

**FYS 189B**

**Rich Reading**

**Spring, 2009**

Kerry Grant  
Richardson 203  
229 5176  
[kgrant@stlawu.edu](mailto:kgrant@stlawu.edu)

Office hours by appointment

Class meets 10:10-11:55 TH RI 302  
1:40-2:40 M RI 201

### **Course Description**

Texts make a variety of demands on readers. Some of them expect us to know beforehand how to read them. Political cartoons, for example, depend upon our prior knowledge of the issues or persons under attack. Others, such as network news broadcasts, provide only the most basic information about extremely complex issues, leaving the reader to fill in the gaps as he or she chooses. Still others--like novels--may invite us to consult critical articles as a way of refining our understanding. In each case, we can find ourselves needing to read more in order to understand the original text, to enrich our reading of it. This course will ask students to engage with a number of different texts in an effort to learn how appropriate research can be used to generate informed critical readings.

### **Texts**

Thomas Pynchon                      *The Crying of Lot 49*  
Alan J. Pakula (Dir.)                *All The President's Men*

### **Means of Assessment**

**Oral Presentations**                      **20%**

You will make two formal presentations.

**Assignments**                                **30%**

You will be asked to complete 14 assignments to earn a possible total of 400 points.

**Final project**                                **30%**

**Attendance and participation**        **20%**

You are expected to be present as a fully participating member of the class at each session. Any absences beyond three permitted for unexpected emergencies will result in a reduction of this portion of your grade, as will any failure to complete an assignment on time.

### **Schedule**

January

- 19 Introduction to the course.
- 20 Assignment #1.
- 22 Assignment #2. Due: final draft of assignment #1.
  
- 26 Writing workshop.

- 27 PowerPoint/Web-page basics. Assignment #3
- 29 Complete Assignment #3

#### February

- 2 Review of assignment #3 results.
- 3 Assignment #4.
- 5 Assignment #5
  
- 9 Informal presentation of assignment #4 findings
- 10 complete Assignment #5
- 12 Web-page basics (part 2). Assignment #6
  
- 16 Assignment #7.
- 17 Assignment #8
- 19 *Lot 49* Chs 1-2 Assignment #9
  
- 23 *Lot 49* Chs 3-4 Assignment #10 Due: assignment #8
- 24 *Lot 49* Chs 5-6 Assignment #11
- 26 Conferences

#### March

- 2 Conferences
- 3 Assignment #12 Presentations
- 5 Assignment #12 Presentations
- 6,7,8 Assignment #13
  
- 9 *All The President's Men*
- 10 Assignment #14
- 12 Assignment #14
  
- 23 Informal presentation of assignment #14 findings
- 24 Informal presentation of assignment #14 findings
- 26 Introduction to final project. Part 1.
  
- 30 Creating the annotation—a collaborative attempt.
- 31 Creating the annotation—a collaborative attempt.

#### April

- 2 Due: Final Project part 2
  
- 6 Project work
- 7 Project work
- 9 Due: Final Project part 3

- 13 Project work
- 14 Project work
- 16 Due: Final Project part 4
  
- 20 Conferences/rehearsal
- 21 Conferences/rehearsal
- 23 Conferences/rehearsal Due: Final project part 5
  
- 27 Presentations
- 28 Presentations
- 30 Presentations

### **Assignment #1 20 points**

Study your assigned news photograph. Starting from the information provided in the caption, conduct enough on-line research to enable you to write a one-page expanded caption explaining the picture. Cite your sources in MLA format. Edit your work before passing it to another member of the class for peer editing.

### **Assignment #2 20 points**

Using a combination of on-line and print resources, complete the following assignment:

Group 1: Locate and copy a reproduction of David's painting *The Death of Marat*. Locate and record the following: the full name and dates of the painter; the date and size of the painting; the date of Marat's death, both in our calendar and in the French revolutionary calendar; the name and motive of Marat's murderer; the most recent mention of the painting in *The New York Times*; the first five lines spoken by Marat at the beginning of Act II of the play *Marat/Sade*; the first sentence of Una Chaudhuri's essay, "Marat/Sade and the Politics of Interpretation;" footnote 12 from David Roberts' article on Marat/Sade in *New German Critique* 38; two other pieces of information the group decides are relevant to the painting in some way, one drawn from a source the group deems informal (i.e. not likely to be cited in a research paper), and one drawn from a scholarly source other than the ones referred to above. Cite your source for each item of information in MLA format.

Group 2: Locate and copy a reproduction of Delacroix's painting *The Death of Ophelia*. Locate and record the following: the full name and dates of the painter; the date and size of the painting; the most recent mention of the painting in *The New York Times*; Gertrude's account of Ophelia's death in *Hamlet*; the opus number of Hector Berlioz's setting of a poem called "La Mort D'Ophelie;" the name of Tom Stoppard's play based on *Hamlet* ; the first line of p. 120 of the 1968 Grove Press edition; the first sentence of Jill L. Levenson's essay, "Stoppard's Shakespeare: Textual Re-visions;" footnote 14 from Susan C.W. Abbotson's article on Stoppard's play in *English Studies* 79(2); two other

pieces of information the group decides are relevant to the painting in some way, one drawn from a source the group deems informal (i.e. not likely to be cited in a research paper), and one drawn from a scholarly source other than the ones referred to above. Cite your source for each item of information in MLA format.

Group 3: Locate and copy a reproduction of Thomas Hart Benton's painting *Poker Night (From A Streetcar Named Desire)*. Locate and record the following: the full name and dates of the painter; the date and size of the painting; the most recent mention of the painting in *The New York Times*; the first line on p. 160 of the 1947 New Directions edition; the relevant lines from scene three of the play; the gist of Jessica Tandy's response to a request that she pose for a photographic reproduction of the painting; the first sentence of Mary Ann Corrigan's essay, "Realism and Theatricalism in A Streetcar Named Desire;" the asterisked note on p. 56 of Terry Teachout's article, "Brand-Name Opera" in *Commentary* 106(5); two other pieces of information the group decides are relevant to the painting in some way, one drawn from a source the group deems informal (i.e. not likely to be cited in a research paper), and one drawn from a scholarly source other than the ones referred to above. Cite your source for each item of information in MLA format.

Group 4: Locate and copy a reproduction of Gericault's painting *The Raft of the Medusa*. Locate and record the following: the full name and dates of the painter; the date and size of the painting; the most recent mention of the painting in *The New York Times*; relevant lines from the Pogues' recording of "The Wake of the Medusa"; a very brief account of the incident that inspired the painting and a copy of a plan of the raft; the first sentence of C. Riding's essay "The Fatal Raft" in *History Today* 53 no. 2; the name of the image reproduced on p. 172 of "Pleasurable Fear: Géricault and Uncanny Trends at the Opening of the Nineteenth Century"; two other pieces of information the group decides are relevant to the painting in some way, one drawn from a source the group deems informal (i.e. not likely to be cited in a research paper), and one drawn from a scholarly source other than the ones referred to above. Cite your source for each item of information in MLA format.

### **Assignment #3 30 points**

Conduct sufficient research on the term you have been assigned to ensure that you will be able to explain the concept to others, making sure that you document your sources. Then, (1) create a sequence of stand-alone PowerPoint slides designed to elucidate the concept; (2) create a web-page on which you write a 200-word glossary entry based on your understanding of the term, with links to fuller sources of information.

### **Assignment #4 50 points**

Examine your assigned cartoon. Draw up a list of questions that you cannot immediately answer regarding the significance of the cartoon and its caption. Conduct the research necessary to make you confident that you could explain the cartoon's intended message. Write a one-page explanation of the cartoon's significance.

Example:

If you were given the cover of the *New Yorker* reproduced below, you would need to answer a number of questions in order fully to grasp its significance. Who is the seated man? Why is he depicted in a toilet? What is the significance of the foot that appears beneath the stall divider? What language is the newspaper written in? What events just prior to the Oct. 8 date on the cover might be the basis for the cartoon?



This *New Yorker* cover combines two unrelated news events to generate its comic and mildly satirical effect. The seated figure depicts Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who spoke at Columbia University on Sept. 24, 2007. Among a number of controversial remarks made on that occasion, Ahmadinejad chose to comment on the subject of homosexuality, prompting the following blog entry: “Who can take the president of Iran seriously when he looks squarely at an audience at one of the leading universities in the world and insists there are no homosexuals in his country? ‘In Iran, we do not have this phenomenon,’ he said, speaking through an interpreter on a university-wide simulcast. ‘I don’t know who has told you we have it.’” (Joe Cutbirth on The Huffington Post, Sept. 25 2007 [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joe-cutbirth/ahmadinejads-columbia-mo\\_b\\_65760.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joe-cutbirth/ahmadinejads-columbia-mo_b_65760.html))

A few months earlier, on June 11, Idaho Republican Sen. Larry Craig, had been arrested for allegedly soliciting sex in a men’s bathroom in the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport. An undercover police officer who occupied the stall next to the senator’s claimed that the senator had tapped his foot several times before sliding it under the partition to touch the side of the officer’s foot.

In the image above, the sandal and the loose-fitting pants, coupled with the Farsi newspaper, indicate that the scene has been transported to Iran, where, according to Amahdinejad, such incidents do not occur.

### **Assignment #5 10 points**

Read your assigned editorial. Identify ten places in the editorial where an annotation of some kind would help a reader of the editorial to understand the argument being presented. Do the research necessary to write notes clarifying each item. Be sure to record the source(s) of your information.

Example:

Here are two paragraphs of an editorial piece from *The Nation* (Oct. 29, 2008). Text in bold is accompanied by suggestions for further research.

This past week, a flier of unknown origin was circulated in Hampton Roads, Virginia, bearing the seal of the state Board of Elections and instructing Democrats that, because of an emergency order of the state General Assembly, they were to vote on November 5... the day *after* election day. Across the country GOP lawyers are working overtime to erect barriers to keep people from voting, and the McCain campaign and its surrogates have spent weeks smearing **ACORN (what does this stand for? Why have McCain supporters been attacking it?)** for engaging in the audacious and outrageous act of... registering poor people. That the group submitted 400,000 registrations that were **flawed (In what way?)**--making the total more like 900,000 than the oft-cited 1.3 million--should not overshadow the fact that it has been part of a much larger and apparently effective drive to expand the electorate. So as we (finally) approach election day, we find ourselves in a familiar situation: the left wants the maximum number of eligible citizens to vote, and the right does not.

**Progressives (define)** have long stood for a wider franchise that includes the propertyless, women, African-Americans and young adults. The same is not true of conservatives: from **Edmund Burke (identify)**, who worried about the "cruel oppressions" the many have-nots might visit upon the few haves, to activist **Paul Weyrich (identify)**, who admitted in 1980 that "I don't want everybody to vote.... As a matter of fact, our leverage in the elections, quite candidly, goes up as the voting populace goes down."

### **Assignment #6 50 points**

Be ready to create a web page based on the work you have done for assignment #6. The object of the page will be to provide an annotated version of your editorial.

### **Assignment #7 10 points**

Read the editorial (handout). Be prepared to contribute to a collaborative exercise in which we will compose a letter to the editor criticizing the position taken by the writer of the editorial. Your contributions should be informed by effective research.

### **Assignment #8 50 points**

Write a 500-word letter to the editor of *The Nation* in which you respond critically to the editorial you have annotated.

### **Assignment #9 20 points**

List ten factual references from chapters one and two that you think need explanation. For example, you might choose the reference to Jay Gould on page ten, or "the well-

known portrait of uncle” on page seventeen. Write informative notes for five of those references.

### **Assignment #10 20 points**

List ten factual references from chapters three and four that you think need explanation. Write informative notes for those references. Choose three of your annotations and explain why you think they enrich the reader’s understanding of the text.

### **Assignment #11 20 points**

Locate two scholarly articles on *The Crying of Lot 49*. Provide MLA style citations for each. On the basis of claims made in these articles, write four interpretive annotations linked to specific details of the text. You might find, for example, that one of your chosen articles comments on the resonances of a character’s name. Your annotation might read as follows: **Metzger** (10.17) [page and line numbers] Nicholson cites Mendelson’s note that the name is German for butcher, and then adds his own observation: “Because of the peripatetic nature of their trade, German butchers in the Middle Ages were given letters to carry from village to village: Metzger hence came to signify ‘temporary postman’”(94). Or you might come across an explanation of an allusion of some kind: **the sound of a stainless orchestral chime** (177.27)

Both Schaub and Gleason locate the source of this allusion in *The Great Gatsby*: “So he waited, listening for a moment longer to the tuning-fork that had been struck upon a star” (quoted in Schaub, “Influence” 140). Schaub pursues at some length the parallels between the two novels, as does Baxter. As Schaub notes (“Influence” 151), unlike *Gatsby*’s, Oedipa’s sense of loss as San Narciso “[gives] up its residue of uniqueness” is temporary; she attends the auction in the hope of finding another “incarnation,” to use Fitzgerald’s word, of the Tristero, one that, perhaps, might prove less inadequate than Daisy does for *Gatsby* as the concrete representation of “unutterable vision[s].”

### **Assignment #12 30 points**

Create and deliver a 3-4 minute PowerPoint supported presentation in which you present the claims made in assignment #11.

### **Assignment #13 20 points**

Consult <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/watergate/>

Watch *All the President’s Men*. Review your assigned segment of the movie.

### **Assignment #14 50 points**

Conduct appropriate research with a view to annotating your segment of the movie. You should:

- provide a timeline of the events being depicted, filling in any significant gaps left by the movie
- explain the actions of the major characters as they are depicted during your segment
- explain where the events being depicted are taking place and indicate any discrepancies with the historical record
- offer any other commentary that would assist a viewer to achieve a richer understanding of the historical moment depicted in the movie

## **Final Project**

Each of you will create a text modeled on Harper’s Magazine’s “Annotations” (see here for an example: <http://www.harpers.org/media/slideshow/annot/2008-01/index.html>) Your annotation should represent a point of view, rather than simply offering factual information. As a result, the “text” you choose to annotate should be something that provokes some kind of critical response. Part 1 of the assignment will provide you with another example, and will allow you to hear descriptions of yet others. Your annotations should be based on solid research drawn from a variety of sources. Because scholarly material is still often not available online, **you may not rely solely on the Web for your research.** Each of you will present your annotation via a 15-minute formal presentation.

### **Part 1**

Study your assigned Harper’s annotation. Be prepared to describe the annotation and to summarize its argument.

### **Part 2**

Choose the text you will annotate for your final project. Be prepared to describe it in class, to indicate a preliminary direction for your argument, and to indicate the kind of research you expect to conduct.

### **Part 3**

Create an annotated bibliography.

### **Part 4**

Create a Word document containing drafts of your annotations.

### **Part 5**

Create the final presentation.

## **The WORD Studio:**

In addition to the help you can receive from me and our peer mentor, the Munn Center for Rhetoric and Communication maintains The WORD Studio in ODY Library—a place to get feedback from peers on assignments in Writing, Oral communication, Research, and Design of visual projects. You can come for a consultation to plan a paper or presentation (you don’t need anything but a blank piece of paper!); to find ways to improve the ideas, organization, and style of a draft; to videotape and review a presentation rehearsal; to practice a PowerPoint presentation, and more. Peer tutors are not proofreaders or editors who silently “fix” your work for you; instead, they are trained to have a conversation with you about ways you can fix problem areas yourself and become better overall communicators. You may use The WORD Studio for consultations on assignments for any of your courses, although for FYP assignments you should first seek out [mentor’s name] during [his/her] office hours.

The WORD Studio is open Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; and Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. You may also IM the Studio during regular hours with quick questions about grammar, citation, and style: *SLUword*.

## The Academic Honor Code

All students at St. Lawrence University are bound by honor to maintain the highest level of academic integrity. By virtue of membership in the St. Lawrence community, every student accepts the responsibility to know the rules of academic honesty, to abide by them at all times, and to encourage all others to do the same.

Responsibility for avoiding behavior or situations from which academic dishonesty may be inferred rests entirely with the students. Students should be sure to learn from faculty what is expected as their own work and how the work of other people should be acknowledged.

**Academic Dishonesty, according to the *Student Handbook*:** includes any dishonest conduct in connection with any academic (including research) course, program, or work.

1. It is assumed that all work submitted for credit is done by the student unless the instructor gives specific permission for collaboration.
2. Cheating on examinations and tests consists of knowingly giving or using, or attempting to use unauthorized assistance during examinations or tests.
3. Dishonesty in work outside of examinations and tests consists of handing in for credit as original work that which is **not** original, where originality is required.
4. Falsifying research methods, data, and/or results constitutes academic dishonesty.

**The following constitute examples of academic dishonesty:**

a) *Plagiarism*: Presenting as one's own work the work of another person—words, ideas, data, evidence, thoughts, information, organizing principles, or style of presentation — without proper attribution. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgment by quotation marks, footnotes, endnotes, or other indices of reference (cf. Joseph F. Trimmer, *A Guide to MLA Documentation*).

b) Handing in false data, reports or results in connection with any research project or experiment.

c) Handing in a book report on a book one has not read.

d) Falsification of attendance records of a laboratory or other class meeting.

e) Supplying information to another student knowing that such information will be used in a dishonest way.

f) Submission of work (papers, journal abstracts, etc.) which has received credit in a previous course to satisfy the requirement(s) of a second course without the knowledge and permission of the instructor of the second course.

g) The above list is not exhaustive. In the event there is a question as to whether alleged conduct falls within the scope of the Academic Honor Code, the vice president and dean of academic affairs' determination shall be final.

Claims of ignorance and academic or personal pressure are unacceptable as excuses for academic dishonesty. Students must learn what constitutes one's own work and how the work of others must be acknowledged." (*St. Lawrence University 2007–2008 Student Handbook*, pp. 149–154.)

All intentional and unintentional acts of academic dishonesty may result in disciplinary action. Recommendations of disciplinary action may include a failing grade on the work in question, a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension from the University, or expulsion from the University.

More information on academic integrity, including the Academic Honor Council's Constitution, can be found at: [www.stlawu.edu/acadaffairs/academicintegrity.htm](http://www.stlawu.edu/acadaffairs/academicintegrity.htm). For information about academic integrity or the Academic Honor Council issues, contact the Dean's Office at x5993.

### First-Year Program Philosophy and Goals 2008-09

A residentially-based, interdisciplinary first-year program is an ideal environment for beginning the four-year process of developing the complex intellectual and social skills that are at the heart of a liberal education and the habits of considered values and engaged citizenship that such an education should produce. The First-Year Program (FYP) and First-Year Seminar (FYS) are the core of our institutional commitment to improving your ability to engage in critical inquiry and research, to design and deliver written, spoken and/or visual texts that demonstrate rhetorical sensitivity, and to be sophisticated readers, listeners, and viewers of the texts of others. We believe that these same competencies can help develop your ability to communicate across differences (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity, political views) as you find ways to live and learn together in the residence halls and as engaged and ethically reflective citizens both during and after your college years. These goals should be understood as the first step in our work with you over a four-year process of helping you to meet the University's Aims and Objectives.

We hope to help you see that writing, speaking, research, and interacting with others are rhetorical endeavors. Effective communicators are, by definition, rhetorically sensitive. Rhetorical sensitivity means understanding that all communication, whether formal or informal, involves having to make choices about your messages, whether written, spoken, or visual. To become an effective communicator, you need to recognize that the creation of a meaningful and powerful message involves both a creator and an audience, and that therefore the voice you adopt in your communication, and the audience you imagine yourself communicating to, matter a great deal in creating your message. The choices you make in writing and speaking are central in determining how people read and hear your voice. Becoming conscious and reflective about those choices, and their ethical dimensions, is a central goal of the FYP and FYS.

Working with you so that you become more rhetorically sensitive means that you should be increasingly able to assess the requirements of a particular task and make intentional decisions about which mode or modes of communication and inquiry would be most effective in addressing it. To do so, you must develop specific writing, speaking, research, and technological competencies. To accomplish these goals, the FYP and FYS will present you with assignments that ask you to engage in a process that involves **recognizing** the rhetorical situation, **planning** communication strategies to address the task at hand, **composing and presenting** the message, and then engaging in **critical assessment** of your own work and that of others. The results of that assessment process will allow you to rethink, restructure, and revise your work. We further recognize that this process is not linear and that the effective creation of texts requires that you move back and forth among these four elements of the message creation process. This is why we require that your writing and speaking assignments be "projects" that include preparatory exercises and multiple drafts or rehearsals, all of which ask you to continue to reflect critically on the choices you have made in constructing your message.

This process of increased rhetorical awareness and skill development is at the heart of the philosophical and pedagogical perspectives that inform the work of the FYP and FYS. Because this process both transcends and integrates a variety of specific skills, the program has a philosophical commitment to designing assignments that ask you to integrate various modes of communication in furtherance of the higher-level rhetorical goals in which they are situated.

To ensure that the program is meeting its stated goals, all FYP and FYS syllabi are read by other faculty in the program to determine if they include a variety of assignments that forward the writing, speaking, research, and literacy goals of the program. All FYP and FYS courses have to be approved by faculty in the program before they are offered.

## First-Year Seminars

### Research Project Learning Goals 2008-09

With respect to research skills specifically, our learning goals for the spring are that students should:

- Be introduced to ways of conducting productive and imaginative inquiry and research in order to become a part of the various conversations surrounding issues.
- Learn to differentiate among the various ways that information is produced and presented, between popular and scholarly journals and books, between mainstream and alternative publications, between primary and secondary sources.
- Learn how to evaluate and synthesize information, whether gathered from traditional sources, e.g., books and journals, or from websites or electronic media.
- Begin to develop the skills of critical analysis in the interpretation and use of information gathered from any source.
- Be introduced to the ethical obligations that scholars have to both responsibly represent their sources and inform their readers of the sources of their information, as well as learning, and being held responsible for the proper use of, the conventions of scholarly citation and attribution.
- Present the results of your research in written, spoken, visual and/or other forms that demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively using the conventions of the mode of communication adopted.