Mapping Men: An Introduction Literature about Gender and Environment

ENGL 2316.003 Literature and Culture

TTH 12:30-1:45pm / CI 109

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Course Description

In “Mapping Men: An Introduction to Literature about Gender and Nature,” we will investigate the way rural masculine stereotypes have developed in concert with American ideas about non-human nature. American culture has a long history of environmental subjugation and many rural masculinities, such as the soldier or the cowboy, have grown out of uniquely American ideas about human interaction with the non-human world. We will read and discuss film and text from both male and female authors that emphasize the often detrimental connections between cultural ideas about what “makes a man a man” and the equally pervasive notions about what eco-critic Kate Soper calls our “oedipal” relationship with the natural world.

Prerequisites

• English 1302

Student Learning Objectives:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to demonstrate knowledge and skills in four Core Objectives defined by the Higher Education Coordinating Board of the State of Texas:

Critical Thinking
CT1. Generate and communicate ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information.
CT3. Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information.

Communication Skills
CS1. Develop, interpret, and express ideas through written communication.

Personal Responsibility:
PR1. Evaluate choices and actions, and relate consequences to decision making.

Social Responsibility:
SR3. Engage in regional, national, and global communities.

Course Objectives:

1. To consider how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience by examining the connections between literary works and their social, historical, and cultural contexts.
2. To use literature to explore ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures and nationalities.
3. To recognize the distinctive characteristics of relevant literary periods, genres, and writers.
4. To understand and use basic literary terms and concepts.
5. To develop analytic skills by close reading, class discussion, and writing.
6. To use writing as a tool for learning.

Required Reading

The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane
Deliverance by James Dickey
First Blood by David Morrell
That Old Ace in the Hole by Annie Proulx
Brokeback Mountain by Annie Proulx
An Introduction to Post-Apocalyptic Literature

The Laramie Project by Moises Kaufman
—Brokeback Mountain (2005)
—Assorted critical readings

Note: Do not come to class without the required text for the day. Texts can be on a reader (e.g. Kindle, Nook, I-Pad, etc.) or in hardcopy. You may not use your phone as your reader insofar as you will need to be able to easily annotate your texts. Failure to bring your text with you will result in being asked to leave the class for the day. There is no point in you being in class if you cannot refer to your text during discussion. This means that you need to purchase all of the texts (and read them) before class. Do not wait until the week before a particular text is required to attempt to purchase it. Bookstores run out of copies and on-line sources are not reliable with regards to timely shipping. You may use print or e-book copies of the texts, but you will need to be able to find specific places in the written texts, so know your technology.

Grade Breakdown

Exam One— 20%
Exam Two— 20%
Service Learning Project— 30%
Group Presentation— 15%
Class Participation— 15% (class participation and attendance/discussion)

A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=0-59

Reading Quizzes

If it becomes obvious as the semester progresses that students are not coming to class having read the assigned texts and prepared with discussion questions for the rest of the class, I will begin giving reading quizzes at the beginning of class and will be worth approximately 5% of your final semester grade. I will allow five minutes after the beginning of class time for late arrivals, and then I will administer the quiz. If you are late, you will lose the points for the quiz. There will be no chance to make up the quizzes, and the quizzes are pass/fail.

Course Assignments

Exams: You will take a two exams during this course (see calendar for specific dates). Exams will be essay in format and will cover all of the texts we will have discussed up to the date of the exam. This means that themes and ideas that we follow throughout the semester, in addition to textual material, from start to finish, will be comprehensively examined on the final exam. Exams are take-home and will require significant writing and use of course texts (films, novels, short fiction, criticism, and literary theory). If you fail to submit your exam on the day it is due, ten points will be deducted from the grade, with ten points deducted for each day late, up to three days—at which point you will receive an F for the exam.

Service Learning: A large component of the grade for this class is a service learning project. The project is broken up into three four week modules: Observation, Research, and Activism. More details will be provided in class, but in a nutshell, the project is designed as follows:

Observation: During this four week module, pre-arranged groups of no more than five students will visit and observe an assigned location in or close to Corpus Christi proper. For no less than one hour a week, groups will observe their location and each member will write a minimum of two full pages per week about their observations.

Research: While continuing observation of their assigned location, groups will also work together to find and read a minimum of three venue-specific scholarly research articles. Combining this new knowledge and continuing the one hour a week of observation, each member of the group will write a minimum of two full pages per week about how the research influenced their observations.

Activism: For the last four week module, each group will work together to actively engage with their assigned venue. For example, a group assigned to observe, research, and write about Corpus Christi Bay might begin a letter writing campaign to the EPA on behalf of the over-fished sea life. Or, a group might choose to spend an hour a week picking up garbage from North Beach and taking it to a recycling center. We will discuss options for activism when the time comes.
(Note: You do not have to be an environmentalist—or a democrat—to observe, research, and engage with the non-human environment. You may even hate the non-human environment. One primary purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate the connections between written texts and the concrete world and thus, the project itself is ostensibly outside the realm of any political or idealistic leanings you may have.)

**Presentation:** During the course of the semester, you will work in your pre-arranged groups to develop presentations which your group will present to the university community during the final days of the semester. You will, therefore, need to know who your group is so that you can work together outside of class. How you set up your presentation is up to you. Presentations should be creative and address the service learning project you have been working on all semester. Your group will then be required to engage your audience in active discussion of the course texts, the service learning project, and the way the two are connected. Further instruction will be handed out in class and a sign-up sheet will be passed around mid-semester. In addition, on your presentation day, you must submit a typed peer evaluation, commenting on the level of involvement in the project by your fellow group members. This evaluation will be used to help determine individual grades for the presentation and no one will read it but me.

**Class Participation/Discussion:** Insofar as a great deal of time will be spent in discussion of the required texts, class participation carries considerable weight. Students will be expected to come to class having read the assigned texts and having prepared to engage in discussion, to pose pertinent questions, and to develop significant and personal answers to the questions posed by the texts. You will receive at least one percentage point per class for participation, for bringing discussion questions, and, if necessary, for mandatory reading quizzes. With that in mind, and although there is no attendance policy for this class, I will keep roll, and failure to attend class regularly will affect your class participation grade considerably.

Part of the participation grade will is group leadership of a class discussion. Groups will be assigned randomly, and each of the eleven groups in the class will be required to lead a discussion. See calendar for specific dates.

**Course Policies**

**Disruptive Behavior:** I reserve the right to ask disruptive students to leave the classroom. Disruptive behavior constitutes any behavior which prevents an active learning environment from developing in the classroom. Students who are asked to leave must make an appointment with me to meet in my office before they may return to class.

Disruptive behavior can range from cell phone use to abusive behavior, from open hostility to racial slurs, and so on. We are in this class together. Please, be respectful of one another. **P.S. Go to the bathroom before class.**

**Electronics:** When you arrive, please remove headphones and turn off phones and put them where they will not be a distraction. Failing to do so is not only disrespectful to both myself and your peers, but constitutes disruptive behavior. Students who fail to adhere to this policy on more than one occasion will be asked to leave the classroom for the duration of the day’s discussion and must meet with me before returning to class. You may use an electronic reader as your textbook, however.

**Disabilities Accommodations:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Grade Appeals:** As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for
completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

**Academic Advising:** The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Dropping a Class:** I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

**Absences:** There is an absence policy for this class. Because this is a three day a week class, you have three “free” absences. Absences are neither excused nor unexcused. You may use them for whatever you want, when you like, with no need to notify me beforehand. After your three “freebies,” you will lose one percentage point (1%) of your final course grade for each absence. I will pass around a sign-up sheet at the beginning of class and pick it up fifteen minutes after class has begun. Once I have taken up the sign-up sheet, you will be counted absent if you have not signed.

In addition, your class participation grade (as well as my evaluation of your essays and the ideas they present) depends heavily on your participation in class discussion and activity. Your classmates benefit from your presence and your ideas, as does the significant group work in the class. You have to be present to participate. Thus, excessive absences will result in a significant reduction of your class participation grade.

**The Writing Center:** The Writing Center of Texas A&M Corpus Christi provides free help for students at any stage in the writing process. Writing Center consultants are trained to work with writers one-on-one to help them find ideas, organize their thoughts, cite sources, and succeed at all aspects of the writing task. The Writing Center works closely with faculty across campus to understand the writing projects they assign and to help students meet the expectations of those assignments. The Writing Center is located in Glasscock Center (GSSC) 112, in the Center for Academic Student Achievement (CASA). Both drop-in and scheduled appointments are available. The Writing Center will be open soon. More information is available at: The Writing Center website.

**Finally,** if you are struggling, please come and see me in my office during my office hours or by appointment, or contact me via e-mail before you are hopelessly lost. Students who make use of my office hours and the University Writing Center inevitably improve their understanding of a text, their writing skills and ultimately their grades.

### Course Calendar
(Dates are subject to—and probably will—change)

<p>| Class Schedule | Reading (Reading/film watching must be completed for the day it is assigned.) | Writing/Discussion Leaders/Daily plan |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week One</th>
<th>Introductions to course, syllabi, and assignments.</th>
<th>Syllabus</th>
<th>Service learning group and venue assignments. Suggestions for venues.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week Two</td>
<td>Literary terms and concepts Read Cronon (BB) SL Module One: Observation begins.</td>
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<td>Read (BB) Read (BB)</td>
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<td>Week Three</td>
<td>Read Proulx TOAH Read Proulx TOAH</td>
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<td>Week Four</td>
<td>Read Proulx TOAH Read Proulx TOAH Discussion—Group One</td>
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<td>Week Five</td>
<td>Read Proulx TOAH Read Proulx TOAH Discussion—Group Two</td>
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<td>Week Six</td>
<td>Read Proulx TOAH SL Module Two: Research begins. Read Proulx TOAH Discussion—Group Three</td>
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<td>Week Seven</td>
<td>Exam One due Read Crane Discussion—Group Four</td>
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<td>Read Crane Exam One review.</td>
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<td>Week Eight</td>
<td>Read Crane Read Crane Discussion—Group Five</td>
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<td>Week Nine</td>
<td>Read Dickey Read Dickey Discussion—Group Six</td>
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<td>Week Ten</td>
<td>Read Dickey SL Module Three: Activism begins. Read Dickey Discussion—Group Seven</td>
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<td>Week Eleven</td>
<td>Read Proulx Read Proulx Discussion—Group Eight</td>
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<td>Last day to drop! Discussion—Group Nine</td>
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<td>Week Twelve</td>
<td>Read Kaufman Read Kaufman Discussion—Group Ten</td>
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<td>Week Thirteen</td>
<td>Read Morrell Read Morrell Discussion—Group Eleven</td>
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<td>Week Fourteen</td>
<td>: Exam Two Read Morrell SL presentations.</td>
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<td>Week Fifteen</td>
<td>Last day of class. Reading Day Final Exams</td>
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<td>Week Sixteen</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
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<td>Final Exams</td>
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<td><strong>Happy Summer Break!</strong></td>
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