ENGL3001: True Stories
Course Outline

Course Co-ordinator: Dr Rosalind Smith
Room: MC125 McMullin Building
Ph: +61 2 4921 5180
Fax: +61 2 4921 6933
Email: Ros.Smith@newcastle.edu.au
Consultation hours: Wednesday 9-11

Semester: Semester 1 - 2007
Unit Weighting: 10
Teaching Methods: Seminar

Course Outline Issued and Correct as at: Week 1, Semester 1 - 2007

CTS Download Date: 6 February 2006
Course Overview

Brief Course Description
This critical and creative course studies the modes and practices of true crime writing.

Contact Hours
Seminar for 2 hours per week for 13 weeks
Seminar combines lecture material and group discussion.

Learning Materials/Texts
Truman Capote, In Cold Blood
James Ellroy, My Dark Places: An LA Crime Memoir
John Bryson, Evil Angels
Helen Garner, Joe Cinque’s Consolation
Peter Carey, True History of the Kelly Gang
Ross Gibson, Seven Versions of an Australian Badland
Ian David, Blue Murder: the screenplay

Course Objectives
Upon successful completion of this subject, students will be able to
1. demonstrate a detailed knowledge of a diverse range of true crime texts
2. demonstrate an understanding of the genres and modes of true crime writing in terms of
   their formal features and cultural meanings
3. demonstrate the translation of this knowledge and understanding into their own practice of
   true crime writing

Course Content
A critical and creative study of the field of true crime writing and the contexts in which it is
produced. The course analyses a number of genres and modes of true crime writing
(including memoir, autobiography, reportage and the new journalism) and their relationship to
legal, literary and ethical issues, in order to facilitate the students' own textual practice within
the field.

Assessment Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essays / Written Assignments</th>
<th>1 x 500 word paper, 10%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Due at the beginning of any of seminars 2-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essays / Written Assignments</td>
<td>1 x 2000 word essay, 35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Due Friday 27 April, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essays / Written Assignments</td>
<td>1 creative writing portfolio (2500 word equivalent), 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Due Friday June 8, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group/tutorial participation and contribution</td>
<td>Class participation 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attendance at seminars is compulsory. Two absences are allowable in the case of illness or other emergencies, and two more absences may be recovered by completing extra work on each of the seminars missed, but further absences will be regarded as failure to complete the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: (please specify)</td>
<td>Students must submit all assessment items in order to complete the course.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumed Knowledge
Assumed knowledge for ENGL3001 is 20 units of English subjects at 1000 level
Callaghan Campus Timetable
ENGL3001
TRUE STORIES
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science
Semester 1 - 2007
Seminar Wednesday 11:00 - 13:00 [MC132]
or Wednesday 14:00 - 16:00 [MC102]

Plagiarism
University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another's ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs.

Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty.

For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link -


The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

Written Assessment Items
Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.

Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised.

Any student:
1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or
2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination
has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;
must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer following the instructions provided in the Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Procedure - Policy 000641.

Note: different procedures apply for minor and major assessment tasks.

Please go to the Policy at http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html for further information, particularly for information on the options available to you.

Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:

- **Requests for Special Consideration** must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the date of submission or examination.
- **Requests for Extensions of Time on Assessment Items** must be lodged no later than the due date of the item.
- **Requests for Rescheduling Exams** must be lodged no later than 10 working days before the date of the examination.

Your application may not be accepted if it is received after the deadline. Students who are unable to meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak to their Program Officer in the first instance.

### Changing your Enrolment

The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) are:

- For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2007
- For semester 2 courses: 31 August 2007
- For Trimester 1 courses: 16 February 2007
- For Trimester 2 courses: 8 June 2007

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with staff in the Student Hubs.

To change your enrolment online, please refer to http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html

### Faculty Information

The Student Hubs are a one-stop shop for the delivery of student related services and are the first point of contact for students on campus.

The four Student Hubs are located at:

**Callaghan campus**

- Shortland Hub: Level 3, Shortland Union Building
• Hunter Hub: Student Services Centre, Hunter side of campus

City Precinct
• City Hub & Information Common: University House, ground floor in combination with an Information Common for the City Precinct

Ourimbah campus
• Ourimbah Hub: Administration Building

Faculty websites
Faculty of Business and Law
Faculty of Education and Arts
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/
Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/engineering/
Faculty of Health
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/health/
Faculty of Science and Information Technology
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/science-it/

Contact details
Callaghan, City and Port Macquarie
Phone: 02 4921 5000
Email: EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

Ourimbah
Phone: 02 4348 4030
Email: EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

The Dean of Students
Resolution Precinct
Phone: 02 4921 5806
Fax: 02 4921 7151
Email: resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Deputy Dean of Students (Ourimbah)
Phone: 02 4348 4123
Fax: 02 4348 4145
Email: resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit:

Alteration of this Course Outline

No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of the term except in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes to this outline.

Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards
Web Address for Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards

Web Address for Rules Governing Professional Doctorate Awards

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness.

If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, or via email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester.

For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability

OTHER INFORMATION

Online Tutorial Registration:
Students are required to register in the Seminar or Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system:
Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email.
Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard copy submission:
- **Type your assignments**: All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.
- **Word length**: The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
- **University Assessment Item Coversheet**: All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet available at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/
By arrangement with the relevant lecturer, assignments may be submitted at any Student Hub located at:
  o Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
  o Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
  o Ground Floor, University House, City
  o Ground Floor, Administration Building, Ourimbah

Date-stamping assignments: All students must date-stamp their own assignments using the machine provided at each Student Hub. If mailing an assignment, this should be addressed to the relevant School. Mailed assignments are accepted from the date posted, confirmed by a Post Office date-stamp; they are also date-stamped upon receipt by Schools.

Do not fax or email assignments: Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse.

Keep a copy of all assignments: It is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in electronic and hard copy formats.

Online copy submission to Turnitin
In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website:

- Essay (2000 words)
- Writing Portfolio (2500 word equivalent)

Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing. Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

Penalties for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the due date will be awarded zero marks.

Special Circumstances
Students wishing to apply for Special Circumstances or Extension of Time should apply online @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html

No Assignment Re-submission
Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

Re-marks & Moderations
A student may only request a re-mark of an assessment item before the final result – in the course to which the assessment item contributes – has been posted. If a final result in the course has been posted, the student must apply under the Procedures for Appeal against a Final Result (see: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/).

Students concerned at the mark given for an assessment item should first discuss the matter with the Course Coordinator. If subsequently requesting a re-mark, students should be aware that as a result of a re-mark the original mark may be increased or reduced. The case for a re-mark should be outlined in writing and submitted to the Course Coordinator, who determines whether a re-mark should be granted, taking into consideration all of the following:

1. whether the student had discussed the matter with the Course Coordinator
2. the case put forward by the student for a re-mark
3. the weighting of the assessment item and its potential impact on the student’s final mark or grade
4. the time required to undertake the re-mark
5. the number of original markers, that is,
   a) whether there was a single marker, or
   b) if there was more than one marker whether there was agreement or
disagreement on the marks awarded.

A re-mark may also be initiated at the request of the Course Coordinator, the Head of School,
the School Assessment Committee, the Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee or the Pro
Vice-Chancellor. Re-marks may be undertaken by:

1. the original marker; or
2. an alternate internal marker; or
3. an alternate external marker (usually as a consequence of a grievance procedure).

Moderation may be applied when there is a major discrepancy (or perceived discrepancy)
between:

1. the content of the course as against the content or nature of the assessment item(s)
2. the content or nature of the assessment item(s) as against those set out in the Course
   Outline
3. the marks given by a particular examiner and those given by another in the same course
4. the results in a particular course and the results in other courses undertaken by the same
   students.

Further detail on this University policy can be found at:

**Return of Assignments**
Students can collect assignments from a nominated Student Hub during office hours.
Students will be informed during class which Hub to go to and the earliest date that
assignments will be available for collection. Students must present their student identification
card to collect their assignment.

**Preferred Referencing Style**
In this course, it is recommended that you use the use the MLA referencing system for
referencing sources of information used in assignments. Examples of the MLA style of
documentation are available at
[www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Style.html](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Style.html).

Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and
result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a
direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of
references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by
authors’ last names (or by titles for works without authors). Further information on referencing
and general study skills can be obtained from:

**Student Representatives**
Student Representatives are a major channel of communication between students and the
School. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on School websites.

**Student Communication**
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course
Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this
proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details
can be found on the School website.
Essential Online Information for Students
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at:

Assessment Details

1. Class participation mark

Participation in class seminars means an active participation in class discussion. It does not mean your presence in class having read the text or prepared creative work, as this is the basic requirement for attendance. If this is the extent of your participation in all seminars you will receive 0% in this section of assessment. Marks will be given in this section for the extent of your active participation in class, in terms of consistency and quality. You may ask for an update on your progress in this section at any time.

If you have a disability or chronic illness that makes it difficult for you to participate in class discussion (such as a hearing disability), please contact the lecturer to arrange an alternative form of assessment.

2. 500 word paper
Due at the beginning of the relevant seminar, weeks 2-7

You may write on any of the texts in the course. There are no fixed questions for the discussion paper: write on a topic which interests you or seems relevant from your primary and secondary readings. Although not an essay, your paper should have some structure: a short introduction outlining your argument, paragraph division, and a concluding sentence. You may not write again on the text discussed in your paper in your essay. The paper is to be submitted at the beginning of the seminar on the text to which it refers. Seminar papers submitted after the seminar will not be accepted.

2. Essay (2000 words)
Due Friday April 27

This essay addresses the texts covered in the first half on the course, dealing with the true crime genre. Write on at least three texts. Answer one of the following questions:

1. Discuss the generic markers that define true crime writing as they appear in the texts on this course. What problems and possibilities are raised by the genre, and how are they negotiated in specific textual instances?
2. What is the relationship between true crime writing and the cultural discourses that it produces and reproduces? You might like to discuss the representation of gender, race, sexuality or class in response to this question, or to consider the ways in which true crime writing participates in rhetorics of nation, space and place.
3. Analyses of true crime frequently cite the genre’s claim to represent ‘the banality of evil’ – the presence of a kind of suppressed universal criminality. What other claims does the genre make? Discuss the operation and/or the validity of these claims across a range of texts.

3. Creative Portfolio (2500 words or equivalent)
Due Friday June 8

This assignment requires you to write a short creative piece based on a true crime. This can take any generic form: for example, a collection of short poems (10 or more), a long poem, the introductory chapter(s) to a novel, a short story, or a set of scenes from a screenplay or play.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading guide</th>
<th>Mark</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49% or less</td>
<td>Fail (FF)</td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% to 64%</td>
<td>Pass (P)</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65% to 74%</td>
<td>Credit (C)</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% to 84%</td>
<td>Distinction (D)</td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85% upwards</td>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Week beginning</td>
<td>Seminar Readings at a Glance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>February 26</td>
<td>Truman Capote, <em>In Cold Blood</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>James Ellroy, <em>My Dark Places</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>March 12</td>
<td>John Bryson, <em>Evil Angels</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>Helen Garner, <em>Joe Cinque’s Consolation</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>March 26</td>
<td>Peter Carey, <em>True history of the Kelly Gang</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>Ross Gibson, <em>Seven Versions of an Australian Badland</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>April 23</td>
<td>ANZAC DAY – no class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>Guest lecture: the practice of true crime writing Ian David, <em>Blue Murder: the screenplay</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>Legal and ethical implications of true crime writing Writing your creative portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>Writing workshop 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>Writing workshop 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>Writing workshop 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>Portfolio consultations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mid-Semester Recess: Friday 6 April to Friday 20 April 2007

End of CTS Entry