repeatedly violate this policy, I reserve the right to collect the device from you at the beginning of every class AND/OR to give you a “F” in participation for the term.**

PLEASE NOTE: This applies especially to texting or answering phone calls in class. You will also receive a “0” in participation for the day for misuse. I will not notify you of the “0” for participation. You will simply receive it if your cell phone is being used during my class. Continual misuse will result in a failing grade in participation for the course. If the disruption is extensive enough for me to ask you to leave, you will also receive an absence for the day. EVEN IF WE HAVE DOWN TIME IN CLASS OR YOU FINISH A TASK BEFORE THE REST OF THE CLASS, THE CELL PHONE SHOULD ONLY BE USED FOR CLASS-RELATED MATERIAL. KEEP IT PUT AWAY.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism is the inclusion of another’s words or ideas as your own in a paper you submit for this class. This includes having another person write a paper for you, turning in another student’s work who has previously had this class, taking any or all information, writing, or ideas from the internet without proper in-text citations and works cited entries, and pulling any information, writing, or ideas from any other type of source that is not your own work. To avoid plagiarism, you should always use proper in-text citations for all quotations (which are direct word for word quotations in quotation marks) and for all paraphrased information (which is the use of others’ ideas and information, which has been converted into your own language). For specific in-text guidelines, see the documentation and citation section in your grammar handbook or visit the Perdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) on the internet.

If you do plagiarize, there are consequences for your actions. The university penalties include a “0” on an essay/portion of your grade, a failing grade for the course, suspension, and expulsion from the university. In order to avoid this, be sure to document and cite your sources clearly. If you are having particular trouble with documentation, writing, or even finding an idea for a paper, please, come and see me so that we can discuss your issue. It is far better to take a late penalty or even a “0” on an assignment than have to face sanctions from the university. I am more than happy to help you with your writing/citing in any way that I can.

For complete information on the university plagiarism policy, see the “Academic Integrity” section of the undergraduate catalog located at: <http://www.duq.edu/about/administration/academic-affairs/policies-and-procedures>.

Standards for Written Work

Format:

1” Margins on Top, Bottom, and Sides, 12 Point Times New Roman Font (including titles), Single Spaced Header (No Longer than 2 Lines), Double Spaced Text, Pages with last name in upper right corner, Endnotes, and MLA Bibliography Style

Technology

All assignments should be typed and when assignments are turned in electronically, you should use Microsoft Word (".doc" or ".docx" files). **Failure to post or e-mail your work as a Word Document could result in a "0" or F on that assignment.**

Athletics

If you are involved in a university athletic program and will miss class because of it, you must bring an official list of the classes you will be missing from the athletic department in the first week of class. Moreover, ALL work is to be submitted prior to the excused absence. You are responsible for any announcements and/or class notes that you miss.

Learning Differences Support and Reasonable Accommodations

If you have any disabilities that may impact your performance in this class, please speak to me within the first week of classes. Disabilities that require accommodation must be documented by the Office of Freshman Development and Special Student Services (x6657).

Writing Center

This is a writing-intensive course. In order to assist you in the revision process of your writing, the Writing Center on campus is available and is staffed by graduate and undergraduate tutors who offer help with writing assignments in all disciplines. Before meeting with a tutor, prepare specific questions about your work so that your time is well spent. The Writing Center is located in 216 College Hall. Appointments must be made online at www.sites.duq.edu/writing-center/

Project Descriptions and Grade Distribution

Written work is the primary focus for this class; writing assignments will be many and varied. Please feel free to ask questions if you do not understand a particular writing assignment. **For your own protection, you must keep all work that you produce for this class—including drafts and in-class notes—until the end of the term.**

Course Elements

- ✓ Close Reading Essay 1 (15%)
- ✓ Close Reading Essay 2 (15%)
- ✓ Final Paper Abstract (5%)
- ✓ Annotated Bibliography (10%)
- ✓ Final Researched Literature Argument Paper Intro & Outline (5%)
- ✓ Final Researched Literature Argument Paper (20%)
- ✓ Quizzes and Free Writes (5%)
- ✓ Literature Argument Paragraphs (15%)
- ✓ In-Class Participation/Professional Etiquette (10%)

In-Class Participation-10% of Overall Grade

Grading for In-Class Participation

- A: Comes to class on time with clear evidence of having read the material. Contributes significantly to discussion (makes at least 3 substantive comments) in most classes.
- B: Comes to class on time with clear evidence of having read the material. Contributes some to class discussion (makes at least 2 substantive comments) in most classes.
- C: Comes to class on time with clear evidence of having read the material. Contributes to class discussion occasionally (makes at least 1 substantive comment) in most classes.
- D: Comes to class with clear engagement with the class and the reading material but refrains from making any comments. Or, tardy for class.

- F: Comes to class but does not show evidence of engaging with the material or participate in class discussion.
- 0/F: Does not attend class, sleeps during class, uses electronic device during class (i.e. cell phone, laptop) outside of approved methods, or causes substantial disruption to class.

Written Assignments (Generally, specific details in assignment sheets)

Grading for Written Assignments

- A: Ideas are well-developed, original, and succeeds in mastering the technical goals for the assignment. There is a clear argument supported with examples, analysis, and research. Paper follows proper citation format, includes a Works Cited page, and has few grammatical errors.
- B: Ideas are written with considerable care and attention. They are developed and detailed. There is some argument format, but ultimately, needs clearer structure. Ideas, grammar, and syntax need more clarity and development. The paper includes correct format, citations, and a Works Cited page.
- C: Ideas and structure are acceptable. The student needs to make more effort to master syntax, grammar, and argument structure and/or develop a thoughtful and focused argument and/or analysis.
- D: Student has made some effort to achieve the assignment goals, but basic fundamentals of writing and analysis need improvement. Also, citations need improvement and argument structure needs more clarity and development. The paper proposes an opinion rather than an argument supported with evidence, especially close reading of the text.
- F: Does not achieve the assignment's technical goals and/or it does not present a focused or thoughtful analysis of the text. There is no clear argument supported with close reading or research. There are no clear citations, and/or the reader summarizes others' ideas rather than constructing his/her own argument. **DID NOT MEET THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF THE ASSIGNMENT.**

Revision Process

Part of your final grade on revisable assignments will be based on your revision process. This will take into account the extent and thoroughness of your revisions throughout the paper process and how complete your writing is at the various deadlines for the revision process (i.e. conference, peer workshop, and Final for Now drafts) and the extent of your revisions between the conference draft to the Final For Now draft to the Final draft. Turning in an incomplete paper as a Final For Now draft or turning in a paper that does not have a clear and developed argument structure at the Final For Now stage will decrease your grade on the paper. Also, if you miss any step in the revision process, your final grade on the paper will be reduced a grade letter for each missed deadline.

Quizzes & Free Writes

At the beginning of each class, you may be asked to either respond to a prompt about the text assigned for that day or you may be given a quiz. These free write and quiz assignments will not be announced, but they will occur in the first ten minutes of class. If you miss class or if you are late for class, you will not be allowed to make up the quiz or free write, and you will receive a "0." The free writes and quizzes will ask you to not only identify events in a text but engage with the text. You will be asked to engage in critical thinking. I would prefer to not give quizzes or free writes every day; however, if it is clear that a significant amount of the class is not doing the reading, I will begin to give a quiz OR free write daily. **These Quizzes and Free Writes are worth 5% of your overall grade for the course.**

Schedule of Activities and Assignments

Note: Please bring your syllabus with you to class every day.

Course Schedule Subject To Change at Instructor's Discretion

Week	Monday(Topic/Work Due)	Wednesday(Topic/Work Due)	Friday (Topic/Work Due)
1			1/9- Class Cancelled ; Review Syllabus on Blackboard
2	1/12-Syllabus Review	1/14-Bhaktin Excerpt on Blackboard	1/16-Bolaki's Introduction to <i>Unsettling the Bildungsroman</i> (9-31)—Available Google Books
3	1/19- No Class; Martin Luther King Day	1/21-Lahiri (1-96)	1/23-Lahiri (97-150)
4	1/26-Lahiri (150-200)	1/28-Lahiri (200-245)	1/30-Lahiri (246-291)
5	2/2-Adiche (1-140)	2/4-Adiche (141-243)	2/6-Adiche (244-341)
6	2/9-Adiche (342-454)	2/11-Adiche (455-588)	2/13-Peer Workshop; Draft of Close Reading Essay 1 Due
7	2/16- Conferences ;	2/18-Diaz (1-50); Close Reading Essay 1	2/20-Diaz (51-113)
8	2/23-Diaz (114-201)	2/25-Diaz (202-261)	2/27-Diaz (263-335)
	3/2-3/6	Spring Break Recess	Spring Break Recess
9	3/9-Hagedorn (1-117)	3/11-Hagedorn (119-178)	3/13-Hagedorn (179-251)
10	3/16-Shteyngart (1-55)	3/18-Shteyngart (56-109)	3/20-Shteyngart (110-164)
11	3/23-Shteyngart (165-215)	3/25-Shteyngart (216-267)	3/27-Shteyngart (268-333)
12	3/30-Danticat (1-61); Close Reading Essay 2	4/1-Danticat (65-113)	4/3- No Class; Easter Recess
13	4/7 (Tuesday)-Danticat (114-174)	4/8-Danticat (177-236)	4/10-Alexie (1-76)
14	4/13-Alexie (77-167)	4/15- Final Paper Abstract ; Class Meets at Computer Lab	4/17- Alexie (168-230)
15	4/20-Ms. Marvel (Comics 1-3)	4/22- Ms. Marvel (Comics 4-5); Annotated Bibliography	4/24- Peer Workshop; Final Paper Outline Due
16	4/27- Conferences; Class Cancelled	4/30-5/6- Final Exam; Final Paper Due	