

HONORS 272: THE HUMAN EVENT

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OFFICE HOURS: Tu & Th from 10:30am-12:30pm in person or on Zoom, but you must make an appointment through the Canvas Calendar.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Human Event is an intensive, interdisciplinary seminar focusing on key social and intellectual currents in the development of humanity in its diversity. Students examine human thought and imagination from various perspectives, including philosophy, history, literature, religion, science, and art. Coursework emphasizes critical thinking, discussion, and argumentative writing. Exploring texts from approximately 1600 to the present, HON 272 is the second half of a two-semester sequence that starts with HON 171.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To improve the student's ability to reason critically and communicate clearly.
- To cultivate the student's ability to engage in intellectual discourse through reading, writing, and discussion.
- To broaden the student's historical and cultural awareness and understanding.
- To deepen awareness of the diversity of human societies and cultures.
- To instill intellectual breadth and academic discipline in preparation for more advanced study.

COURSE THEMES:

This course has two themes—one of substance, and one of form. On the substantive side, each reading deals with obsession in various forms, namely obsessions with different objects or ideals, such as glory, revenge, self-aggrandizement, power, vanity, a culture, or a person. The texts not only illustrate various obsessions, but also their causes and effects. Hence we will examine the circumstances that help create these obsessions, with an eye toward the role of isolation and man's social nature (or lack thereof), as well as the results of obsession.

On the formal side, the course introduces the forms of the novel and novella, which were *novel* in the period. This is intentionally in stark opposition with the focus of the HON 171 course. The time period covered in HON 171 stops just before the genuine birth and proliferation of the novel (and its diminutive sibling, the novella), which would go on to become the primary form of modern literature. This course aims to give the novel its due, and augment the introduction to literary forms offered in HON 171. To accomplish this, the readings include works from around the globe are all represented. Though the course concentrates on the standard novel and novella, we will also study a works of philosophy and social theory, and a graphic novel.

It is important to note that a proper introduction to the form of the novel requires the reading of longer works in their entirety. Length is part of what makes the novel a distinctive form, allowing them to present more elaborate stories in greater detail than shorter forms. One must perceive these details to appreciate the art form. This means that in some weeks the reading load will be relatively heavy, though manageable.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Students must have these exact editions:

1. *Lady Audley's Secret*
By Mary Elizabeth Braddon
Publisher: Oxford University Press (Oxford World's Classics Series)
ISBN-13: 978-0199577033
2. *A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas*
By Virginia Woolf
Publisher: Oxford University Press (Oxford World's Classics Series)
ISBN-13: 9780192818393
3. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*
By Oscar Wilde
Publisher: Dover Publications
ISBN-13: 978-0486278070
4. *The Periodic Table*
By Primo Levi
Publisher: Schocken (reissue), Everyman's Library Contemporary Classics Series
ISBN-13: 978-0805210415
5. *Beloved*
By Toni Morrison
Publisher: Vintage
ISBN-13: 978-1400033416
6. *Arkham Asylum: A Serious House on Serious Earth*
By Grant Morrison and Dave McKean
Publisher: DC Comics
ISBN-13: 9781779504333

Some readings will be posted to Canvas. Please check the site (go to <https://my.asu.edu> and find our class site under "Courses") frequently for readings, focus questions, online discussions, and announcements. **Failure to use the assigned edition for a paper will result in a failing grade.**

MULTICULTURALISM

Barrett, the Honors College at Arizona State University, is committed to creating a multicultural learning environment, which is broadly defined as a place where human culture diversity is valued and respected. Barrett courses integrate multicultural and diversity issues in ways that are designed to enhance students' honors experience and promote learning goals. We hope that our students will contribute their unique perspectives to this effort by respecting others' identities and personal life histories and by considering and raising issues related to multiculturalism and diversity as appropriate to individual course content.

ASSESSMENT

Each class meeting is your chance to have an analytic conversation with your peers about the material we will be reading. Our goal will be to work together, not only to further your critical reading skills but also your writing abilities. Attendance and active participation, therefore, are crucial to success—both for you as an individual and for the class as a whole. Students are required to complete all reading assignments and come to class prepared for discussion.

I will determine your final course grade in the following way:

- Participation: 30%
- Quizzes: 10%
- 1st paper: 15%
- 2nd paper: 20%
- 3rd paper: 25%

ATTENDANCE

Because this class is a collaborative, discussion-based learning community, attendance is mandatory. Your active participation is essential for your success and the success of this class.

- Sitting in class doing nothing (or worse) and not attending class are functionally equivalent. Do not waste my time and your classmates' money pretending to have done the reading.
- Bring the assigned texts to class each day; you will often need to refer directly to the text we are discussing to support your arguments. ***If you do not bring the necessary texts to class, you will be marked as absent.***
- Arriving late to class will also impact your participation grade significantly.
- For more information on ASU's attendance policies, please refer to the following links:
 - ASU's policies regarding accommodation for religious practices are available here: <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-04.html>
 - ASU's policies regarding accommodation for university-sanctioned activities are available here: <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-02.html>

PARTICIPATION

Good participation is a matter of quality rather than quantity. **Please come prepared to share at least one comment or question about the week's reading during each class.** I'm looking forward to hearing your ideas and insights, and I welcome suggestions for things you would like to talk about (confusing passages, key terms, etc.). When you talk, please address your comments to the whole class, not just to me. Being a good participant is not just about speaking,

but also about listening attentively to your classmates and addressing their comments thoughtfully. The criteria I use when grading participation include the following:

- **A:** The student in this grade range arrives to class each day thoroughly prepared with comments and questions on the assigned reading. Comments reveal that the student has read carefully; this student occasionally initiates the discussion without waiting for the instructor to do so. This student does not, however, try to dominate the class, but listens carefully to the remarks made by fellow class members, and responds as readily to these as to the instructor's questions. This student's comments are almost always backed up by direct reference to the text under discussion. They will be able to ask others insightful questions about their views and will be able to develop and extend the ideas of others.
- **B:** The student in this grade range participates in most discussions, although not as fully or reliably as the student described above. There is evidence of having done the reading. This student pays attention to the comments of the other students.
- **C:** The student in this grade range participates only intermittently, and is more willing to discuss broad, general questions than to engage in concrete analysis of an assigned text. Sometimes unprepared, this student lacks interest in the ideas of other members of the class, and is often inattentive. This student may also sometimes disrupt or otherwise interfere with others' ability to engage in the discussion.
- **D or E.** The student in this grade range seldom, if ever, participates and/or neglects to bring the proper text to class.

For information on how to assess your performance in discussion and make improvements, see the handout "Some Questions to ask Yourself about Your Seminar Participation" on our Canvas site. I will calculate your final participation grade at the end of the semester. If you are concerned about this part of your final grade, please come to my office hours so that we can discuss your current performance and make a plan that will help you increase your grade before the end of the semester.

QUIZZES

For 10 weeks out of the semester there will be quizzes on the readings for that respective week. The quizzes will be available on Monday and are due before 9am on Friday. The quizzes will be available on Canvas.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

This course requires three papers (5-6 pages). These essays are opportunities for you to demonstrate your ability to critically analyze texts, synthesize ideas and concepts, and develop insightful and original arguments. Your papers will be graded on accuracy of interpretation and understanding, quality of argument, expression, and originality.

These papers must be **double-spaced and stapled** in the upper left hand corner, and have page numbers and one-inch margins. Please use **Times New Roman font size 12**. We will go over formatting and style guidelines before your papers are due. You will turn in a hard copy of your paper to my office the day it is due and also upload a copy to the Canvas page. Both copies must be submitted by the time specified. Papers turned in after the time due will be counted as one day late.

LATE POLICY

Any late papers will be marked down 4 percentage points every 24 hours past the due date. Papers submitted after one week of the due date will automatically fail. Extensions are available in cases of emergency. Late or extended papers will receive no comments, only a grade.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY ETHICS

The Barrett community is committed to upholding values of academic, professional, and personal honesty of the highest order. We believe that ethical and respectful behavior is one of the most important measures of the worth of an individual and, as such, the overall integrity of our community as a whole. As members of a learning community, we all play a part in maintaining that community.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism, or taking credit for words and ideas not your own, is a crime, and I will not tolerate it. **The consequences are severe including failure for the assignment, probable failure for the course, disciplinary referral to the Dean and possible expulsion from the University. If I suspect that you have plagiarized, you will receive a 0 on the essay in question and, depending on the severity and extent, I reserve the right to give you an E for the course.**

According to ASU's Academic Integrity Policy, "Plagiarism is stealing. Whenever you borrow a phrase, sentence, paragraph—even an idea stated in your own words—from any outside source (news writing, magazine, TV show, book) without giving credit to that source, you have plagiarized. Plagiarism is cheating yourself and someone else. Academic integrity is expected of every individual." For more information on what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, please visit the following website: <https://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

THE BARRETT WRITING CENTER

Learning to write clearly, compellingly, and coherently should be a major goal of yours in this class. Writing Center instructors, who are also Barrett students, are trained to work with inexperienced as well as advanced student writers. The Writing Center is an excellent resource and I highly recommend that you take advantage of it over the course of the term. If you would like some help organizing ideas for your paper or some constructive criticism of a draft, please make an appointment to see a Writing Center instructor. For more information, go to <http://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/barrett-writing-center/>.

OFFICE HOURS

My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus. If you cannot make my assigned office hours or need to meet with me urgently because of some other reason outside of my regular office hours, please let me know at least 48 hours in advance.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

Part of learning how to communicate effectively is learning how to write professional and courteous emails. Here are some guidelines to keep in mind when you email me or any other faculty member at ASU:

- Treat your email like any other formal communication. Use complete sentences and correct grammar, and please greet me with "Hello, Dr. Rigoni" or "Dear Dr. Rigoni." Please do not begin your emails with "Hey."

- Use the subject line for the purpose of your email (e.g., “Question about reading responses”)
- Before emailing me with a question, review the syllabus, assignment sheet, or handouts that I have given you. You want to make sure that the answer to your question is not clearly stated in any of the class material I have already given you.
- If you miss a class, your first step should be to contact a classmate to borrow his or her notes. Do not email me to ask if you missed anything important. If there is something you don’t understand after you’ve done the reading and gone over the notes, I’ll be happy to meet with you to go over it.
- Do not expect an immediate reply. I usually respond within 24 hours. If 48 hours pass without a reply, feel free to e-mail me again reminding me of your concern. Notice that 24 hours can be a significant period of time if the e-mail concerns a paper that is due in less than 24 hours. That is something to consider when composing e-mail.

REMINDERS

- Bring a copy of the current book to each class. **Remember, if you do not bring your textbook you will be counted absent for that day.**
- Turn cell phones off before class begins.
- Some of the assigned texts contain adult content, such as profane language and graphic violence and sexuality. If you are uncomfortable with some of the reading material, please come see me during my office hours or send me an email.
- You may not record class discussions.

POLICIES FOR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Students are entitled to receive instruction free from interference by other members of the class. An instructor may withdraw a student from the course when the student's behavior disrupts the educational process per “Instructor Withdrawal of a Student for Disruptive Classroom Behavior” <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm201-10.html>

- Appropriate behavior is defined by the instructor and includes keeping course discussion focused on the assigned topics. Students must maintain a cordial atmosphere and use tact in expressing differences of opinion.
- The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities accepts incident reports from students, faculty, staff, or other persons who believe that a student or a student organization may have violated the Student Code of Conduct <https://eoss.asu.edu/dos/srr/codeofconduct>.

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

In compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended (ADAAA) of 2008, professional disability specialists and support staff at the Disability Resource Center (DRC) facilitate a comprehensive range of academic support services and accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Qualified students with disabilities may be eligible to receive academic support services and accommodations. Eligibility is based on qualifying disability documentation and assessment of individual need. Students who believe they have a current and essential need for disability accommodations are responsible for requesting accommodations and providing qualifying documentation to the DRC.

Every effort is made to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information please visit the DRC website: <https://eoss.asu.edu/drc/>

MANDATORY TITLE IX STATEMENT

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>.

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling> is available if you wish to discuss any concerns confidentially and privately. ASU online students may access 360 Life Services, <https://goto.asuonline.asu.edu/success/online-resources.html>.

GRADING RUBRIC

A+ → 100-98%
A → 97-93%
A- → 92-90%
B+ → 89-88%
B → 87-83%
B- → 82-80%
C+ → 79-78%
C → 77-70%
D → 69-60%
E → 59% and below

A-level: An excellent paper engages with the subject in an exceptionally rigorous or imaginative way and demonstrates that the writer has arrived at his or her conclusions through a close and sustained examination of the text. The paper progresses through clearly ordered and relevant stages, and it is developed with concrete, substantial, and consistently relevant evidence. Individual paragraphs, as well as the essay as a whole, are unified and coherent, and transitions are effective. Individual sentences are skillfully constructed: coherent, forceful, and effectively varied. The diction is precise and engaging.

B-level: A good paper has many of the same qualities as an excellent paper, but it is not as consistently distinguished in all areas. The content is sound, but not as original as that of an excellent paper. The organization and style are generally effective, but they are not as polished or elegant as those of an excellent paper. Occasional awkwardness in sentence structure,

punctuation, or other areas may occur, but they do not detract seriously from the effectiveness of the essay.

C-level: Marginal work suffers from major problems, but it is still minimally passing. In some cases the central idea is not entirely clear or its development is inadequate; there may be little supporting evidence for the admittedly sound generalizations. In other cases, the content may be sound, but the paper contains significant grammatical or mechanical errors. Such grades do not indicate that a student cannot succeed in this course, merely that he or she needs to devote significant time and effort to improving his or her writing and work closely with the instructor to determine the precise source of the problem.

D to E-level: Papers in this grade range suffer from major problems in content, form, or both. In some cases the content is unclear and the central idea is not supported. Organizational problems and/or errors in sentence structure and grammar may severely hinder communication. In other cases the paper may fail to meet the requirements of the assignment.

WRITING STANDARDS FOR HUMAN EVENT PAPERS

The elements outlined below form the basis for all Human Event argumentative papers, and therefor constitute the fundamental criteria of evaluation.

1. A Human Event paper contains a clear thesis statement.

- The thesis statement makes a specific, text-based claim, not a vague or broad observation.
- The paper must stake a substantive position, one that is neither trivial nor obvious.
- Human Event papers are usually 5-6 pages long (1600-1800 words), and the thesis statement should appear in the first paragraph.

2. The body of Human Event paper defends the thesis via a progression of arguments.

- The opening of the paper provides an overall map of its direction.
- The body of the paper mirrors the introductory map, and each paragraph builds the case in logical progression.
- The paper makes an evidence-based case in support of the thesis. Accordingly, the paper also anticipates and addresses potential objections.

3. Evidence from, and analysis of, the primary text(s) form the backbone of the paper's defense of a thesis.

- Textual evidence constitutes the foundation of the paper's argument. The paper cites the sources of evidence.
- No outside sources are permitted.
- Analysis offers plausible explications of the texts that show how the meaning of the cited evidence helps develop the argument.

4. Human Event papers adhere to fundamental style elements.

- The paper uses proper grammar and word choice including gender neutral and inclusive language.
- The author proofreads the paper to avoid errors, wordiness, unnecessarily complex phrasing, and excessive use of passive voice.

COURSE CALENDAR
“ * ” indicates reading available on Canvas

WEEK 1

W Jan 11 Introduction to Course and writing review
F Jan 13 Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651 C.E.), excerpts*

WEEK 2

W Jan 18 Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (1689 C.E.), excerpts*
F Jan 20 Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1754 C.E.)*

WEEK 3

W Jan 25 Jodin, *Views on Legislation for Women* (1790)*; de Gouges, *Declaration of the Rights of Women* (1791)*
F Jan 27 Marx, *Alienated Labor* (1844 C.E.), excerpts*; Lamb, “Adam Smith’s Concept of Alienation” (optional) *

WEEK 4

W Feb 1 Durkheim, *Mechanical and Organic Solidarity; Anomie and The Modern Division of Labor; Sociology and Social Facts* (optional); *Suicide and Modernity* (1893-97), excerpts*
F Feb 3 Mill, *On Utilitarianism* (1863), excerpts

WEEK 5

W Feb 8 Sartre, “Existentialism Is a Humanism” (1946) excerpts*
F Feb 10 Dubois, W.E.B. *Souls of Black Folk* excerpts*

FIRST PAPER DUE AT 1pm ON TUESDAY, FEB 14th

WEEK 6

W Feb 15 Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own* (1929), ch.1-3
F Feb 17 Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own* (1929), ch. 4-6

WEEK 7

W Feb 22 Braddon, *Lady Audley’s Secret* (1862), pp.1-92
F Feb 24 Braddon, *Lady Audley’s Secret* (1862), pp.92-180

WEEK 8

W Mar 1 Braddon, *Lady Audley’s Secret* (1862), pp.180-279
F Mar 3 Braddon, *Lady Audley’s Secret* (1862), pp. 279-380 (end)

WEEK 9

W Mar 8 No class, Spring Break
F Mar 10 No class, Spring Break

WEEK 10

W Mar 15 Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890 C.E.), pp. 1-50

F Mar 17 Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890 C.E.), pp. 50-107

WEEK 11

W Mar 22 Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890 C.E.), pp.107-End
F Mar 24 Borges, "Three Versions of Judas" (1944)*

SECOND PAPER DUE AT 1pm ON MONDAY, MARCH 27th.

WEEK 12

W Mar 29 Levi, *The Periodic Table* (1975, trans. 1984) Argon - Nickel
F Mar 31 Levi, *The Periodic Table* (1975, trans. 1984) Lead - Sulfur

WEEK 13

W Apr 5 Levi, *The Periodic Table* (1975, trans. 1984) Titanium - Carbon
F Apr 7 T. Morrison, *Beloved* (1988 C.E.) pp. 1-99

WEEK 14

W Apr 12 T. Morrison, *Beloved* (1988 C.E.) pp. 100-180
F Apr 14 T. Morrison, *Beloved* (1988 C.E.) pp. 181-256

WEEK 15

W Apr 19 T. Morrison, *Beloved* (1988 C.E.) pp. 257-end
F Apr 21 Larkin, "Church Going" (1955 C.E.)*
G. Morrison and McKean, *Arkham Asylum: A Serious House on Serious Earth* (1989 C.E.)

WEEK 16

W Apr 26 To be announced or a catch-up in case of cancellations
F Apr 28 Concluding class

FINAL PAPER DUE AT 1pm ON TUESDAY, MAY 2nd