

**WATCH BLACKBOARD FOR SYLLABUS UPDATES & CORRECTIONS**

ENG 267 Literature & Sexuality WF 10-11:15/Bloom S06 ETT 108

Office Hours Wed 8:45-9:45 Th 10-11—CA247 Tel. [3317/bloom@muhlenberg.edu/mailbox](mailto:3317/bloom@muhlenberg.edu/mailbox) CA 255

**BOOKS TO BUY**

Nabakov, *The Annotated Lolita* (Vintage)

Munro, *Runaway* (Vintage)

Lawrence, *The Fox...* (Penguin)

**(All other readings on Blackboard)**

**FOCUS/GOALS**

Representation of and reflections on sexual desire and activity have preoccupied artists since before recorded history. Over the past couple of centuries, poets, playwrights, and novelists writing in English have increasingly moved these preoccupation to the foreground of cultural consciousness. This course will focus on some of the writers most influential in bringing about and exploiting this shift in emphasis and on their writing practices.

**THE L PERSPECTIVE**

In studying literature, students have to ask mostly *how* questions: How does a writer's language work to produce the impression you get in the process of reading his or her work? How does the writing itself change as you read? Does the writing seem intent on changing a reader's relationship to his or her language and culture? Addressing such questions entails close attention to language, style, and form. This kind of attention places the general approach in this course well within the faculty's L-perspective guidelines, particularly the guideline stating that "literature courses are those that primarily stress verbal making, the ways in which writers work in words to render experience, evoke feelings, and shape understanding."

"The most interesting writing is that which does not quite satisfy the reader. Try and leave a little thinking for him; that will be better for both . . . A little guessing does him no harm, so I would assist him with no connections.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson.

**Misconceptions About Reading Literature**

Contrary to what you may have heard, no "hidden meanings" ever appear "between the lines." What you see *on the page* is what you get. But in any writing worth reading what you see on the page usually contains a lot of meaning. Almost always every word you see on the page has been seen and heard before. So you'll need to consider the ways and contexts in

which the words you're reading usually occur, in relation to the way in which the writer you're reading uses words. Sometimes this requires slowing down to take another look, to reread and perhaps even read aloud to see how the words, phrases, clauses, sentences and paragraphs work together in the ear as well as on the page.

TENTATIVE READING/SCREENING/DISCUSSION/ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE  
(Watch for frequent updates and revisions, as needed, on Blackboard and via email.

In between class meetings, the professor will e-mail general questions meant to provide cues for your essays and help prime class discussions.)

First class: define terms -- Woolf & Foucault (Blackboard/Document)

2d & 3d classes poems by Rossetti & Yeats & Larkin & Clark (Blackboard Documents/with Larkin background "Circa 1960") **For January 25: Please write up a page or two indicating and explaining which of these poems promises to provide the most illuminating basis for further discussions of literature and sexuality and be prepared to share your explanation in class discussion,**

4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> classes Anderson, *Winesburg Ohio* excerpts: "The Strength of God" & "The Teacher" (Blackboard/Documents)

over

6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> classes Lawrence *Fox* (Penguin edition through 71) plus excerpts from 7 about Lawrence's reflections in his critical writing on writing about sex (Blackboard/Document)

8<sup>th</sup> Class -- Group One Leads discussion on Lawrence & class discusses essay assignment  
(See Group Rosters & Guidelines on Blackboard under Assignments)

#### ASSIGNMENT

Brief essay #1: Apply a perspective in Lawrence's criticism excerpt in comparing Anderson and Lawrence's representations of desire and pleasure  
(Writing Assignment Guidelines on Blackboard/Assignments)

Due February 8

9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> classes Cather, "Coming, Aphrodite" (Blackboard/Document)

11<sup>th</sup> Class Group Two leads discussion of Cather

12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> classes Nabakov, *Lolita* —screen adaptations on reserve for paper plus excerpt from *Reading Lolita Tehran* & *Lolita* 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tributes, etc.  
(Blackboard/Document)

*Lolita* Reading/Discussion Segments: 1-109, 110-199, 200-317

16<sup>th</sup> Class: Group 3 leads *Lolita* discussion & class discusses essay assignment

### ASSIGNMENT

*Brief Essay # 2:* Bearing in mind that every screen adaptation of a novel is a critical interpretation, determine which adaptation seems most congruent with the understanding of sexual desire rendered in Nabakov's novel: Stanley Kubrick's 1962 version or Adrian Lyne's 1997 version?

*Videos on library reserve from February 18 to April 1*  
Due April 1

16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> McCarthy story: "The Man in the Brooks Brothers Shirt"  
(Blackboard/Document) & supplement: "Dottie Makes an Honest Woman of Herself" (Blackboard/Document)  
18<sup>th</sup> Group 4 on McCarthy

19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> Rosenfeld "Wolfie" (Blackboard Document) with screening and discussion of movie, *Carnal Knowledge* (based on play by Jules Feiffer/Directed by Mike Nichols)  
22<sup>nd</sup> Class Group 5 leads "Wolfie"/*Carnal* discussion  
Video on reserve after screening.

### **APRIL 24 Reading by novelist Samuel Delany—7 pm Moyer Forum**

23<sup>d</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> classes Munro stories: "Chance" & "Passion"  
28<sup>th</sup> Group 6 leads Munro discussion

Final Exam to be scheduled by registrar—see description of exam on Blackboard under Assignments

Rosenwasser Spring, 2006

English 241 The Nature of Narrative

Office: CA 245 Phone: 484-664-3334

E-Mail: [rosenwas@muhlenberg.edu](mailto:rosenwas@muhlenberg.edu); (evenings use [rosenwasser@rcn.com](mailto:rosenwasser@rcn.com))

Tentative Office Hours: Office Hours: TTH 4:30-5:30, W 3:00-4:00, and by appointment

Class: MW 11:00-12:15 in Taylor 7

### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

W Jan 18 Introduction

M Jan 23 *Writing Analytically*, Chapter 1, pp1-34 & Bruner, *Making Stories*, pp3-20

**NOTE:** Through April 10, we will improvise. Assignments will be taken from the required texts in the course. The texts are:

1. Peter Turchi and Andrea Barrett, eds, *The Story Behind the Story*. Norton.  
 University
2. Jerome Bruner, *Making Stories: Law, Literature, Life*. Harvard Press. ISBN 0-674-01099-X
3. Rosenwasser & Stephen, *Writing Analytically*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Thomson/  
 [required text for this class] Wadsworth, 2005, ISBN 1-4130-1012-1
4. Josip Novakovich, *Writing Fiction Step By Step*, Story Press, ISBN 1-884910-35-1
5. Art Spiegelman, *Maus*, volumes I and II, Pantheon, ISBN 0679748407

Please get the correct editions (that is, the new 4<sup>th</sup> edition of *Writing Analytically* and both volumes of *Maus*).

W Jan 25  
 M Jan 30  
 W Feb 1  
 M Feb 6  
 W Feb 8  
 M Feb 13  
 W Feb 15  
 M Feb 20  
 W Feb 22  
 M Feb 27  
 W Mar 1  
 M Mar 6 spring break  
 W Mar 8 spring break  
 M Mar 13  
 W Mar 15  
 M Mar 20  
 W Mar 22 no class—at a conference  
 M Mar 27  
 W Mar 29  
 M Apr 3  
 W Apr 5  
 M Apr 10  
 W Apr 12 Art Spiegelman, *Maus I*  
 M Apr 17 Easter break  
 W Apr 19 *Maus I*  
 M Apr 24 *Maus I*  
 W Apr 26 *Maus II*  
 M May 1 *Maus II*  
 W May 3 workshop late drafts of short stories in small groups

## I. AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND A FEW DEFINITIONS TO GET US STARTED

The aim of this course is, as the course title suggests, to introduce you to the nature of narrative. But what is the *nature* of something? How it functions? Its social utility? Its spiritual worth (whatever that means)? What it threatens? Suffice it to say that to discover the nature of something is a fairly elusive, even mystical enterprise. Nonetheless, we'll try; and I, for one, continue to be engaged by the project. I hope you will be too.

What is a narrative? It's not a term we can define simply or singly, so let's start with three complementary definitions.

1. First, let's say that *a narrative is a sequence that occurs through time, and that offers some kind of connecting of events into a plot (or plots) that organizes time, that makes it purposeful*. Narrative, in other words, is a way of thinking, of making sense of experience, **of giving meaning to time**. We will shorthand this definition as **narrative as epistemological tool** ("epistemology" is the study of how we come to know things).

It follows that

\*our lives are composed and organized as narratives: we are each the hero of our own life's story; and

\*our personal narratives are surrounded and informed by broader cultural narratives—what narrative theorists term "grand-" or "meta-narratives"—that tell us who and how to be: be well-liked, excel in school and sports, get a good job, make money, help others, achieve 2.4 kids and a split-level spouse, etc.

2. Second, and less abstractly, a narrative is a story—a sequence of events—usually told in prose, involving characters and what they say and do. In this course, we will be examining mostly prose narratives mostly written in the recent past. We will study these narratives, at least to some extent, as an *anatomical enterprise*: to understand a thing by understanding its various parts. We will explore kinds of narration. We will focus on the ways that plots are organized, that characters are conceived, that settings and other elements of so-called "description" actually function. We can shorthand this definition as **narrative as record or account**. [It bears mentioning that narratives are not limited to fiction, especially if fiction is conceived in opposition to (the narrative known as) "real life." All histories are narratives, for example, as are newspaper accounts. Most political pundits now agree that Bush defeated Gore because the Republicans had a narrative but the Democrats did not.]

To give you a broader sense of the range of narratives, I have ordered a text entitled *Making Stories: Law, Literature, Life* by Jerome Bruner, a distinguished psychologist and educational theorist. I have taught it a few times now and have found it to be an interesting but challenging text. Bruner writes, for example, of "how rituals of adjudication manage to stem cycles of revenge"(46)—this is not a book for the faint-hearted or absent-minded. But it's smart, and its attempts to locate narrative in the frame of cultural and especially

legal studies as much as literary study should enrich our discussions of both individual short stories and of narrative theory generally.

3. Finally, narrative is an experience in which we all participate, on both the producing and the consuming ends. A key premise of the course is that we can learn more about the nature of narratives if we not only consume (i.e., read and analyze) them, but also experiment with writing them. The narratives we will consume come from a new collection of short fiction entitled *The Story Behind the Story*. I have only read a handful of stories from this text, which I used for the first time last semester, so I do not know it well. One of the main reasons I chose it was its idea to include brief accounts from each author about how she or he came to write the story—how it came to be produced. And as Josip Novakovich persuasively argues in our guide to writing narratives, *Writing Fiction Step By Step*, we can expand our understanding of narratives by doing various **exercises** with writing them. We'll shorthand this definition as **narrative as participatory experience**.

How much of this kind of composing will we do this semester? Only as the narrative of Nature of Narrative unfolds will we be able to tell. (Yes, all courses are also narratives.) It is a good bet, though, that at the least you will be writing and then revising several versions of an autobiographical narrative at the beginning of the semester, followed by various experiments with writing fiction, and culminating with the production of a full-fledged short story at the end.

## II. THE SYLLABUS NARRATIVE

In one of the best novels of the last few decades, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (1984), the Czech novelist Milan Kundera has his narrator contemplate the main character, Tomas, who is trying to decide whether to invite a woman, Tereza, to move in with him:

We can never know what to want, because, living only one life, we can neither compare it with our previous lives nor perfect it in our lives to come.

Was it better to be with Tereza or to remain alone?

There is no means of testing which decision is better, because there is no basis for comparison. We live everything as it comes, without warning, like an actor going on cold. And what can life be worth if the first rehearsal for life is life itself? That is why life is always like a sketch. (8)

As with life, so with this course. The syllabus is a sketch. We are all “going on cold” together. If the pace gets too fast, we will cut some of the reading. If we need more time to *breathe*—to catch up, to discuss your own writing—we'll simply take it. You should consider only one text inviolable, *Maus I & II* by Art Spiegelman. The rest is subject to change.

So, the given of the course is **improvisation**. But that is not utter formlessness. Rather, like jazz, it begins with a few themes that we will rehearse

and develop across the time span of the semester. (Arguably that's what separates music from noise: it organizes—in effect, narrativizes—time.) These themes are implicit in the three definitions of narrative offered above. Narrative as epistemology will take us to the notion that narrative is a way of thinking about life as well as art. This is a primary focus of Bruner's book, and so we will begin with at least the first few chapters of *Making Stories* to give us a crash course in narrative theory. In addition I will almost certainly distribute several other narratological essays for us to discuss as the semester unfolds—probably having to do with neuroscience and with the problem of sentimentality.

These theoretical readings we will alternate with our analysis and discussion of selected stories from our anthology, *The Story Behind the Story*, which contains 26 of them. In most semesters, we study 5 or 6 stories, and we return to them again and again later in the semester, rereading to see, for example, how different writers introduce characters or describe rooms. So far, I have really enjoyed reading a handful of stories from the anthology, and I am looking forward to expanding my repertoire of short fiction by reading new ones with you this spring.

As should be clear, my decision not to read the central narrative text for the course ahead of time also means that I cannot assume great interpretive authority over the stories we will be reading. The playing field is more level this way, and of course, *you* necessarily take on more responsibility for figuring out what to say about the stories, since you can't rely on teacherly expertise for the kinds of *final answers* that are only available in sentimental narratives, of which Hemingway may have uttered the last word when he wrote, "Isn't it pretty to think so?" Not in this life, folks. (I do have a scheme for getting you to determine which stories we will read, which I will open to you later. Meanwhile, I encourage you to read stories in the anthology that look good to you, and if you find them compelling, come tell me and I will consider assigning them to the class as a whole.)

We will work through the stories, performing lots of short exercises on them adapted from *Writing Analytically* (aka *WA*). The aim here will be to sharpen your habits of observation and elevate your chops with regard to making that crucial leap to implication—that is, to what meanings the observations might plausibly lead. (If you don't have the courage to ask and answer "so what?" about the stuff you are studying, you are ripping yourself off.) More mundanely, these exercises and ones from Novokovich's how-to-write-stories primer will serve to help you learn about how stories work, their constituent parts.

At any rate, you can expect our approach to narrative to be quite detached and, if I may use the word, "scientific." We will encounter the stories quite impersonally, as high energy constructs, *language machines that have designs on readers* (take that as a first definition of what a short story is). And along similar lines, we will not, for example, be thinking about characters simply (and simple-mindedly) as people but as *representations* of people. We will be

querying *what stories invite us to think*, and how they do so, and why they do so.

Especially once the semester gets going, we will probably begin to concentrate more intensively on various narrative writing exercises, mined from *Writing Fiction Step By Step*, which will build to the final project, the short story. As the syllabus narrative winds down, we will devote the bulk of class time to *Maus*, a two-volume comic book and the only nonfiction narrative on the list, which will not only raise questions about the fictive aspect of historical narrative but also allow us to consider visual narratives. I've allotted a lot of time to discuss *Maus* because I assume your primary efforts during the last three weeks of the course will be directed towards writing your short story.

### III. WRITING

As a writing-intensive (W) course (under the provisions of the writing-across-the-curriculum requirement), The Nature of Narrative must fulfill the following guidelines: a diagnostic assignment in the first weeks of the semester; a minimum of fifteen typed pages divided among at least three assignments, including a revision component; and the determination of at least 25% of the final grade according to writing proficiency. I'm not sure exactly how we will fulfill these requirements—we'll improvise—but the writing will almost certainly be distributed among the following formats:

- \* Take-home exercises: usually brief, highly specific analyses, answers to questions posed in class, applications of models from *WA*, etc. There will probably be a lot of these.

- \* Passage-based in-class writings & short papers: you will be asked to select a specific passage from the reading assignment for that day and, during the first 20 minutes of class, analyze it both in its immediate context and as exemplary of some "larger" meaning in the work. Then you will take your draft home, revise it for half an hour, and submit it at the next class, with the first draft attached. See the hand-out on "Tips for Doing In-Class Writing" for more detailed advice. We will probably do these occasionally—less often than the take-home exercises.

- \* Take-home narrative-writing exercises from *Writing Fiction Step By Step* on such topics as recording images, manipulating point of view, constructing characters, etc.

- \* Narratives of your own composing—we'll start with personal narratives and expand our experiments to the point of culminating with a short story of at least 7-10 pages written over the last three weeks of the semester.

**A Note about Written Presentation:** Please type everything double-spaced, leaving sufficient room (preferably 1.25") in the left margin for my marginalia.

### IV. THE CLASSROOM

**A Note about Classroom Decorum:** Let me emphasize that this is not a course aimed primarily at teaching you how to be a short story writer. The

composing-narratives aspect of the course is about learning-by-doing, and part of that learning is discussing what we've learned. So please don't get too shy or thin-skinned or panicky when you are asked to read aloud to the class anything you've written. And along the same lines, please make your comments about the work of others (and in response to their comments in class) both civil and constructive. Education is all about moving outside our narrow little egos to learn about the world beyond the self.

**A Note about Preparing for Class:** I expect you not only to attend classes regularly but to prepare for them conscientiously. That is, to discuss productively, you must first read carefully and actively, thinking about the reading. *You should come to every class with at least one passage from the day's reading assignment that you want to talk about, preferably with a few notes about the issues it raises for you.* This is your primary responsibility to the class as a community. Expect me to call on you.

In addition, I expect you to bring your book(s) to class. A carpenter who forgot to bring his tools to the job site would not expect to get paid for that day. The books are your tools. If you come to class without your book, it will be noticed and remembered in relation to the Intangibles aspect of evaluation (see below). Need I add that you should mark up your books with underlining and/or marginalia, even if this means not getting full value when you resell them—or at least have notes taken from the reading? As Chapter 4 of *Writing Analytically* argues, reading actively requires you to respond to the text as you are reading, to note and work with the language.

**Attendance Policy:** As a general rule, let's say three cuts are reasonable; after three, they will affect your "Intangibles" grades (see below). If you miss class ten times, in my view you haven't really taken the course and so should not expect to pass it. Have the grace to accept the consequences of absence stoically.

## V. ARITHMETIC

### A. Grading

Since it's not clear exactly how much of which kinds of writing we'll actually end up doing, it's impossible to predict accurately how much everything will count towards determination of the final grade. As a highly tentative scheme, I offer the following:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| observation exercises, in-class writings, short papers | 25% |
| narrative exercises                                    | 10% |
| narrative compositions                                 | 25% |
| final exam   | 20% |
| intangibles  | 20% |

Obviously, if we end up doing lots of narrative exercises and very few short papers, the percentages will shift to accommodate the change.

### B. How I Grade

I will take your writing seriously, trying to understand your ideas, suggest implications, and genuinely engage what you have to say. Somewhere in the final comment, prefaced by the word “overall,” I will evaluate the piece as “outstanding,” “very good,” “good,” “enough,” or “embarrassing.” Here, briefly, is what these terms mean:

**Outstanding:** the piece offers an original, coherent, and persuasive piece of complex thinking, using evidence not only to substantiate but to develop its claims, all located within resonant course contexts; this mark is rare. It is roughly equivalent to an A+.

**Very good:** the piece contains genuine thinking and fairly clearly articulates its ideas, supports its claims with analysis of evidence, and shows some sense of “the larger picture.” It teaches us something, but still probably overlooks significant details, alternative interpretations or counter-arguments. It is roughly equivalent to an A or A-.

**Good:** the piece has some interesting ideas and is generally coherent but also has some problems: e.g., it may over-rely on summary at the expense of analysis, contain unacknowledged contradictions or complications, neglect to substantiate its claims with evidence, or leave its analysis underdeveloped. “Good” is roughly equivalent to a B; “good to very good” or “verging on very good” is roughly a B+.

**Enough:** the piece accomplishes enough to constitute having done the assignment, but probably contains several of the items listed as problems under “Good” above. “Enough” means, in effect, that you haven’t “gotten it” yet—that the piece still doesn’t really manage sufficient analytical thinking about the material. A fairly accurate summary without much awareness of point of view is probably “enough.” If you find yourself getting several of these in a row, I strongly suggest that you confer with me. Enough is in the C/C+ range.

**Embarrassing:** the piece is not really acceptable. It probably doesn’t analyze or even summarize accurately. “Embarrassing” is a message that you should spend more time on the course; it is roughly equivalent to a D or lower.

Often short exercises receive only a check plus, check, or check minus.

### C. The Intangibles

The intangibles include class participation, effort, improvement, and attendance. They account for a sizable portion—20%—of your overall grade, because the success of the course depends upon your active engagement of the material and your willingness to share your views and to respond acutely to the views of others. I also encourage you to confer with me during office hours about the course. It is always best to bring with you the text or piece of your own writing that you want to discuss.

### D. Missed or Late Work

*You* are responsible for any work that you miss because of absence. Contact another member of the class in such cases (preferably), or if absolutely necessary, e-mail me. Absence, in short, is no excuse for not doing the reading or preparing for an in-class writing. Any late submission will receive reduced credit—the later the submission, the greater the reduction. At a certain point it will be too late to submit the work at all.

As for brief extensions: I will do my best to accommodate you flexibly. If you are in a crunch or have other compelling reasons for an extension, contact me ahead of time.

### E. The Final Exam

By way of encouraging you to talk the talk, there will probably be a section asking you to define key terms and identify them in action. And I suspect that there will be a choice among essay questions treating *Maus*. I will also probably ask you to write about a piece of fiction that we have not studied.

\* \* \*

All faculty have been directed to reinforce in their syllabi the importance of the Academic Behavior Code. Yes, it matters for all of the best idealistic reasons. Any source you consult needs to be cited promptly and accurately.

If you have a learning disability, please do not hesitate to consult with me, so that we can match your needs with course requirements most fairly.



Rosenwasser Spring, 2006  
Questionnaire for The Nature of Narrative

Please complete and return the following questionnaire at our second meeting.  
Use the back of this sheet if needed.

1. Formal name:
2. What I should call you:
3. Local e-mail address:  
Do you check your e-mail frequently?
4. Local phone:
5. Hometown and state:
6. Major or prospective major(s), minor and career:
  
7. Name the last books that you have read that were not assigned in a course.
  
8. What programs do you regularly watch on television?
  
9. Name the best and worst films you've seen lately. Name a few of your favorite films as well.
  
10. Specifically, what music do you listen to?
  
11. What courses at Muhlenberg have influenced you most strongly?
  
12. Who are some of your favorite authors?
  
13. Please browse the titles of the short stories listed in the table of contents of *The Story Behind the Story* and name below the titles of any of these stories that you have already read.
  
14. Do you write fiction, creative nonfiction, or poetry? If so, how often, how much, how intently?
  
15. What do you consider your particular strengths and weaknesses as a writer?

16. Why are you taking this course?

Rosenwasser Spring, 2006  
English 241: The Nature of Narrative  
A Few Tips about Doing In-Class Writings

**The goal of in-class writings is to help you generate ideas.** You can do that, almost formulaically, by following the steps below. You needn't proceed in the numbered order, but you should probably include each of these steps.

1. **Seek to understand before you judge.** Your primary goal is not to express your agreement/disagreement or like/dislike. This reflex move to premature judgment is the single largest impediment to productive analysis. The aim of analysis is to find out and formulate stuff about the world beyond the self—in this case, the texts, and their relationship to the nature of narrative in general and their specific strategies and meanings in particular. In this context, you need to get more detached and scientific: your focus should rest on what the text is saying and doing, on its point of view (POV) about various matters. Your focus should not concentrate solely on your “reactions”—your feelings about characters or about their points of view on various matters.

Your point of view in fact inevitably suffuses any analysis, since you are the one selecting the evidence and offering the observations about it, but your POV should not be foregrounded—at least not as a like/dislike. Insofar as your POV does enter overtly, as judgment, that should come after you've analyzed the data. And crucially, it should address the work, not a character. That is, you should not offer your POV on a character simply as if she were a person (she's not); rather, you should offer your POV on the work's POV of the character (a representation of a human being constructed by the language of the story, and more particularly, by the story's particular narrator.)

2. **Choose a limited piece of concrete evidence** to focus on. You should select a passage that you find interesting, that you have questions about, probably one that you don't quite understand. That way the writing will have some work to do—to help you understand it by putting your thoughts into some kind of sustained analytical form. In some cases your passage might be a leitmotif (repeated phrase), a strand, or an example of a pattern of similarity or contrast that you have noted elsewhere in the text as well. *Always write out the quote and include the page number*, which is located in parentheses after the quote, at the top of the page.

3. **Contextualize the evidence.** Where does it come from in the text? Who is saying what where to whom when at the point this quotation appears? Briefly answering these questions will prevent you from taking things out of context. Identifying the source of the language—the speaker, the POV—is key here, since it always matters who (which character) is producing the language you are looking at.

4. **Make observations about the evidence: talk about the actual language you've quoted; dwell with it.** Most writers leave the evidence behind far too quickly to launch into generalizations that are often clichés. What words seem interesting and important to you, and why? Try to paraphrase parts of the passage; this is one of the best ways of beginning to define and question and get ideas about the evidence. Attend to the possibility of multiple meanings; ask yourself what key words mean; notice when

the language uses metaphors as opposed to literal statements. Evaluate the style of the chosen passage, which is always a key part of what it “says.”

5. **Share your reasoning about what the evidence means** as you move from observation to implication (i.e., from the details to your conclusions about them). Remember that evidence can never speak for itself; you need to explain how and why it means what you claim it means.

6. **Culminate your discussion in “larger” reference to the work:** that is, move from your local discussion of the passage to address what, given your analysis, the work is “saying” about this or that issue or question. You should *avoid concluding your in-class writing in reference to a character*; instead, talk about what the work means, the implied author’s POV. Even if you are running out of time, you should leap to this move—with a phrase like “I’m out of time, but my big point is . . .”—before you stop.

# THE LITERARY MARKETPLACE

ENG 374

DR. FRANCESCA COPPA

SPRING 2006

- I. "The Crushing Power of Big Publishing" by Mark Crispin Miller
- II. "Of King's Treasuries" by John Ruskin
- III. *Consuming Fictions* by Terry Lovell
- IV. "Introduction" to *Consuming Pleasures* by Jennifer Hayward
- V. various articles about Stephen King
- VI. "The Act of Reading the Romance," by Janice Radway
- VII. "Romancing the Classroom" by Nara Schoenberg
- VIII. "Television Fans, Poachers, Nomads" by Henry Jenkins
- IX. The New Yorker — Comment: The Story of Us All
- X. "How you stupidly blew fifteen million dollars a week, etc." by Harlan Ellison
- XI. "Credit Grab" by Tad Friend
- XII. "Authorship Without Ownership: Reconsidering Incentives in a Digital Age"  
by Diane Leeheer Zimmerman
- XIII. "November 1960: Lady Chatterley's Lover"
- XIV. Education and the Transmission of a Literary Culture