ENGL 263g--American Horror Story

Instructor: David Treuer [treuer@usc.edu](mailto:treuer@usc.edu)

406 THH

Course Times: T/TH 11:00-12:20 THH 115

Office Hours: 12:30-1:30 T/Th and by Appointment

**Course Description:**

In this course we will use a variety of great works of American horror to interrogate the very idea of America itself. From road trips to acid trips, and from the well of slavery to western epics we will read American horror stories and in so-doing try to find new ways to think about the country, its literature, and ourselves. Readings include: Stephen King, Toni Morrison, Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Allen Poe, Erika Wurth, H.P. Lovecraft, Truman Capote, Henry James, and Patricia Highsmith among others. Along the way we will—seemingly accidentally—become familiar with a body of work that suggests but can’t completely represent some of the best (and most disturbing!) literature that American literature has to offer.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Learn how to read for pleasure and profit
2. Demonstrate engagement with and curiosity about written narrative
3. Analyze and contextualize American literature
4. Sustain longer written arguments and analyses about American literature
5. Remember and recover the thrill of reading in and of itself

**Grade Breakdown:**

Weekly class discussions = 10%; Weekly Reaction papers = 15%; Mid-term and final papers (8-12pp each) = 40%; Mid-term exam = 15%; Final exam = 20%

**Attendance policy:**

You are all grown-ups and can choose to be where you want to be in the world and where you don’t want to be. I will not take attendance. However, class discussions make up 10% of your grade so if you’re not there to discuss things…it will be hard to perform well in the class

Reading List: Charles Brockden Brown

White Horse: Erika Wurth 978-1250847652

The Shining: Stephen King 978-0451134264

Beloved: Toni Morrison 978-1784876432

In Cold Blood: Truman Capote 978-0679745587

The Talented Mr. Ripley: Patricia Highsmith 978-0375407925

H.P. Lovecraft: Complete Tales 979-8634859484

Narrative Gordon Arthur Pym of Nantucket: Edgar Allen Poe 978-0199540471

Turn of the Screw: Henry James 979-8472523417

Edgar Huntly: Charles Brockden Brown 978-1883011574

**Weekly schedule of lectures, readings, and assignments:**

In terms of syllabi I am not such a fan of “long-form” narrative. By which I mean: I tend not to provide a weekly breakdown of expectations and assignments and course “themes.” In most cases how we progress (in terms of pace or difficulty) is largely dependent on our in-class discussions. But for this course there are a few things that are safe to say:

1. We will read in reverse chronological order. So we will start with the most recent publications and gradually time-travel back in time, ending with Charles Brockden Brown.
2. There will be weekly reaction papers based on our class discussions. These will, typically, be due on Tuesdays. No late papers accepted without documented proof/reasons.
3. The mid-term and final exams will be in class (best think of them as long quizzes).

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct:**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](https://policy.usc.edu/research-and-scholarship-misconduct/).

**Students and Disability Accommodations:**

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University’s educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at [osas.usc.edu](http://osas.usc.edu/). You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto:osasfrontdesk@usc.edu).

**Support Systems:**

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](https://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling/)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://urldefense.com/v3/__http:/www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/__;!!LIr3w8kk_Xxm!rrFxYhF1nKrSbiaYh7rkItJFxRj6V9MUJDF2GD1l1cf90byR10D4sCgqda0cV3QNRfUu_IC_h0u7P5qWBsA$)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](https://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault/)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086*

[eeotix.usc.edu](https://eeotix.usc.edu/)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

*Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298*

[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\_report](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/__;!!LIr3w8kk_Xxm!rrFxYhF1nKrSbiaYh7rkItJFxRj6V9MUJDF2GD1l1cf90byR10D4sCgqda0cV3QNRfUu_IC_h0u7RWjtcbI$)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - (213) 740-0776*

[osas.usc.edu](http://osas.usc.edu/)

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

*USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710*

[campussupport.usc.edu](https://campussupport.usc.edu/)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101*

[diversity.usc.edu](https://diversity.usc.edu/)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu/), [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu/)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu/)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Office of the Ombuds* - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

[ombuds.usc.edu](http://ombuds.usc.edu/)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

*Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-33*40 or [otfp@med.usc.edu](mailto:otfp@med.usc.edu)

[chan.usc.edu/otfp](http://chan.usc.edu/otfp)

​Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.