

Dr. George S. Diamond  
Fall, 2009

Zinzendorf 37 610-861-1391  
M-W-F 1-2 PM & T 11-Noon  
And By Appointment

### English 343 Contemporary Fiction

I. The purpose of this course is to read, study, and discuss important works of contemporary fiction published, in the main, since 1950, with an emphasis on living authors. Readings will be set in the context of the great changes that have taken place in Western society, mostly in the United States, since World War II.

II. For appropriate participation, students will read select material, take part in class discussions, lead one class discussion, participate in one panel, take one in-class exam and a final, and write a research paper on a topic approved in advance. For the grade in the course, the first class discussion will be worth 10%, the panel, the in-class exam, and the final will be worth 20%, and the research paper will be worth 30%.

III. All students are expected to view the video THE SOURCE, an 89 minute film about The Beat Generation, on Blackboard. Students are also expected to attend the production of Christopher Durang's "Betty's Summer Vacation" by the Moravian College Theatre Company, October 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>, times and cost to be announced.

IV. Attendance policy for English 343 is based on the attendance statement in the 2006-2008 Moravian College Catalog: read, date, sign, and submit the accompanying paper. **Attendance includes viewing THE SOURCE and "Betty's Summer Vacation."**

V. All papers and tests are expected to adhere to a minimum quality of standard English.

VI. All students must adhere to the revised policy on academic honesty that appears in the College Student Handbook and the 2006-2008 Moravian College Catalog.

Texts: American Short Stories Since 1945 (2002)  
Seven Contemporary Short Novels (1982)

1. M Au 31 Introduction; MULTIMEDIA EXTRAVAGANZA: "We Didn't Start the Fire," B. Joel & An Audio Visual History of American Literature: #9 "Power and Alienation"; the Influence of Literature and Critical Approaches;
2. W Sp 2 A-V History: #10 "Into the Eighties"; Jackson, "The Lottery," (9) & Singer "The Spinoza of Market Street" (25); Basic Literary Elements.
3. F Sp 4 Basic Literary Elements. Introduction(1), Olsen "I

Stand Here Ironing" (36) & Ellison "Battle Royal" (42)

4. W Sp 9 Basic Literary Elements; Taylor "The Old Forest" (103) & Yamamoto "Seventeen Syllables" (246)
5. F Sp 11 **Varieties of Contemporary Fiction 1: The WASP MAINSTREAM:** Cheever "The Country Husband" (175) & Updike "Separating" (399)
6. M Sp 14 **Varieties 2: The Southern Influence.** Welty "Why I live at the P.O." (15) & O'Connor "Revelation" (149)
7. W Sp 16 **Varieties 3: Embattled Minorities:** African American, Baldwin "Sonny's Blues" (225) & Hispanic, American, Cisneros "One Holy Night" (779)
8. F Sp 18 **Embattled Minorities,** Native American, Silko "Storyteller" (450) & Asian American Tan "Rules of the Game" (635)
9. M Sp 21 **Varieties 4: The Jewish-American Influence;** Malamud "The Jewbird" (96) & Ozick "The Shawl" (352)
10. W Sp 23 **Varieties 5: Feminism and Queer Theory:** Adams, "Roses, Rhododendron" (461) & Leavitt "A Place I've Never Been" (872)
11. F Sp 25 **Varieties 6: The Proletarian Influence;** Paley "An Interest In Life" (53) & Ford "Rock Springs" (643)
12. M Sp 28 **Varieties 7: Absurdist/Anti-Fiction & Black Humor;** Barth "Night-Sea Journey" (332) & Coover "The Babysitter" (312)
13. W Sp 30 Gaines "The Sky Is Gray" (292) & Beattie "Janus" (495)
14. F Oc 2 Oates "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" (369) & Bamabara "The Lesson" (381)
15. M Oc 5 Gass "In the Heart of the Heart of the Country" (274) & Carver "What We Talk About, When We Talk About Love" (724)
16. W Oc 7 Prose "Everyday Disorders" (715) & Vaughn "Able, Baker, Charlie, Dog" (760)
17. F Oc 9 Apple "The Oranging Of America" (420) & Boyle "Greasy Lake" (557)
18. W Oc 14 Jones "Cold Snap" (817) & Gaitskill "Girl On A Plane" (861)
19. F Oc 16 Williams "Health" (603) & Gardner "Come On Back" (355)
20. M Oc 19 THE BEATS and Their Influence,
21. W Oc 21 Visit from Dr. Joyce Hinnefeld
22. F Oc 23 Stone "Helping" (789) & Dilillo "Videotape" (813)
23. M Oc 26 **Exam I.**
24. W Oc 28 Mason "A New Wave Format" (521) & Mukherjee "The

- Management of Grief" (611)
25. F Oc 30 Erdrich "Saint Marie (1934)" (680) & Alexie "This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona" (825)
26. M Nv 2 Chin "The Only Real Day" (690) & Barrett "The Littoral Zone" (855), **Office interview with Research Paper Subject.**
27. W Nv 4 SEVEN, McCullers, "The Ballad of the Sad Café'," 1943 & 1951.
28. F Nv 6 "Ballad of the Sad Café."
29. M Nv 9 SEVEN, Bellow, "Seize the Day," 1956.
30. W Nv 11 "Seize the Day
31. F Nv 13 SEVEN, Roth, "Goodbye, Columbus," 1959.
32. M Nv 16 "Goodbye, Columbus."
33. W Nv 18 SEVEN, Vonnegut, "Slaughterhouse-Five," 1969.
34. F Nv 20 "Slaughterhouse-Five."
35. M Nv 23 SEVEN, Morrison, "The Bluest Eye," 1970
36. M Nv 30 "The Bluest Eye."
37. W Dc 2 SEVEN, Kosinski, "Being There," 1970;
38. F Nv 4 "Being There".
39. M Dc 7 SEVEN, Atwood, "Surfacing." 1972; **Research Paper Due**
40. W Dc 9 "Surfacing;" Course Evaluation Forms.

### **OUTCOMES FOR ENGLISH 343 CONTEMPORARY FICTION**

At the conclusion of English 343 the student should be able to:

1. Provide a basic definition of contemporary fiction and the forces-historical, cultural, social, philosophical, critical-that contributed to its creation;
2. Understand how and why literary artists of exceptional ability emerged during the post-WWII period;
3. Understand how and why the term ``contemporary`` includes a greater variety of literary artists-men and women, races, religions, cultures-than previous eras of literary creativity;

4. Understand the basic elements of fiction and how an individual work can be interpreted by examining it in terms of these elements;

5. Have a fundamental knowledge of the variety and breadth of critical and philosophical works that define and analyze contemporary fiction.

6. Demonstrate competence in participating in and working well with others in panel presentations, preparing effective oral and written analyses by careful and exact reading and employing the tools of literary analysis and library research.