ENGL 108H (01): Isolation and Alienation
Fall 2003

Class Times: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30-3:50
Place: PAS 2083
Instructor: Michael Truscello
Office Hours: PAS 1064, Mondays and Wednesdays 1-2, or by appointment
Mailbox: English Department Drop Box; email: novel_1@rogers.com

Course Summary: English 108H will examine the concepts of “isolation” and “alienation” as historical and ideological constructs through an exploration of literary texts. The texts on the syllabus represent a variety of historical epochs and identities. We will examine the construction of the concepts of “alienation and isolation” from a postcolonial perspective (Lucy), a modernist perspective (“Prufrock”), a Marxist perspective (Brecht), a pre-20th century Western feminist perspective (Chopin), a late-20th-century masculinist perspective (Fight Club) and a postmodern, media age perspective (White Noise).
An essential goal of this course is to develop the reading, analysis, and writing habits of first-year students. To this end, class #3 will combine the study of a short story with a writing workshop, in which students will produce writing samples and critique them. The workshop will cover the basic elements of an academic essay, and instruction on how to develop a thesis.

Required Texts:

Brecht, Bertolt. The Good Woman of Szechwan.
Chopin, Kate. The Awakening.
DeLillo, Don. White Noise.
Kincaid, Jamaica. Lucy.
Palahniuk, Chuck. Fight Club.
*Courseware Package. (see below for contents of courseware package)

Recommended Texts:


Assignments:

1. Short Essay (5-6 typed pages): 20%
Details to follow. Due October 15.

2. Long Essay (7-8 typed pages): 40%
Details to follow. Due December 1.

3. Final Exam: 40%
TBA by the university.

Essay Policies: Essays will be handed in to me at the beginning of the class on the day they are due. Essays that are not handed to me directly must be signed and dated by a department secretary and placed in my mailbox in HH 229. The English Department Mailroom is open daily from 8:30 to 4:30 and is closed on the weekend.
Late essays will be docked 2% per day starting the day the assignment is due, including weekends. Extensions are at my discretion for serious medical and/or family emergencies only. Budget your time and plan on handing in your assignments on time.
Please note: Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will be dealt with according to the University of Waterloo Disciplinary Code (see Policy 71 in Undergraduate Calendar). All quotations, paraphrased material and ideas which are not your own MUST be properly cited and referenced.

Class Schedule:
*Readings from the Courseware Package.
September 8: Introduction
September 10: Introduction
September 15: Lucy
September 17: Lucy
September 22: Writing Workshop*
September 24: Jamaica Kincaid’s "Xuela"*
September 29: "Painter of Modern Life"*
October 1: "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"*
October 8: Good Woman of Szechwan; excerpts from Brecht on Theatre*
October 10: Good Woman of Szechwan; excerpts from Brecht on Theatre*
October 15: Good Woman of Szechwan; excerpts from Brecht on Theatre*; Essay #1
October 17: Good Woman of Szechwan; excerpts from Brecht on Theatre*
October 22: Fight Club
October 24: Fight Club
October 29: Fight Club
October 31: Fight Club
November 3: The Awakening
November 5: The Awakening
November 10: Film: The Shining
November 12: Film: The Shining
November 17: The Shining (discussion)
November 19: White Noise
November 24: White Noise
November 26: White Noise
December 1: No class; Essay #2 Due