



ENGL 242 B
**Banned, Bowdlerized, and Burned:
 Reading (and Writing) as Political**
 Spring 2011 | University of Washington | Edmond Chang

ENGL 242
 Section B
 MTWTh
 9:30-10:20 AM
 DEN 209
 Spring 2011
 University of
 Washington
 Edmond Chang



“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”
 —Albert Einstein

“The man who does not read books has no advantage over the man that can not read them.”
 —Mark Twain

“An idea that is not dangerous is unworthy of being called an idea at all.”
 —Oscar Wilde

GIVEN THE RECENT hullabaloo over the NewSouth Books’ “new and improved” version of *Huckleberry Finn* and the abridged reading of the *Constitution* by the House of Representatives majority, we will take up the question and challenge of understanding how reading is a political act. Maya Angelou once said, “When I look back, I am so impressed again with the life-giving power of literature. If I were a young person today, trying to gain a sense of myself in the world, I would do that again by reading, just as I did when I was young.” It is this sense that literature is important, that reading (and by extension writing) can reveal something about ourselves and the world, and that reading is a practice and lifeway maintained and sustained over time that is central to this class. In other words, literature is more than just words on a page, literacy is not a destination or a merit badge, and reading is as much about rereading as writing is as much about revising. This class will take up reading and rereading as critical practice by pointedly embracing literature considered controversial, inappropriate, subversive, or obscene. Many of these texts are commonly taught in high school curricula in the US and subsequently banned, bowdlerized, even burned because they are “dangerous.” We will rescue and re-catalyze this literature. This is not your usual high school novel class. Texts may include in whole or in excerpt the fiction of Mark Twain, Kate Chopin, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Steinbeck, J.D. Salinger, Shirley Jackson, Ray Bradbury, Allen Ginsberg, Toni Morrison, and J.K. Rowling.

A REQUIREMENT for this class is a well-developed curiosity about the world, about the culture we live in, and about the cultural productions we imagine, produce, and consume. In other words, this class is about reading, critiquing, and analyzing our culture through literature. Our understandings of identities, meanings, and power, as well as the intersections of cultural and social locations like race, gender, class, nation, and sexuality, can be excavated through the analysis of the texts we create and consume. This class will spend the quarter reading, thinking, writing about various fictions and how and what these texts argue, reveal, narrate, hide, perpetuate, and complicate the world we live in.

FINALLY, as a class, we will engage the techniques and practices of reading and enjoying literature. We will identify and develop different ways to read different kinds of texts—from fiction to scholarship to visual and digital—and understand and develop strategies, habits, and perspectives of reading, thinking, and writing. Foremost, we will read with pleasure and for pleasure. We will also rhetorically read, close read, read for analysis. And lastly, we will read and deploy literature as theory, as dramatizing the concerns, wonders, struggles, and politics of lived life and experience. The class counts for W credit, requiring you to complete 10-15 pages of revised writing including a set of short response papers culminating in a longer seminar paper project.

“First sentences are doors to worlds.”
 —Ursula K. Le Guin



Required Course Texts & Materials

- Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*.
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*.
- Ginsberg, Allen. *Howl*.
- Kafka, Franz. *The Metamorphosis*.
- Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*.
- Salinger, J.D. *The Catcher in the Rye*.
- Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*.
- Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*.
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
- ENGL 242A Course Reader available via e-reserve.
- Web access and an active UW email account.



Course Requirements

- Response Papers (30%)
- Presentation (10%)
- Critical Review (10%)
- Final Project (20%)
- Class Participation (30%)

“Learn as much by writing as by reading.”
—Lord Acton

“A book is like a garden carried in the pocket.”
—Chinese proverb

“When we read a story, we inhabit it. The covers of the book are like a roof and four walls. What is to happen next will take place within the four walls of the story. And this is possible because the story’s voice makes everything its own.”
—John Berger

Requirements & Grading

Your grade should not be the sole exigence or motivation for this class. It is the hope of the course that you walk away from English 242 with something more. Find some pleasure and some edification and some knowledge from this class (or any class really) and success is usually not far behind. With that in mind, your grade will be a reflection of engagement, effort, close reading, critical thinking, writing, and participation.

Critical Response Papers (30%)

The majority of the writing you will do for this class is in the form of short, critical, analytical response papers. These single-spaced, one-page writings serve as reactions to, close readings of, analyses of, and articulations of the texts and connections you see, read, and talk about in class. These responses are more than just summaries or personal reactions and will be graded on clarity, focus, coherence, critique, and your ability to concisely formulate arguments. You will be required to generate a response paper approximately every week for a total of 6. See the response paper prompt for more details.

Readings Presentation (10%)

You will be a required to sign up for a readings oral presentation. For your presentation, you will read the texts assigned for a particular day, research a topic relevant to the texts, and get class discussion started for the day. You will be required to create a 1-page handout copied for the whole class. Topics (usually biographical, historical, or theoretical context) will be assigned to your group. Presentations are 5 to 8 minutes.

Critical Review (10%)

You will be required to write a short, 500-750 word, single-spaced critical review of a text not covered by the course that you believe fits the critical, theoretical, and intellectual stakes of this class. You will locate a text, close read the text, and generate an academic critique and assessment of the text’s value for study. In other words, what text might you include in a class like ours? You **must** have your text **approved** by the instructor. The critical review will be turned in and published on the course blog and is due by the last day of class.

Mash-Up “Mixed-Paper” Final Project (20%)

Your final paper project will be a “mixed-paper,” a mash-up that collects together three of your short response papers, revises them, and incorporates the addition of images, verse, and other kinds of evidence, all of which is framed by an introduction and conclusion, both one page each. The “mixed-paper” asks you to think critically about the course questions and texts, to make connections, and to create an argument across texts and different kinds of evidence. See the “mixed-paper” final project prompt for more details and explanations.

Participation and Preparedness (30%)

Preparedness and participation forms a large component of your final grade. It is essential that you prepare for class, attend class, and participate. Missing class may seriously compromise your ability to do well in this class. Again, negative participation will hurt your participation grade. Participation is determined by 1) your **respectful** presence in class, 2) your **willingness** to discuss, comment, and ask questions, 3) your **preparation** for



“Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without ever noticing it, live your way into the answer.”

—Rainer Maria Rilke

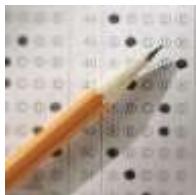
“I don’t pretend we have all the answers. But the questions are certainly worth thinking about.”

—Arthur C. Clarke

“Read in order to live.”

—Gustave Flaubert

“Thought flows in terms of stories—stories about events, stories about people, and stories about intentions and achievements. The best teachers are the best story tellers. We learn in the form of stories.”
—Frank Smith



Response Paper Formatting

- 1) 1" margins top, bottom, left, and right on each page.
- 2) Single-spaced block header with your name, date, course, my name.
- 3) Response (week number and title).
- 4) Response papers are single-spaced, block paragraph format.
- 5) Standard Times Roman Font, 12 point only.
- 6) Correct MLA citation and bibliographic format. Bibliography if necessary.

class, which includes bringing required materials to class and doing all of the assigned reading for class, 4) your **engagement** in group work, 5) your care and use of the class blog (bookmark the address, check and comment regularly, think of the blog as an extension of class):

<https://catalyst.uw.edu/gopost/board/changed/21154/>

and 6) your interactions with me and other students. Finally, failure to turn in homework, incomplete assignments, or late papers will negatively impact your participation grade.

Attendance

Attendance is strongly recommended. If you are absent, you miss the explanation of an assignment, the discussion of a reading, the chance to play and participate, and overall, the class as a community of learning. Also, you are expected to be in class on time. Class will start immediately at the appointed time. In the first minutes of class I may make important announcements, establish the agenda for the class meeting, begin immediately with an important lesson, or field questions. If you come in after we start class, even by only a few minutes, you are late and we will mark you as such. Chronic or conspicuous attendance problems will negatively affect your overall participation grade for the class. If you know you are going to miss class, please let me know ahead of time (via email), if you can, and make any necessary arrangements. And when you do miss class, always find another student to get class notes and see me in order to make up missed work in a timely manner.

Assignment Format

All papers must be typed or produced on a word processor. All documents should be saved in Microsoft Word format; if you do not have access to Word, then save your documents in RTF or Rich Text Format.

All papers must follow the manuscript format outlined by the assignment. **All papers must use MLA citation and documentation conventions.** All papers must be neatly printed (in black), stapled in the top, left-hand corner if necessary, and should not be three-hole punched. Papers that do not follow these format guidelines will not be accepted. They will be returned unread to you. Papers will be regarded as late until they are resubmitted in the proper format. Response Papers have their own format, and the Critical Review and “Mixed-Paper” Final Project will have different manuscript guidelines detailed by their assignment prompts.

Always make a backup copy of every paper you turn in, lest you be one of the unhappy people whose paper is eaten by the computer. You may even want to take the precaution of e-mailing your paper to yourself as an attachment at least a couple of times during the drafting process and certainly BEFORE you exit the document for the last time and leave the computer lab, your friend’s computer, or even your own computer. This way, even if you lose your disc or your paper gets mysteriously erased, you still have a copy in your e-mail files.

Evaluation Rubric

Over the course of the quarter, your assignments will receive feedback and comments that will identify what you are doing well and what still needs improvement. Your grades assess your fulfillment of the assignment, the quality of work, detail, analysis, and argumentation, overall effort, and finally, style, polish, and risk taking. Consider the following evaluation rubric as signposts or a kind of legend to your progress and evaluation:



Late Assignments

All assignments must be done completely and turned in on time. Lateness will subtract from your assignment’s final grade and work must be turned in by the next class meeting after the original due date. Note that I will not comment on late work. However, you still need to complete late work or you will receive a zero. If you miss class on the due date of a paper, you must notify me and make arrangements to get the paper to me as soon as possible. **Unless previously arranged, I do not accept assignments via email.** Furthermore, **all work must be seen and checked by me to be eligible for your final project!** Remember that a paper has not been officially handed in until it is in my hands. Never turning anything in late is always the best policy.

- **Outstanding** (3.7-4.0): Offers a very highly proficient, even memorable demonstration of the trait(s) associated with the course or assignment goal(s), including some appropriate risk-taking and/or creativity.
- **Strong** (3.1-3.6): Offers a proficient demonstration of the trait(s) associated with the course or assignment goal(s), which could be further enhanced with revision, additional support, and creativity.
- **Good** (2.5-3.0): Effectively demonstrates the trait(s) associate with the course or assignment goal(s), but less proficiently; could use revision to demonstrate more skillful and nuanced command of trait(s).
- **Acceptable** (2.0-2.4): Minimally meets the basic course or assignment requirement, but the demonstrated trait(s) are not fully realized or well-controlled and would benefit from significant revision.
- **Inadequate** (1.0-1.9): Does not meet the course or assignment requirement; the trait(s) are not adequately demonstrated and require substantial revision on multiple levels.

“I have always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of library.”
—Jorge Luis Borges



“Literature is analysis after the event.”
—Doris Lessing

“It is very nearly impossible...to become an educated person in a country so distrustful of the independent mind.”
—James Baldwin

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”
—William Butler Yeats

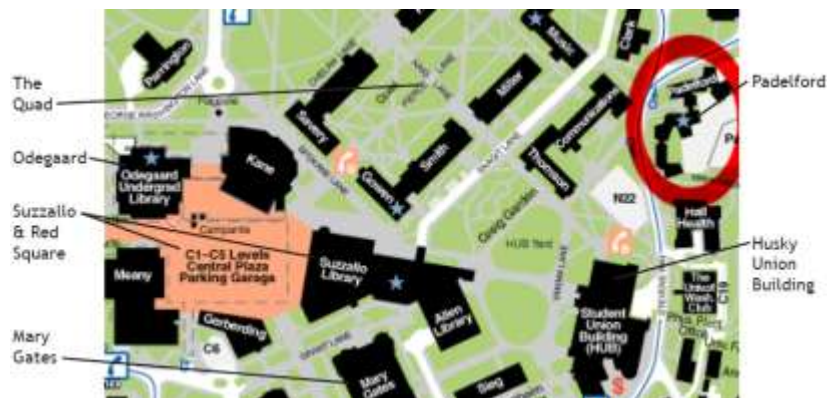


Contact Ed

Office:
B33 Padelford
Office Hours:
Th 10:30 AM-12 PM
E-mail:
changed@u.washington.edu
AIM or Google Talk:
EDagogy

Finding Help

My office and office hours are listed at the front of the course policies. I am available during that time and by appointment to help you. I encourage you to come see early in the quarter even if it is just to talk about the class, about the assignments, or about school in general. I may ask you to meet with me when I think a conference would be useful. My office is located in the ground floor of Padelford Hall (northeast of the HUB), Room B-33. See <http://www.washington.edu/home/maps/northcentral.html?pd1>.



I am also available electronically by email and the course blog. Email and the blog are the best means of contacting me. I will do my best to answer your emails and blog posts, usually **within twenty-four hours**. If there is an emergency and you need to reach me, please contact the Undergraduate English office in A-2H&G Padelford. Furthermore, when time permits, I will supplement my office hours with virtual hours via AOL Instant Messenger or Google Talk (**nickname: EDagogy**); if I am logged in, during reasonable hours, you are more than welcome to discuss the class or ask questions. Please, when you initiate an IM conversation for the first time, please identify yourself to me; also, be **patient** because my responses may not be immediate.

You can find additional writing help at the Odegaard Writing and Research Center (**OWRC**) is a good resource for this class and other classes. OWRC is located on the third floor of Odegaard Library and offers a variety of services including help with papers, brainstorming ideas, help with reading, and research. See <http://depts.washington.edu/owrc/> for more

information. Moreover, the Center for Learning and Undergraduate Enrichment (CLUE) is also a good resource. CLUE is located in Mary Gates Hall Commons and offers tutorial sessions for most freshman lecture courses, skills courses, access to computer labs, and drop-in centers for math, science and writing. See <<http://depts.washington.edu/clue/>> for more information.

Further resources, both on- and off-campus can be found on the Links page of the course website:

<<http://staff.washington.edu/changed/242/links.html>>.

Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism, or academic dishonesty, is presenting someone else's ideas or writing as your own. In your writing for this class, you are encouraged to refer to other people's thoughts and writing – as long as you cite them. Many students do not have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism, so feel free to ask questions about these matters at any time. Plagiarism includes:

- a student failing to cite sources of ideas
- a student failing to cite sources of paraphrased material
- a student failing to site sources of specific language and/or passages
- a student submitting someone else's work as his or her own
- a student submitting his or her own work produced for another class

If you have any doubt about how to cite or acknowledge another's writing, please talk to me. It is always better to be safe than sorry. As a matter of policy, any student found to have plagiarized any piece of writing in this class will be immediately reported to the College of Arts and Sciences for review. For further information, please refer to UW's Student Conduct Code at <<http://www.washington.edu/students/handbook/conduct.html>>. **Play it smart, don't plagiarize!**

Accommodations

If you have a registered disability that will require accommodation, please see me immediately. If you have a disability and have not yet registered it with Disability Resources for Students in 448 Schmitz Hall, you should do so immediately. Please contact DRS at 206-543-8924 (Voice) or 206-543-8925 (V/TTY) or 206-616-8379 (FAX) or via their website at <<http://www.washington.edu/admin/ada/dss.htm>>. I will gladly do my best to provide appropriate accommodation you require.

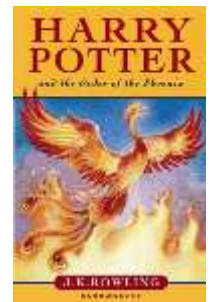
UW SafeCampus

Preventing violence is everyone's responsibility. If you're concerned, tell someone. For more information visit the SafeCampus website at <<http://www.washington.edu/safecampus>> and keep the following in mind:

- Always call 911 if you or others may be in danger.
- Call 206-685-SAFE (7233) to report non-urgent threats of violence and for referrals to UW counseling and/or safety resources. TTY or VP callers, please call through your preferred relay service.
- Don't walk alone. Campus safety guards can walk with you on campus after dark. Call Husky NightWalk 206-685-WALK (9255).
- Stay connected in an emergency with UW Alert. Register your mobile number to receive instant notification of campus emergencies via text and voice messaging. Sign up online at <<http://www.washington.edu/alert>>.

"To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark."

—Victor Hugo



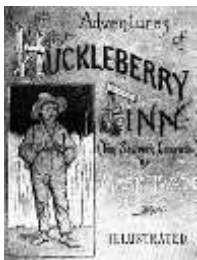
"Every time I see an adult on a bicycle, I no longer despair for the future of the human race."

—H. G. Wells

"I entered the classroom with the conviction that it was crucial for me and every other student to be an active participant, not a passive consumer...[a conception of] education as the practice of freedom.... education that connects the will to know with the will to become. Learning is a place where paradise can be created."

—bell hooks

"If one is lucky, a solitary fantasy can totally transform one million realities."
—Maya Angelou



"You don't have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them."
—Ray Bradbury

"Deliver me from writers who say the way they live doesn't matter. I'm not sure a bad person can write a good book. If art doesn't make us better, then what on earth is it for."
—Alice Walker

**syl-la-bus: n 1: a summary outline of a discourse, treatise, or course of study or of examination requirements
2: subject to change**

Chang / ENGL 242 B / Spring Quarter 2011 / University of Washington

Mon 3/28
First Day of Classes

March						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Week 1: March 28-April 1

Introduction to the Course
United States Declaration of Independence (1776)
Constitution of the United States of America (1787)

Week 2: April 4-8

Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884)

Week 3: April 11-15

Kate Chopin, *The Awakening* (1899)

Week 4: April 18-22

Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis* (1915)

Week 5: April 25-29

F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (1925)

Week 6: May 2-6

John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men* (1937)

Week 7: May 9-13

Shirley Jackson, "The Lottery" (1948)
J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951)

Week 8: May 16-20

Ray Bradbury, "There Will Come Soft Rains" (1950)
Allen Ginsberg, *Howl* (1956)

Week 9: May 23-27

Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (1973)

Week 10: May 30-June 3 (Memorial Day 5/30)

J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2000)

Week 11:

6/6 - Finals Begin, 'Mixed-Paper' Final Project Due

Week 12:

6/13 - Grades Due

Week 2 Response is recommended.

April						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Week 5 Response Paper is recommended.

May						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Critical Review due by the end of Week 10 (posted to the class blog).

Mon 5/30
Memorial Day
Holiday

June						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		