

Modern British and American Literature and the Arts: Popular Literature

Instructor: Ildikó Limpár; email: limparildiko@gmail.com

Platform: Microsoft Teams

Week 1 (Feb 16) Introduction:

- Definitions: popular culture/fiction; fans, cults, bestsellers, genre fiction; audience

Week 2 (Feb 23) Postmodern Rewritings of Fairy Tales I.

- Little Snow-White” by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. <https://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm053.html>
- Neil Gaiman: “Snow, Glass, Apples”
- Michael Cunningham: “Poisoned”
- **Written task:** Reflect on how one of the rewritings modify any of the key elements of the source tale. (Do not focus on your own emotions but on what the modification aims to serve in the story.)

Week 3 (March 2) The Fantasy Romance

- Neil Gaiman: *Stardust*
- **Written task:** reflect on the role of the witches OR the fairies OR the romance theme

Week 4 (March 9) The Detective Story / The Mashup:

- Edgar Allen Poe: “The Purloined Letter”
- Neil Gaiman: “A Study in Emerald”
- Watch “A Study in Pink” (Episode I of BBC's Sherlock; 2010)
- **Written task:** Reflect on the detective characters in the stories OR on the fantasy world in “A Study in Emerald”

Week 5 (March 16) The Coming-of-Age Novel as Dark Fantasy

- Neil Gaiman: *Coraline*
- **Written task:** Reflect on the theme of coming of age OR the darkness of the story OR the combination of the two

Week 6 (March 23) Hard Science Fiction (The Man-Made Monster)

- James Tiptree Jr. (Alice Bradley Sheldon): “The Girl Who Was Plugged In”
http://www.f.waseda.jp/sidoli/Tiptree_Girl_Plugged_In.pdf
- **Written task:** Reflect on the theme of technology OR consumerism
- Background text: Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein*

Week 7 (March 30): Science Fiction (Utopia vs Dystopia; satire)

- Robert Sheckley: “A Ticket to Tranai”
- Ray Bradbury: “The Last Night of the World”
<https://www.esquire.com/entertainment/books/a14340/ray-bradbury-last-night-of-the-world-0251/>
- **Written task:** Reflect on the utopian or dystopian aspects of Sheckley’s work or the darkness in Bradbury’s work.

Week 8 (April 6):	Presentations (student projects)
Week 9-10 (April 13, 20)	SPRING BREAK
Week 11 (Apr 27)	Presentations (student projects)
Week 12 (May 4)	Presentations (student projects)
Week 13 (May 11)	Presentations (student projects)
Week 14 (May 18):	Evaluation

Requirements:

- **Reading** the assigned works and **active participation**. (Please check our Institute's policy on participation in online classes: <http://btk.ppke.hu/karunkrol/intezetek-tanszekek/angol-amerikai-intezet/hirek/online-class-rules.>)
- a **research project + its presentation** in class (ca.15 mins, on any example of contemporary popular literature) – with slide show, handout, individual research, sources identified, etc. The presentation should illustrate how the given piece could be used for pedagogical purposes/in class (identify age group, type of class, purpose of using the text, exact details of length, place in lesson plan, etc). You should upload your slide show and handout in Teams **one week before your presentation**.
- **Commenting** on **3** of the uploaded slide shows before the presentation takes place. I will tell you whom to comment on to have a proportional amount of feedback for the slide shows. Instructions are to be given later. A separate document about guidelines concerning the presentation as well as how to comment on the slide shows will be available.

AND

- **four reflections** (ca. 4-500 words) on the works to be discussed in class, always submitted in Teams before the discussion (that is, the related class) begins (unless you are absent from class, in which a one-week delay in submission is allowed). In each case, make sure you have a clear thesis in your reflection and keep focus.

OR

- a **home essay** (ca. 1600 words) on any work of art that can be classified as contemporary popular fiction (other than what you present on), originally written in English (analysis OR classroom use) due **April 26**. Extended deadline for home essay: May 11. Late submission results in taking half a point off the mark of the paper.

All written assignments are to be submitted as a Teams assignment. The slide shows are to be uploaded in a folder specifically created for this purpose in the files sections.

Marking depends on: your project/oral presentation (ca. 35%), written work (ca. 35%) and class work (ca. 30%). Without a regular participation in class work, you may not receive a final mark 5 for the course. Plagiarism results in an automatic failure, so please consult the guidelines on how to avoid plagiarism.