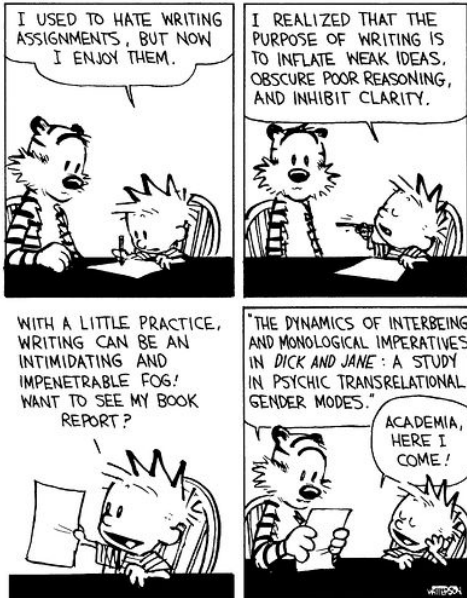


# Critical Approaches to *Buffy* Synthesis Papers

wgs 361 / summer 2016 / university of oregon / chang



The central intellectual, imaginative, and academic activity of this class is reading, thinking, and writing analytically and critically about film and television, popular culture, and feminist media studies. You will be required to write **two** formal papers over the course of the quarter that engage the episodes and theoretical texts of the class. Papers will be due and turned in via Canvas at the end of each week. **You must complete a minimum of two papers to a maximum of three.** Each paper will be graded and the average of the number completed will constitute 40% of your final grade.

## Goals and Outcomes

For this **4- to 6-page** formal, researched paper, you will watch and read the week's episodes and selected readings. These essays must:

- Have an argument that specific, focused, and supported by close reading details.
- Must put **two** of the week's episodes and at least **three** of the week's readings into conversation. Synthesize. In other words, use the course readings as research to help you write your essay and demonstrate what you have explored, analyzed, and understood that week. You may incorporate additional research (one or two relevant, authoritative sources) or previous readings, if necessary.
- Finally, must do more than simply describe or summarize your texts or respond personally or thematically.

To start, develop a critical question. For example, how does the *Buffy* pilot "Welcome to the Hellmouth" negotiate the intersection of gender and femininity? What does episode 1.2 "Teacher's Pet" reveal about the intersection of femininity, sexuality, and violence? What are the connections and intersections across both episodes? The answer(s) to your critical question will be the framework for your claim. Be selective and specific in your claim. Think about the following questions when you sit down to make your claim (pick and choose the best and most relevant questions to use as a way to generate ideas and subclaims).

- What question do the texts leave you asking? What difficulty or confusion needs articulation, clarification, or critique? Your claim will be the answer these critical questions.
- How does the text demonstrate or complicate the goals of the class? How might the text push, expand, or focus your understanding of a key concept, definition, theory, practice? How might you use a keyword like gender, sexuality, race, disability, nation, queerness to analyze the text?
- What connections between the texts can you make? How might you use one of the framing theoretical texts as a way to close read or analyze a critical scene or concern in an episode?
- Finally, for all of the above, why is that important? What is the analytical, rhetorical, or political stake?

These formal, academic writings serve as close readings, analyses, 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 or rehashing of our discussions and will be graded on clarity, focus, coherence, critique, argument, support, and your ability to formulate a precise claim, close read both episodes and theories, and substantively use academic research.

## Guidelines and Due Dates

**Format:** Formal, academic paper, 4-6 pages, typed, no title page, 1" margins, doubled-spaced body, proper heading & title  
MLA in-text, parenthetical citation & bibliography (which includes at least 3 in-class sources)

**Due:** at the end of each week, Sunday, 5 PM, submitted via Canvas:  
<https://canvas.uoregon.edu/courses/64432/assignments>