

Class Description:

Students in this class will interact with various kinds of popular English-language media. We will pay attention to the English-language content of the media we explore, we will also look at the non-verbal "messages" that are communicated in "narratives" and how they are represented differently when adapted to different media, even when telling the "same story".

Through this analysis, students will expand their critical awareness and "vocabulary", both in verbal and nonverbal, and attain a deeper understanding of the culture from which this media was produced, and to which it has been designed to communicate. For this course, we will examine the trope of the "super-hero" and the "notion of the hero" as presented in various works and Anglophone cultures.

Course Objectives:

1. To familiarize students with a wider scope of popular media in English-language culture, and provide a focused chance to interact with English-language media.
2. To allow students a chance to discuss and critique media, and working together to develop a sense of what kinds of communication, linguistic and otherwise, are facilitated through popular media, as well as the differences in the kinds of messages and ideas communicated most naturally through different media formats.
3. To have students creatively use what they have learned and internalized to produce their own sample of a media adaptation, and be able to discuss their creation critically. (This is the final project.)

Class Activities

Group work, discussions, and creative assignments will be an important part of the course, and active participation is essential. At least one presentation will be made by each student.

Assessment:

- Class Participation – 20%
- Short Essay – 10%
- Homework/Quizzes/Presentations – 20%
- Midterm Exam – 20%
- Final Project – 30%

Textbook:

All textbooks will be ordered as a group purchase, organized within the class. Students are free to get a copy of the textbooks on their own if they prefer, before the course begins. Tentatively, we will look at only one graphic novel this semester:

V for Vendetta by Alan Moore & David Lloyd (graphic novel)

However, I may add a second graphic novel after the break depending on how the course proceeds. Photocopies and materials available online will also be used.

My contact information:

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Course Outline:

The following is extremely tentative and subject to changes at any time, but it should give you an idea of what I'm planning for you. Student presentations will probably begin in Week 3, and will mostly occur on the days in which our class meetings are one hour and not on the days when we meet for two hours.

Week 1: Introductions, Discussing Narrative and Media

Week 2: *Smallville*, Part 1: Viewing & Discussion

Week 3: *Smallville*, Part 2: Viewing & Discussion

Week 4: The Hero Across Media Divides: The adaptation of Superman from comic book to movie and TV

Week 5: *V for Vendetta*: the film & discussion

Week 6: Film analysis & Discussion, Presentations

Week 7: Reading *V for Vendetta* 1: Readings, Presentations, and Discussion

Week 8: Reading *V for Vendetta* 2: Readings, Presentations, and Discussion

Week 9: Midterm Exam

Week 10: Reading *V for Vendetta* 3: Readings, Presentations, and Discussion

Week 11: Reading *V for Vendetta* 4: Readings, Presentations, and Discussion

Week 12: Creative Project Launch

Week 13: The War of the Worlds (The Radio Drama): Listening & Discussion

Week 14: The War of the Worlds: Novel vs. Movie vs. Radio Drama

Week 15: Creative Project Workshop

Week 16: Final Projects Due & Course Wrap-Up