

## ENGLISH 200: FAIRY TALES AND HEROIC QUESTS FALL 2009

Instructor: Dr. Casey A. Cothran

Class: English 200-001 (10638), TR 3:30-4:45 (Owens 202)

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Office Hours: 9:30-12:00 MW; 2:00-3:15 TR (and by appointment)

Turnitin.com Information: Class ID (2810975) Password (ilovepapers)

### COURSE GOALS:

Terri Windling writes: “Fairy tales have much to say on the subjects of heroism and transformation; about how one finds the courage to fight and prevail against overwhelming odds. They are tales of children abandoned in the woods; of daughters handed poisoned apples; of sons forced to betray their siblings; of men and women struck down by wolves or imprisoned in windowless towers. Such tales were passed down through the generations by word of mouth, woman to woman, mother to child – using archetypes as a mirror held to daily life . . . particularly the lives of those without clear avenues of social power. Why do we continue to be enspelled by fairy tales, after all these centuries? Why do we continue to tell the same old tales, over and over again? Because we all have encountered wicked wolves, faced trial by fire, found fairy godmothers. We have all set off into unknown woods at one point in life or another” (*Women and Fairy Tales*). In this class we will explore children’s stories, myths, and magical tales, looking for universal, eternal themes about the complex nature of human experience.

Specifically, this course will examine fairy tales and popular myths, often focusing on early versions of the tale, modern versions of the tale, and notable rewritings of the tale. In addition, emphasis will be placed on the function and power of fantasy stories. You will be encouraged both to analyze tales and to try your hand at rewriting a fairy tale of your choice. On the whole, papers, projects, and exams are designed to aid students in their quests to become better readers, writers, and critical thinkers.

This course fulfills the Touchstone Program’s “Humanities and Arts” skill areas.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Knowledge: By the end of the semester, students will be able to

- **Identify** how fairy tales function both as cultural artifacts and as works of art/literature
- **Identify** the role that literature plays in the development and understanding of human cultures

- **Describe** how the selected readings reflect and reinforce “the diversity of ideas, institutions, philosophies, moral codes, and ethical principles” (General Education Goal #4)

Skills: By the end of the semester, students will be able to

- **Demonstrate** their ability to read critically and to write analytically (through successful completion of tests, papers, and other graded work)
- **Demonstrate** a basic understanding of the processes appropriate to composing in a variety of forms and for a variety of audiences and purposes
- **Apply** the skills of literary research, including MLA documentation and research sources (e.g., the MLA bibliography online and the *OED*).
- **Incorporate** appropriate literary terminology in discussions of assigned works

Attitudes: By the end of the semester, students will be able to

- **Recognize** literature as a source of wonder and insight

#### TEXTS:

Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*

Angela Carter, *The Bloody Chamber*

Donna Jo Napoli, *Zel*

J.R.R. Tolkien, *Tree and Leaf*

\* Additional reading materials (PDF files) will be emailed to you; important links are to be found on **my web site** (<http://faculty.winthrop.edu/cothranc>).

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. You will receive a daily grade based on informal, in-class writing and on random “reading quizzes.” This daily grade will take the place of an attendance grade. Missing one or two days will not harm your final average, but missing many days will affect this score and thus your final grade. Winthrop policy is that students who miss more than 25% of the classes in a semester cannot receive credit for the course.
2. Over the course of the semester, you will be required to turn in three formal papers. These should be four to six pages each (typed, double-spaced). Every day an assignment is late (including weekend days) is five points off the final grade. Daily writing assignments may be turned in early, but not late, unless you have an amazing excuse.
3. The class will be divided into six groups, and each group will be required to give a thirty minute presentation and to turn in a research packet. Grades will depend upon the successful completion of three elements: a written description of research findings (complete with bibliography), a written explanation of the group’s “lesson plan,” and a successful

presentation. There also will be an “Individual Project Grade” assigned to each student, reflecting his/her individual participation in the project.

4. A final exam will be given at the end of the semester.

<b>Paper 1</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>Group Project Grade</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Paper 2</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>Individual Project Grade</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Paper 3</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>Daily Grade/Class Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>20%</b>		

94 and above = A	80-83 = B-	67-69 = D+
90-93 = A-	77-79 = C+	64-66 = D
87-89 = B+	74-76 = C	60-63 = D-
84-86 = B	70-73 = C-	59 and below = F

Student code of conduct: As noted in the Student Conduct Code: “Responsibility for good conduct rests with students as adult individuals.” The policy on student academic misconduct is outlined in the “Student Conduct Code Academic Misconduct Policy” in the online *Student Handbook*

(<http://www2.winthrop.edu/studentaffairs/handbook/StudentHandbook.pdf>).

### **Plagiarism Policy**

All work in this class that uses outside sources must be documented correctly in the MLA documentation style. Please review the English Department’s policy on Using Borrowed Information at <http://www.winthrop.edu/english/plagiarism.htm>. You are responsible for reviewing the description of plagiarism in *The Prentice-Hall Reference Guide to Grammar and Usage* and handling source materials correctly. If you turn in plagiarized work, I reserve the right to assign you a failing grade for the course. The University Policy on Plagiarism is explained at <http://www.winthrop.edu/studentaffairs/Judicial/judcode.htm> under section V, “Academic Misconduct.”

We will be using [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) this semester; papers not submitted to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) will not be graded. Be sure to sign up soon! Class ID (2810975) Password (ilovepapers)

### **Accommodations**

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact Ms. Gena Smith, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities, at 323-3290, as soon as possible. Once you have your professor notification letter, please notify me so that I am aware of your accommodations before the first assignment is due.

### **Technology Requirements**

I conduct most of my business with students using e-mail. If you do not have an e-mail account, go to 15 Tillman immediately to set it up. All class e-mail will be sent to your campus e-mail address, so make sure you set it to forward to any off-campus account you use (e.g. Comporium, AOL, Yahoo!, etc.) You must have a working Winthrop POBox e-mail address by the third day of class. All students must subscribe to the class listserve.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

Note: assignments are due on the days next to which they appear.

<b>Date</b>	<b>In-Class</b>	<b>Homework</b>
Tuesday August 25	Review Syllabus Organize Groups	
Thursday August 27	Fairy Tales and their Tellers	“Chapter 1: The Broken Pearl” from <i>The Seduction of Water</i> (Emailed PDF Document)
Tuesday September 1	<b>Paper 1 Due</b>	
Thursday September 3	Class Discussion: How these tales can function as more than just children’s stories	Look at the three websites listed on my faculty webpage (surlalune, Endicott Studios, Ashliman); type a short response to your perusal of each site
Tuesday September 8	Examining the Genre	Tolkien: “On Fairy-Stories”
Thursday September 10	The Corset, The Comb, The Apple ... The Red Shoes  In-Class: view brief excerpts from NBC’s <i>The 10<sup>th</sup> Kingdom</i>	Grimm, “Little Snow-White” (Online: Ashliman’s web site)
Tuesday September 15	Murderous Mothers!	Snow White Versions: “Gold Tree and Silver Tree,” “The Young Slave,” “Maria, the Wicked Stepmother, and the Seven Robbers,” “The Crystal Casket,” “Death of the Seven Dwarfs” (Online: Ashliman’s web site)
Thursday September 17	View Disney’s <i>Snow White</i> (1937)	
Tuesday September 22	Disney	Ayres: “The Poisonous Apple in Snow White” (Emailed PDF Document)

Thursday September 24	Rewriting the Tale	“Snow Glass Apples” (Online, see link on my webpage)
Tuesday September 29	Writing Workshop	Bring a typed, completed Rough Draft to class
Thursday October 1	<b>Paper 2 Due</b>	
Tuesday October 6	In-Class: view Hallmark’s <i>Jack and the Beanstalk: The Real Story</i>	
Thursday October 8	In-Class: view Hallmark’s <i>Jack and the Beanstalk: The Real Story</i>	
Tuesday October 13	Discuss Film	Campbell 41-80
Thursday October 15	The Hero’s Journey	Campbell 81-166
Tuesday October 20	FALL BREAK	
Thursday October 22	The Hero’s Journey	Campbell 167-205
Tuesday October 27	Parents and Children	Rapunzel Versions: Comparison of Grimms’ 1812 and 1857 “Rapunzel” (Online: Ashliman’s web site); Begin Napoli’s <i>Zel</i>
Thursday October 29	Real-life psychological effects	Napoli: <i>Zel</i>
Tuesday November 3	Peer Review	Bring a typed, completed Rough Draft to class
Thursday November 5	<b>Paper 3 Due</b>	
Tuesday November 10	Beauties and their Beasts In Class: Excerpts from Disney’s <i>Beauty and the Beast</i>	Beauty and the Beast Versions: DeBeaumont: “Beauty and the Beast,” Grimm: “The Singing,

		Springing Lark,” “The Little Nut Twig,” “The Enchanted Frog” (Online: Ashliman’s Web Site)
Thursday November 12	“All the skins of a life in the world”	Carter: “The Courtship of Mr. Lyon,” “The Tiger’s Bride”
Tuesday November 17	<b>GROUPS 1, 2 PRESENTATIONS</b>	
Thursday November 19	<b>GROUPS 3, 4 PRESENTATIONS</b>	
Tuesday November 24	<b>GROUPS 5, 6 PRESENTATIONS</b>	
Thursday November 26	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Tuesday December 1	Men as Wolves	Red Riding Hood Versions: Perrault: “Little Red Riding Hood” and Grimm: “Little Red Cap” (Online: Ashliman’s Web Site), Carter: “The Company of Wolves”
Thursday December 3	In Class: Exam Review	
Monday December 14	<b>FINAL EXAM 3:00-5:30 pm</b>	

### ASSIGNMENTS

Each essay should be 5-7 pages, typed and double-spaced.

Essay 1: Write about your favorite fairy tale from your childhood. Retell the story, but also say who told you the story and what you thought about it then. (What did you learn from the story? What did it tell you about the world you lived in?) What do you think about the messages conveyed by the story now that you are an adult?

#### Essay 2:

Look at three different versions of a fairy tale. You may choose to research any tale you wish; additionally, any film, artistic, or textual renderings of the story will serve as an acceptable “version” for you to analyze.

In the paper you should do three things (not necessarily in this order):

- 1) Analyze the different versions of the story you have chosen. What sorts of different messages, symbols, and beliefs are being presented? (Note: while doing this, please try to avoid repetition; try to keep plot summaries brief.)
- 2) Compare/contrast the versions. How are they alike? How are they different? In what way are these similarities and differences significant?
- 3) Explore how the messages, symbols, or systems of belief that are embedded within each version reflect the time and culture in which the tale appeared. What does each tale say about the people who loved it, who valued it, who passed it on?

At least one version of the text you have chosen must be a version that you have discovered and read/watched on your own: one that we have not covered in class or read/watched for homework.

### Essay 3:

#### Part I

Rewrite a popular fairy tale. As you construct your version, please make sure that you do not simply “retell” the story. Your paper should make some significant changes to the tale’s plot, ending, tone, point of view, or general focus. Let your version of the story provide readers with different ideas or conclusions than those presented by the original text. Also, try to write well; let yourself enjoy the delicate, detailed process of storytelling!

#### Part II

After you have written a new version of the story, analyze your efforts. Write an explanation of your work; describe the changes you have made and why you have made them. What were you attempting to do here? Why have you chosen to make these particular changes? What do they add (or take away from) the popular (i.e. twenty-first-century American) version of the story? (The paper should be 5-7 pages long; please dedicate 1.5 - 2 of these pages to your explanation / analysis.)

### **Group Project**

Choose either

- 1) an image that appears in a number of fairy tales (glass, the color red, shoes, birds)
- 2) a fairy tale we are not exploring in class (Cinderella, The Princess and the Pea, Peter Pan, maybe even the Wizard of Oz!)

Research your chosen topic. Then prepare a presentation for the class. The presentation should be more than just a lecture on the material. **Present your findings, but also give some sort of artistic rendering (of the image or the tale) through drama, dance, art, or music.**

On the day of the presentation the group will turn in:

- 1) A short “essay” describing their findings (This essay must include a bibliography in MLA format citing research sources.)

- 2) A lesson plan that details *how* they will present the material and *why* they have chosen that particular method of presentation
- 3) A “log” (This should record the times the group met, who attended each meeting, the time spent in the library, planning the presentation, typing up the findings, etc.)

Each individual student will turn in:

- 1) A self evaluation, explaining their contribution to the project
- 2) An evaluation of each of the other group members, detailing their contributions
- 3) An evaluation of the group as a whole: How well did everyone work together? Did everyone contribute equally?