

## SYLLABUS

### EN 382.01 Topics in Literature and Film:

#### Neurodiversity: Mental Disability in Literature and Film

Fall 2013 Dr. Osteen

Office: HU 242B; Hours: TTH 9:30-10:30 am; 3-4 pm and by appointment

Phone: x2363; e-mail: mosteen@loyola.edu

### COURSE SUMMARY

The neurodiversity movement proposes that people with cognitive disabilities add something unique and valuable to the human spectrum. This course proceeds from that idea, using Disability Studies to investigate how writers and filmmakers have depicted neurological and intellectual differences. Can disabilities also be abilities? What illumination can disabled people provide for neurotypicals? How might impaired language, cognition or memory shed light on the deeper nature of these phenomena? Are there limitations or drawbacks to neurodiversity doctrines?

### COURSE LEARNING AIMS

- To enable students to create their own research paper topics and to write substantial, sophisticated critical essays.
- To provide a discussion-oriented format that encourages everyone to participate and exchange idea and to enjoy the fruits of challenging intellectual discourse.
- To gain an enhanced appreciation of the richness of the human neurological spectrum.
- To question conventional definitions of intelligence.
- To reach a deeper understanding of our own abilities, disabilities and differences.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

William Wordsworth, "The Idiot Boy." Pdf on Moodle

Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener." Pdf on Moodle.

Daniel Keyes, "Flowers for Algernon." Pdf on Moodle.

John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*. 1937. Penguin.

William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*. 1929. Norton Critical Edition. Ed. David Minter. 1994.

Doris Lessing, *The Fifth Child*. Vintage, 1988.

Stuart Murray, *Autism*. Routledge, 2011.

Mark Osteen, *One of Us: A Family's Life with Autism*. U of Missouri Press, 2010. Excerpted pdfs on Moodle.

Temple Grandin, with Margaret M. Scariano, *Emergence: Labeled Autistic*. Warner, 1986.

Oliver Sacks, *An Anthropologist on Mars*. Vintage, 1995.

Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*. Vintage, 2003.

Autism Self-Advocacy Network, *Loud Hands*, 2012. Excerpted pdfs on Moodle.

Paul Karasik and Judy Karasik, *The Ride Together*. Washington Square, 2003.

Jayne Anne Phillips, *Lark and Termite*. Vintage, 2009.  
 Richard Powers, *The Echo Maker*. Picador, 2006.  
 Floyd Skloot, *In the Shadow of Memory*; pdf excerpts on Moodle.  
 Alice Munro, "The Bear Came over the Mountain." Pdf on Moodle.

## REQUIRED FILMS

*The Wild Child*. Dir. François Truffaut. Les Artistes Associés, 1970.  
*Rain Man*. Dir. Barry Levinson. United Artists, 1988.  
*Temple Grandin*. Dir. Mick Jackson. HBO, 2010.  
*Autism: The Musical*. Dir. Trisha Regan. HBO, 2007.  
*The Black Balloon*. Dir. Elissa Down. 2007.  
*Somewhere in the Night*. Dir. Joseph Mankiewicz. 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox, 1946.  
*The Lookout*. Dir. Scott Frank. Miramax, 2007.  
*Memento*. Dir. Christopher Nolan. Newmarket Films, 2000.  
*Away from Her*. Dir. Sarah Polley. Lionsgate, 2006.

## REQUIREMENTS

**1. Participation:** Each student should attend *every* session and come prepared. If you miss more than one class your grade will be adversely affected. Preparation must include the text(s), films and music assigned for each session. I'll give quizzes only if you show me you need them.

**2. Moodle Posts:** To keep our discussions lively and to ensure that you are watching the films, reading the texts, and thinking critically about both, each student must write a substantial forum post every third week. The topic will be the text or film for that week. We will divide the class in thirds; each student will be responsible for **six substantial posts** over the course of the semester, beginning the week of Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>.

These should not be just viewing or reading notes, but rather short essays. Don't write a review; focus on one or two significant themes, details or ideas and analyze them. You should write three or four solid paragraphs. As we learn more about these issues, I'll expect more thoughtful and sophisticated responses.

Each student **must also respond** to at least three student posts each week when you are not writing a longer post. Responses such as "sick post, Dave" are worthless. The point is to engage with your peers and discuss the films and texts outside of class.

**3. Reflection Papers.** During the semester you will write **two** short reflections that relate the course texts to your own experience of cognitive difference. Both are graded. *These need not be submitted electronically.*

**4. Presentation:** Each student will deliver, with a partner or two, an oral presentation on a subject of his/her choice. These will be assigned on the second class meeting. Each group will meet with me before the date of the presentation to determine a topic.

*Guidelines:*

- a. The presentation should treat critically some theme, technical issue or idea in the texts or films for that week.
- b. Each presentation **must be accompanied by an audio-visual aide**, such as a handout, film clip, musical excerpt(s), website, PowerPoint, etc.
- c. Each presentation should last no more than 20 minutes; I'll give one warning, then I will cut you off.
- d. Each student will also evaluate other students' presentations by completing a form with comments and a grade. Each student will be graded on the helpfulness and accuracy of his or her evaluations; this grade will be included in the participation grade.
- e. A research bibliography containing at least **four** sources is **due on the day of your presentation**. These should be annotated: that is, you should describe the source's topic or thesis in a few sentences. Check with me before including any Internet sources; sources found on the library's research database are okay. The film versions do not count as sources.
- f. You must provide **two** questions for discussion. The questions should be photocopied and handed out or presented visually in class. **You should not ask discussion questions that you've already answered in your presentation.**

**5. Research Paper:** You will write a research paper of 6-10 pages, **due no less than one and no more than two weeks after the date of your group presentation. The paper should expand upon the topic of your presentation.**

*Guidelines:*

- a. The paper **must incorporate at least three secondary sources—that is, criticism of literature and/or film**—as well as primary texts. You may use Internet sources if they are from refereed journals such as those found on the library databases. *Check with me before using any other web-based source.*
- b. The paper is due **no less than one and no more than two weeks after the date of your oral presentation**. Please meet with me after your presentation to work out a topic. **All late papers are graded down 1/3 grade per day late**, unless you make arrangements with me in advance.
- c. You must give me hard copy of your paper *AND* send it to me as an e-mail attachment or upload it to the "Research Paper" assignment on Moodle. ***The e-mail attachment alone is not acceptable.***

**6. Deadlines.** Late assignments are **penalized one-third of a letter grade per day late**, beginning five minutes after class on the day it is due. Quizzes or short writing assignments may be made up only with an excused absence, no later than the week following the original assignment. Make-up exams are given only in case of dire emergency. If you know you must miss an exam, **make arrangements ahead of time**. All term grades are final.

**7. Exams.** There will be a midterm and a final.

**8. Percentages.** The final grade will be determined according to the following ratios:

Participation, daily preparation and reflections:	25%
Mid-term exam and quizzes:	20%
Term Paper and Presentation:	30%
Final Exam:	25%

### ACCOMMODATIONS NOTICE

To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS), Newman Towers West 107, at [DSS@loyola.edu](mailto:DSS@loyola.edu) or 410-617-2750/2062. If you have already registered with DSS and have requested an accommodations letter (and DSS has sent the letter to your professors via email), please schedule a brief meeting to discuss with me the accommodations you might need in this class. If you have any questions please contact Marcia Wiedefeld, Director of DSS, at [mwiedefeld@loyola.edu](mailto:mwiedefeld@loyola.edu) or 410-617-2062.

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### HONOR CODE NOTICE

This course is covered by the Loyola College Honor Code. **All students guilty of plagiarizing or cheating on any assignment will fail the course, regardless of their grades on other assignments or activities.**

The English department regards plagiarism and other forms of cheating as the antithesis of scholarship, learning, collegiality, and responsible citizenship. The department defines plagiarism as any unacknowledged use of another’s words or ideas. This definition applies to non-print media, including (especially!) the Internet, as well as to books, magazines, journals, newspapers, and other print media.

It is the student's responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism and to avoid it in all assignments. Students should familiarize themselves with the *Loyola Undergraduate Catalogue*’s statement on “Intellectual Honesty,” and with the section “Integrating Sources and avoiding Plagiarism” (pp. 197-202) in Lunsford’s *Easy Writer*, the Loyola English Department’s grammar and style handbook. Anyone having questions or uncertainties about plagiarism should consult with the instructor before submitting any assignment. When in doubt, err on the side of safety! Neither ignorance of the definition of plagiarism nor the lack of intention to deceive constitutes an acceptable defense in matters of scholarly dishonesty.

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### EN 382.01: NEURODIVERSITY SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND VIEWINGS

September 3: Introduction to the course.

#### I. “Idiots” and Innocents

September 5: Wordsworth, “The Idiot Boy”; Melville, “Bartleby” (pdfs).

September 10: Text: Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*, all.

September 12: Film: *The Wild Child*; Keyes, “Flowers for Algernon” (pdf).

## II. Gothic Modernisms

September 17: Text: *The Sound and the Fury*. Start with the Appendix (203-15), then read “April Seventh, 1928” (1-48).

September 19: Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*, “June Second 1910.”

September 24: Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*, to end. Presentation.

September 26: Text: Lessing, *The Fifth Child*, to p. 94.

October 1: Text: *The Fifth Child* to end. Presentation. **Reflection paper due: *What Is Intelligence?***

## III. Autistic Presences

October 3: Text: Murray, *Autism*, 1-59. Osteen, “Urinetown” and “Echo Chamber” (pdfs).

October 8: Text: Murray, *Autism*, 59-107. Film: *Rain Man*.

### October 10: Midterm Examination.

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October 15: Text: Grandin/Scariano: *Emergence*, all.

October 17: Text: Sacks, *An Anthropologist on Mars*, 188-296. Film: *Temple Grandin*.  
Presentation.

October 22: Texts: Haddon, *Curious Incident*, through p. 124; excerpts from *Loud Hands*.

October 24: Text: Haddon *Curious Incident*, to end. Film: *Autism: The Musical*. Presentation.

## IV. Brothers and Sisters

October 29: Text: Karasik and Karasik, *The Ride Together*, through Chapter 10 (p. 118).

October 31: Text: Karasiks, *The Ride Together*, to end. Film: *The Black Balloon*. Presentation.

November 5: Text: Phillips, *Lark and Termite*, through p. 169.

November 7: Phillips, *Lark and Termite*, to end. Presentation.

## **V. Shadows of Memory**

November 12: Text: Powers, *The Echo Maker*, through Part Two (p. 178).

November 14: Powers, *The Echo Maker*, through Part Three (274).

November 19: Powers, *The Echo Maker* to end. Presentation.

November 21: Text: Skloot, *In the Shadow of Memory*, Sacks, *Anthropologist*, 42-76.

November 26: Films: *Somewhere in the Night*; *The Lookout*. **Reflection paper due: “My Disability.”**

**November 28: No Class. Thanksgiving Break.**

December 3: Text: Munro, “The Bear Came over the Mountain. Film: *Away from Her*.

December 5: Film: *Memento*. Catch-up day, review for final exam.

**December 11, 1 pm: FINAL EXAM.**