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***ENG 202 – Multi-Ethnic American Literature***  
**Fall 2006**  
Course Syllabus



**Required Texts**

- *King*, Ho Che Anderson (Fantagraphics)
- *Skinwalker*, Nunzio DeFilippis and Christina Weir (Oni)
- *Blood of Palamor*, Gilbert Hernandez (Fantagraphics)
- *Mail Order Bride*, Mark Kalesniko (Fantagraphics)
- *The Jew of New York*, Ben Katchor (Pantheon)
- *Understanding Comics*, Scott McCloud (Harper)
- *Palestine*, Joe Sacco (Fantagraphics)
- *Maus I & II*, Art Spiegelman (Pantheon)
- *Summer Blonde*, Adrian Tomine (Drawn and Quarterly)

**Prerequisites**

ENG 102

**Catalog Description**

This course is designed to give students knowledge of the ethnic diversity of American literature at the same time that they improve their skills in reading and interpreting literature and in writing. The course covers material from at least three of the following ethnic groups: Native American, African American, Hispanic American, and American Eskimo. Other ethnic groups may also be included.

**Course Objectives**



This coming Fall, ENG 202 will be devoted entirely to representations of race and ethnicity in comics, comix, and the graphic novel. Over the course of the semester, we will read a variety of graphic narratives covering the wide spectrum of the American ethnic experience. More specifically, we will consider why it is that so many authors have used comics as a means of expressing racial and ethnic conflict and identity. Our goals over the semester will be to give students an introduction to the vast array of ethnic writing that makes up much of American literature; to explore the diverse nature of literature in the U.S.; to develop a deeper understanding of the ever-evolving issues involved in defining the American canon and in the national discourses on both “race” and “ethnicity”; and to encourage the reading of literature with a fine critical understanding and aesthetic appreciation that a sophomore-level course should provide.

## Attendance

Be here! Much of your work will be done in class. Therefore, except in the most extraordinary cases, **you will be required to attend all class sessions**. If you know you have/will have an excused absence from class, please see me about this as soon as you can. You still need to make up the work you may have missed in class. And do arrive to class on time; tardiness can count as an absence. Attendance and class participation will help determine your overall course grade. **More than three unexcused absences can lower your course grade by at least one letter. Also, if you miss more than 15% of the scheduled classes (that's more than 6 classes) you cannot pass the course.**

## Evaluation

The course grade is determined by performance on five non-cumulative exams, a group presentation, and class participation.

### Grading Scale

A+=99, A=95, A-=90 B+=89, B=85, B-=80  
C+=79, C=75, C-=70, D+=69, D=65, D-=60  
F=59-0

The portions are weighted as follows:

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| 5 Exams            | 80% |
| Group Presentation | 15% |
| Participation      | 5%  |



Unless there are outstanding or usual circumstances, **exams cannot be made up**, so please make sure you do the readings and don't miss class.

## *Words of wisdom from your professor!*



## American Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement

Students requesting accommodations for disabilities must go through the Academic Support Committee. For more information, please contact the Director of Disability Resources & Services, Halladay Student Services Building, Room 303D, 303-886-5835.

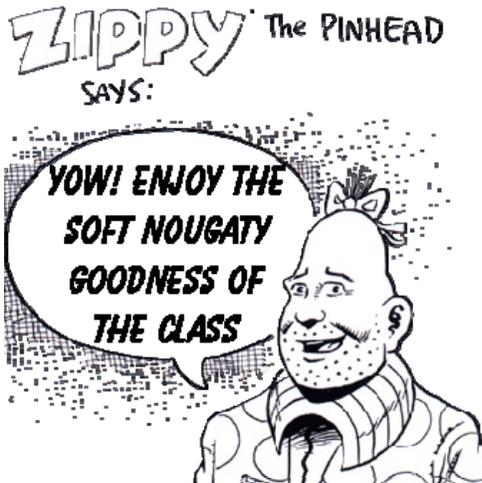
## Plagiarism and Cheating

- **Department policy:** Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1,2,3]).

- **Royal's addendum:** To intentionally plagiarize is to steal another's words or ideas as if they were your own. **Any student who blatantly plagiarizes (i.e., intentionally and directly lifting whole or partial material from any electronic or printed material) or cheats on an exam will automatically fail the course and should expect disciplinary action by the college.**

## Student Conduct and Responsibilities

*Have a good time, but consume responsibly*



- **University policy:** All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.

- **Royal's addendum:** In order for everyone to get the most out of this course, classroom conduct is of the utmost importance. Therefore, you will be required to create and maintain a productive classroom environment with little in the way of disruption. Your overall grade could be put in jeopardy if you demonstrate inappropriate classroom behaviors. This includes the habitual disruption of the class through chit-chatting and talking out of turn, doing outside work during our classroom time, and bringing in active electronic devices (such as cell phones and pagers). Every day you enter the class, please turn off your cell phones and pagers.

## Schedule

(Please note the weeks where exams and presentations are scheduled.)

### Week 1: August 28 – September 1

- Introduction to class, reading American ethnic literatures
- *Understanding Comics*, chaps 1-4

### Week 2: September 4 – 8

- *Understanding Comics*, chaps 5-9
- *The Blood of Palomar*

### Week 3: September 11 – 15

- *The Blood of Palomar*, cont.

#### Presentation

### Week 4: September 18 – 22

- *The Jew of New York*

### Week 5: September 25 – 29

- *The Jew of New York*, cont.

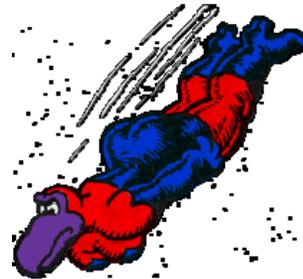
#### Presentation

### Week 6: October 2 – 6

- *Summer Blonde*, “Alter Ego” and “Summer Blonde”

### Week 7: October 9 – 13

- *Summer Blonde*, “Hawaiian Getaway” and “Bomb Scare”



**Presentation**

**Week 8: October 16 – 20**

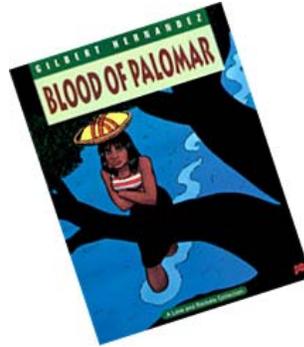
- *Skinwalker*

**Week 9: October 23 – 27**

- *Mail Order Bride*
- Presentation**

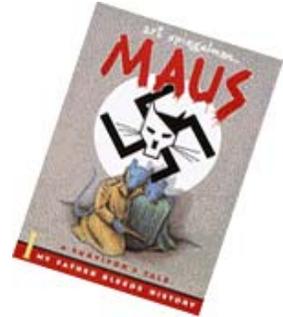
**Week 10: October 30 – November 3**

- *Mail Order Bride*, cont.
- *Maus I*



**Week 11: November 6 – 10**

- *Maus I*, cont.
  - *Maus II*
- Presentation**



**Week 12: November 13 – 17**

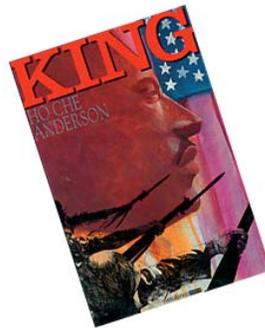
- *Maus II*, cont.

**Week 13: November 20 – 24**

- *King*

**Week 14: November 27 – December 1**

- *King*, cont.
  - *Palestine*
- Presentation**



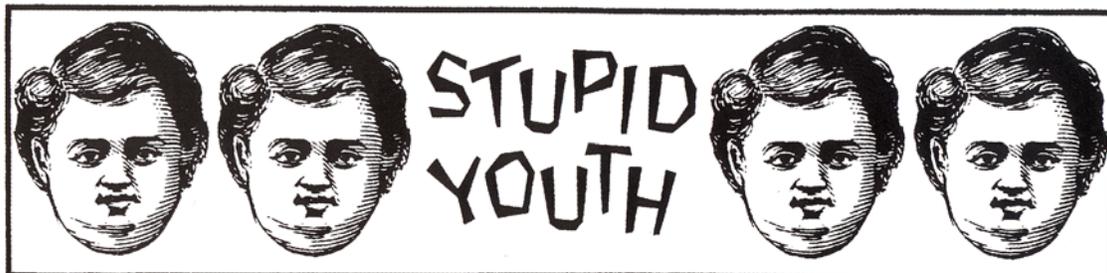
**Week 15: December 4 – 8**

- *Palestine*, cont.

**Week 16: December 11 – 15**

- **Final Exam Week**  
Exam scheduled for Dec. 15, 10:30am – 12:30pm

**DON'T BE A**



**DO YOUR CLASS READINGS!**

## ENG 202 – Multi-Ethnic Graphic Narrative Presentation

There will be several group presentations this semester reflecting a graphic novel, graphic album, or even a comic book series that we aren't all reading for class. Everyone in the group will be responsible for carefully studying the work, discussing it within the group, and taking significant part in the group's oral presentation and formal write-up. I would like for everyone not only to rely on the primary work itself, but to use other resources that give a context for the graphic narrative as well as its author(s). For your presentation, your group needs to make sure it does the following:

- Choose a graphic novel, graphic album, or comic book series *that has something to do with multi-ethnic or multicultural issues in American literature and culture*
- Introduce the work and author by doing the following:
  - Give a description of the text, its history, its context within graphic narrative/comics as a whole
  - Discuss the author(s) of the work, including a brief biography and a discussion of other works they may have done
  - Point out the significance of the author's work and any publicity and criticism it might have generated
- Give a detailed presentation of the graphic narrative you choose in terms of:
  - The place of the work(s) within the author's overall body or work.
  - The basic literary elements of the work, e.g., theme, character, plot, setting, point of view, symbolism, genre issues, etc. In other words, what are those things that characterize the graphic narrative
  - A brief overview of any criticism surrounding this graphic narrative. In particular, you might want to look at:
    - how the comic/graphic novel was originally received by reviewers when it first came out
    - what kind of controversies, if any, surrounded the comic's publication
    - how the comic has been read within a particular community
    - what kind of scholarly criticism might be out there, if any
    - the way this comic/graphic novel may (or may not) be used in the classroom
  - Some of the problems you might see in the text—feel free to be critical in a constructive way.
- Since many of you are in education, it would be a good idea to speculate on how you would teach this graphic narrative to high school or even junior high school classes. (Or, *would* you even consider teaching it to a high school or junior high school class?)

On the day of presentation, you should provide me with a 4-5 page formal essay, jointly written and edited by the group, that encapsulates the issues you bring up and discuss in class. The essay should be formatted according to MLA style, and include at least three critical sources (not counting the author's work themselves).

Remember that this is a group effort, which means that everyone in the group must participate in the class presentation as well as contribute to the writing/editing of the essay. So you'll need to assign responsibilities accordingly. (In other words, if someone's really good at doing research, that person can do a survey of the criticism. Or if one member is a good writer, she/he could write up an initial draft that can be critiqued by the others.) You will need to exchange contact information with your fellow group members and make arrangements to meet several times outside of class. Feel free to use any sort of media in your class presentation, but please keep in mind a couple of things: 1) if you choose to use visual media of any kind you *must* check with me at least a week before your presentation so that I can make arrangements with Media Services, and 2) make sure that the glitz or dazzle of any media that you use does not overshadow the content of your presentation.

