

ENGL 4384: Senior Seminar
Fall 2017
3 Credit Hours
MW 5:30-6:45
TLC 2237
3 credit hours

“Even in the Future, the Story Begins with ‘Once Upon a Time’”: Fairy Tales Grow Up

“The fairy tale emanates from specific struggles to humanize bestial and barbaric forces, which have terrorized our minds and communities in concrete ways, threatening to destroy free will and human compassion. The fairy tale sets out to conquer this concrete terror through metaphors.”

—Jack Zipes



—Fairyland subdivision on Lookout Mountain, Chattanooga, Tennessee

The Instructor

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TLC 2248

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Fall office hours: M 4:30-5:15, W 12-3:15, and by scheduled appointment

The Course

Specific Section Description

Of core stories, scholar Jack Zipes argues, “over the centuries [,] we have transformed the ancient myths and folk tales and made them into the fabric of our lives. Consciously and unconsciously we weave the narratives of myth and folktale into our daily existence.” The first half of our fall semester’s course will entail unpacking this statement, noting ways in which select modern artists have consciously extrapolated fairy tale memes into their own work, thus (re)viewing the originals for old and new audiences alike. This work will see us playing through a narrative-based, episodic videogame that asks players to understand the wolf among us; reading a young adult novel that interweaves Cinderella’s plight with posthuman plague-ridden upheaval, and parsing a book of poetry by one of America’s most skilled confessional poets, Anne Sexton. In each reading event, our central task will be to understand the material from whence the work springs and to argue in our verbal and written work how new renderings enrich, modify, or invert meaning.

In the second half of the semester, students will build on existing writing and research skills as they complete the arduous process of composing an original scholarly essay about a modern text based all--or in part--on an older fairy or folk story. Class members will work collaboratively and in one-on-one conferencing as they research, propose, revise, and edit before turning towards shaping the class’s body of work into an anthology representative of our journey together.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will understand and apply select theoretical and practical issues in the discipline of literary studies.
- Students will become conversant with representative texts and select issues in literary history that allow for integration of the aims of the discipline.
- Students will develop the ability to work both independently and collaboratively toward the publication of an anthology of essays by class members.
- Students will propose, research, and execute a substantive literary argument appropriate to the seminar topic.
- Students will be able to make effective oral presentations, both individual and collaborative.
- Students will participate in an end-of-semester exit interview to assess how the course and the major have served their professional goals.

- Students will demonstrate in both oral and written work a discipline-specific critical facility through convincing and well-supported analysis of related material.
- Students will demonstrate their command of academic English and the tenets of sound composition by means of thesis-driven analytical prose.

The Work

Required Texts (in the order we will read them)

- *Transformations*, by Anne Sexton
- *The Wolf Among Us* episodes 1-5, Telltale Games*
- *Cinder*, by Marissa Meyer
- Various supplemental readings, all provided on Course Den

*I suggest purchasing this game via Amazon download. If you are already a gamer, you may choose to purchase the game on Steam. Some might prefer to buy through the App store and play on their tablets.

Suggested Texts and Supplies

- Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (6th edition)
- Grammar handbook
- USB drive

Major Assignments and Percentage Breakdown

- Two 4-6 page Response Papers (15%, 20%)
- Capstone Project (12-15 pages) with associated benchmarks (annotated bibliography and proposal; two conferences; drafting and peer reviewing; editorial meetings; and final draft) (50%)
- Class and Community (15%)

Methods of Evaluation

I will use the rubric for upper-division courses to evaluate the writing you do in this course.

Class and community grades include my consideration of your performance in the following areas: participation in class collaboration or discussion; performance in the planning and deployment phases of the project; and your demonstrated willingness to work to achieve stated course and Learning Community goals. I seek intellectually invested individuals in our class; strive to present yourself in this way through attention, discussion, and work ethic.

All grades are based on a 100-point scale, summarized below:

- 0-59 = F
- 60-69 = D
- 70-79 = C
- 80-89 = B
- 90-100 = A

The Semester in Brief

During the first six weeks of the semester, we will read a book of poetry alongside short critical articles, the study of which will clarify the purpose of fairy and folk tales within particular cultural contexts. We will then study an interactive narrative video game and play through its first five episodes. You will also read of short critical articles on interactive narrative in gaming. You will compose two, 4-6 page argument-driven Response papers, one about each of these texts.

During weeks seven through nine, you will read a novel before spending time studying how to research a concept in that novel and practicing how to read longer secondary scholarly articles.

For the remainder of the semester, you will turn to your own Capstone Project for which you will choose a text reflective of our course's theme and critical lenses and, via close reading and research, craft an advanced argument-driven, critical 12-15-page paper. This is a multi-step process with items due along the way. You will propose, conference, draft, review in class, and revise. You will also engage in editorial meetings to discuss the anthology's artwork, order, etc.

In sum, then, the first half of our semester involves study and training. During the second half, you will continue to study and train, but you will do so in service of developing your own Capstone Project.

Course Fees

Student course fees associated with ENGL 4384 go towards the production of the class anthology of written work.

Missed Class Work and Late Work*

Students cannot make up missed in-class assignments (practice analysis, group discussion work, or writing practice). As a rule, late work is not accepted except under dire conditions. However, if you feel your circumstance is extenuating, please do contact me via email to set up a face-to-face conference so that we can discuss. At that time, I will let you know if you may turn in the work and what, if any, deduction will apply.

**Note: I do realize that, sometimes, "life happens," and that, from time to time, problems over which you have no control can occur. If this happens, I urge you to contact me immediately so that we can sit down and talk. In most cases, I have found that honest communication helps us work towards a solution.*

Required Format

All work must be word-processed and in MLA format. Any in-class daily assignments should be legibly written to aid in evaluation. You will turn in hard copies of the two Response Papers but will, later, turn in electronic copies of parts of the Capstone to aid with editing the anthology.

UWG Email Policy

All students should utilize their UWG email address to communicate with me. Please do not use Course Den's email function or other email addresses you may have.

Course Den

While our class is a face-to-face course, I make use of Course Den, the university's online learning platform, to provide you with documents, links to readings and rules, important announcements, and, from time to time, discussion boards. You will need to use your UWG username and password to access Course Den regularly to get materials, check announcements and, when required, post ideas, examples, etc.

Keep in mind that this class is significantly different from other upper-division English courses that you have completed. It is the capstone course for the major and must be your top academic priority this semester.

The Policies and Procedures

University-Wide Policies

Please read the [university-wide course policies linked here](#).

Plagiarism

UWG's [Code of Student Conduct](#) indicates that plagiarism "Includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials such as term papers or other academic materials prepared by a person other than the submitting student." Further, collusion, or excessive collaboration when not appropriate, is considered cheating.

Students are expected to credit sources in assignments accurately. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the assignment and/or course. You can also be subject to a university disciplinary review, and the university requires professors to report plagiarism in writing to the appropriate university office. Other university policies that govern plagiarism are found here: [Student Handbook](#).

Please note: "excessive collaboration" includes having family members, friends, or significant others edit your work. This means that no one should "fix" your grammar for you or "write in" sentences/ sources/ documentation for you. This sort of behavior is cheating and will be treated as such. We will collaborate in class, and you have the University Writing Center as well as my input should you need extra advice about your work. Should you hire a personal tutor or use an athletic tutor, realize that excessive collaboration with that person can also result in plagiarism charges. In short: do your own work. Should I have evidence of cheating, you will be assigned an "F" for the course, and I will recommend that you be sent before a disciplinary committee.

My policy is a zero tolerance one.

Attendance

Our class meets twice per week, and during each class period you can expect to discuss; complete in-class daily assignments; listen to your peers' ideas; and work together to arrive at increasingly complex conclusions because of our collaborative analysis. Because of the think tank, workshop environment I seek to set up with you, *attendance is mandatory*.

Students may miss *up to 4* class periods. After the fourth absence, students will not be able to pass our course because of the amount of work missed. I don't distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, so please choose the days you must miss wisely. Avoid tardiness, as I start class promptly and do not want you to miss a single moment of instruction or disrupt the ongoing learning here in TLC 2237.

Students with Special Needs/Accessibility Pledge

Any student who has a special need should inform me during the first week of class. We will then set up a conference to discuss the specifics of the official paperwork from Accessibility Services. Students with documented special needs may expect accommodation in relation to classroom accessibility, modification of testing, special test administration, etc. For more information, please contact [Accessibility Services](#) at the Counseling Center at the University of West Georgia. I have also uploaded a document related to Accessibility for technology to Course Den in case anyone needs help with access.

Office Hours and Discussion

I list my office hours at the top of this document, and I welcome you to come by to introduce yourself, talk about classwork at any stage, to ask questions, or even to chat. You might even want to continue a discussion begun in class. Whatever the case, I encourage you to make use of office hours and of me as your guide.

I do want to say a word about confidential discussion. The Board of Regents, the governing body for the University System of Georgia, recently passed [new rules](#) regarding sexual misconduct and its reporting on our campus. As of July 2016, all faculty and staff must report complaints of or information regarding sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator on campus. Here is the UWG [Title IX website](#).

For you, this means that I cannot guarantee confidentiality if you come to me and tell me about an instance of sexual misconduct. I must report. However, the following locations and individuals can offer confidential support, and I strongly encourage you to talk to them. I can help you contact these places, too, and I can accompany you, if you would like. You are still welcomed to talk to me about such issues; but know that, since I am not a trained professional counselor and I am most concerned with your health, I must report and will always encourage you to obtain help to ensure your safety and well-being. Below are various confidential places on campus to go for help. Above all, whether you share with me or self-report, know this: You deserve safety. You deserve wellness. You deserve a positive, professional outlet for any sexual misconduct you experience.

<u>UNIVERSITY POLICE</u> 678-839-6000 (9-6000 on campus)	<u>COUNSELING CENTER</u> Location: 123 Row Hall Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8-5 Tel: (678) 839-6428 Call UWG Police after hours Email: counseling@westga.edu
<u>HEALTH SERVICES</u> 678-839-6452	<u>PATIENT /VICTIM ADVOCATES</u> 678-839-0641; 678-839-5338, after hours 678-839-6000

Administrivia

- The best way to contact me outside of office hours is via your university email account. Of course, you may call my office or come by during office hours. Finally, you can schedule an appointment with me outside of office hours by talking with me in class or via email. While I am incredibly interested in discussing your work with you, please note: email is not an appropriate or legal venue to discuss grades or to hold extended conversation related to writing, and I do not check email after 6 p.m. or on Sundays.
- Please turn off phones upon entering our classroom. Ringtones and notifications distract your fellow classmates and me and prevents us from doing our work together. If you have an emergency that may require electronic communication, put your phone on vibrate and exit the classroom if you receive a notification. Please also avoid texting or phone use during class, unless we are using technology. When you enter the world of your phone, you have left our class and are effectively not here any longer.
- You may make use of small laptops or tablets while in class; however, if they become noticeably distracting you will be asked not to bring them to class any longer.
- I reserve the right to amend this document with future handouts.
- You must have your materials with you to participate fully. This means bringing film annotations, readings, and/or having access to other assignment materials. You will be free to stay in class for the benefit of instruction and discussion when not prepared, but you are essentially not present when you do not have your materials.

The Daily Syllabus through Mid-Term

August 9

Course Introduction

Before next class do the following:

- Reread this document, log into Course Den and peruse our class's page
- Read the following: pgs. 53-57 in Sexton and "The Twelve Months," "Yeh-Shen," "The Little Glass Slipper," and "The Princess on the Glass Hill," all found on Course Den

-Read "The Meaning of Fairy Tale within the Evolution of Culture" on Course Den

August 14

Mapping Cinderellas: Context and Content

Before next class do the following:

-Read Sexton, pages 1-22

August 16

Response One assigned

Discuss Sexton

Before next class do the following:

-Read Sexton, pages 25-42

-Read "That Story: Anne Sexton and Her Transformations" on Course Den

-Begin work on Response One

August 21

Discuss Sexton and Ostriker

Before next class do the following:

-Continue to work on Response One

-Read Sexton, pages 67-92

August 23

Discuss Sexton

Before next class do the following:

-Finish Response One

-Read Sexton, pages 93-112

August 28

Turn in Response One

Discuss Sexton

Before next class do the following:

-Read "Why Fairy Tales Matter: The Performative and the Transformative" and "How the Rise of Narrative Design is Revolutionizing the Craft of Video Game Storytelling," both on Course Den

August 30

From Tale Type to *Fables* to *The Wolf Among Us*: Narrative Evolutions for Tale Telling

Before next class do the following:

-Play episodes 1 and 2 of *The Wolf Among Us*

-Read "From Narrative Games to Playable Stories: Towards a Poetics of Interactive Narrative" on Course Den

September 4: Labor Day Holiday—no regular class or office hours

September 6

Discuss *The Wolf Among Us* and articles

Before next class do the following:

- Play episode 3 of *The Wolf Among Us*
- We will meet in TLC 1109

September 11: Meet in TLC 1109 Tonight

Response Two assigned

Discuss *The Wolf Among Us*

Before next class do the following:

- Play episode 4 of *The Wolf Among Us*
- Begin Response Two

September 13

Discuss *The Wolf Among Us*

Before next class do the following:

- Finish *The Wolf Among Us*
- Read "The Female Gaze: How Being Watched Affects Your Morality in Adventure Games" on Course Den
- Continue to work on Response Two

September 18

Discuss *The Wolf Among Us* and article

Before next class do the following:

- Read *Cinder*, chapters 1-8

September 20

Discuss *Cinder*

Before next class do the following:

- Read *Cinder*, chapters 9-20
- Finish Response Two

September 25

Turn in Response Two

Discuss *Cinder*

Before next class do the following:

- Read *Cinder*, chapters 21-29

September 27

Discuss *Cinder*

Before next class do the following:

- Finish *Cinder*

September 29: No regular class or office hours, but today is mid-term, the last day to drop with a "W"

October 2

Discuss *Cinder*

Before next class do the following:

-Read "Putting the Punk in a Steampunk Cinderella: Marissa Meyer's 'Lunar Chronicles'" on Course Den

October 4

Discuss secondary materials, research

Before next class do the following:

-Read "Real Women Aren't Shiny (or Plastic): The Adolescent Female Body in YA Fantasy" on Course Den

October 9

Discuss secondary materials, research

Before next class do the following:

-Examine the assignment sheet for your Capstone Project, found on Course Den, and bring three questions to class for discussion

More detailed syllabus to come. . .