ENGL3001 - True Stories
Course Outline

Course Coordinator: Rosalind Smith
Room: MC125
Ph: 4921 5180
Fax: 4921 6933
Email: Ros.Smith@newcastle.edu.au
Consultation hours: Monday 11-1 or by appointment
Lecturer: David Murray
Semester: Semester 2 - 2009
Unit Weighting: 10
Teaching Methods: Seminar

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 the full term
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
John Silvester and Andrew Rule, Underbelly: The Gangland War

Course Objectives
Upon successful completion of this course, 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
Course Outline Issued and Correct as at: Week 1, Semester 2 - 2009

CTS Download Date: July 1 2009
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

| Essays / Written Assignments | 1 x 500 word paper, 10%  
| 1 x 2000 word paper, 35%  
| 1 writing portfolio (2500 word equivalent), 50% |

| Group/tutorial participation and contribution | Class participation 5%  
| A minimum of 80% attendance is expected at seminars. Failure to meet attendance requirements may result in additional assessment requirements. |

| Other | Students must submit all assessment items in order to complete the course. |

Assumed Knowledge

Assumed knowledge for ENGL3001 is 20 units of English courses at 1000 level

Callaghan Campus Timetable

ENGL3001 TRUE STORIES

Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science

Semester 2 - 2009

Seminar Monday 13:00 - 15:00 [MC132]

or Monday 15:00 - 17:00 [MCLG59]

IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity, honesty, and a respect for knowledge, truth and ethical practices are fundamental to the business of the University. These principles are at the core of all academic endeavour in teaching, learning and research. Dishonest practices contravene academic values, compromise the integrity of research and devalue the quality of learning. To preserve the quality of learning for the individual and others, the University may impose severe sanctions on activities that undermine academic integrity. There are two major categories of academic dishonesty:

Academic fraud is a form of academic dishonesty that involves making a false representation to gain an unjust advantage. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it can include:

a) falsification of data;

b) using a substitute person to undertake, in full or part, an examination or other assessment item;

c) reusing one's own work, or part thereof, that has been submitted previously and counted towards another course (without permission);

d) making contact or colluding with another person, contrary to instructions, during an examination or other assessment item;

e) bringing material or device(s) into an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item; and

f) making use of computer software or other material and device(s) during an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item.

g) contract cheating or having another writer compete for tender to produce an essay or assignment and then submitting the work as one's own.

Plagiarism is the presentation of the thoughts or works of another as one's own. University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:
a) copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
b) using another person's ideas without due acknowledgment;
c) collusion or working with others without permission, and presenting the resulting work as though it were completed independently.

**Turnitin** is an electronic text matching system. During 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 text matching service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking.

**RE-MARKS AND MODERATIONS**
Students can access the University's policy at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html)

**MARKS AND GRADERS RELEASED DURING TERM**
All marks and grades released during term are indicative only until formally approved by the Head of School.

**SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AFFECTING ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

*Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations* items must be submitted by the due date in the Course Outline unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension. Unapproved late submissions will be penalised in line with the Faculty policy specified in **Late Penalty** in Additional Information.

**Requests for Extensions of Time** must be lodged no later than the due date of the item. This applies to students:
- applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or
- 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.

Students must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, as outlined in the Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html)

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

**Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:**
- Special Consideration Requests must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the due date of submission or examination.
- Rescheduling Exam requests must be received no later than 10 working days prior the first date of the examination period.

*Late applications may not be accepted.* Students who cannot meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak firstly to their Program Officer or their Program Executive if studying in Singapore.

**STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS**
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 contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, 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 on confidentiality and documentation visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability.

CHANGING YOUR ENROLMENT

Students enrolled after the census dates listed in the link below are liable for the full cost of their student contribution or fees for that term.

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/fees/censusdates.html

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

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of term, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of term must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with staff in the Student Hubs or with your Program Executive at PSB if you are a Singapore student.

To check or change your enrolment online go to myHub: https://myhub.newcastle.edu.au

STUDENT INFORMATION & CONTACTS

Various services are offered by the Student Support Unit: www.newcastle.edu.au/service/studentsupport/

The Student Hubs are a one-stop shop for the delivery of student related services and are the first point of contact for students studying in Australia. Student Hubs are located at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Callaghan Campus</th>
<th>Port Macquarie students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shortland Hub: Level 3, Shortland Building</td>
<td>contact your program officer or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter Hub: Level 2, Student Services Centre</td>
<td><a href="mailto:EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au">EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Precinct</td>
<td>Phone 4921 5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Hub &amp; Information Common, University House</td>
<td>Singapore students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Coast Campus (Ourimbah)</td>
<td>contact your PSB Program Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Hub: Opposite the Main Cafeteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty Websites</th>
<th>General enquiries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/business-law/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/business-law/</a></td>
<td>Callaghan, City and Port Macquarie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/</a></td>
<td>Phone: 02 4921 5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/engineering/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/engineering/</a></td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/health/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/health/</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au">EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/science-it/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/science-it/</a></td>
<td>Ourimbah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards</td>
<td>Phone: 02 4348 4030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000311.html">www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000311.html</a></td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards</td>
<td><a href="mailto:EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au">EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000306.html">www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000306.html</a></td>
<td>The Dean of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dean of Students</td>
<td>Deputy Dean of Students (Ourimbah)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 02 4921 5806; Fax: 02 4921 7151</td>
<td>Phone: 02 4921 5806;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au">resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au</a></td>
<td>Fax: 02 4921 7151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au">resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This course outline will not be altered after the second week of the term except under extenuating circumstances with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of the change.

End of CTS Entry

Essential Criteria in Assessment

This course contains compulsory components or assessment items that must be satisfactorily completed in order for a student to receive a pass mark or better for the course. These essential elements are described in the CTS. Refer - http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000648.html

1. Assessment Items
Students must submit all assessment items in order to complete the course.
Rationale for compulsory submission of all assessment items: Assessment items are designed not simply to measure students’ achievements in the course but also to provide essential steps in the learning process. Each assignment engages with different skills and conceptual techniques, all of which are necessary to the development of competence in the discipline.

Online Tutorial Registration:

Students are required to enrol in a specific seminar time for this course via the Online Registration system. Refer - http://studinfo1.newcastle.edu.au/rego/stud_choose_login.cfm

NB: Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: Refer - 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.

Important Additional Information

Details about the following topics are available on your course Blackboard site (where relevant). Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

- Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
- Online copy submission to Turnitin
- Penalties for Late Assignments
- Special Circumstances
- No Assignment Re-submission
- Re-marks & Moderations
- Return of Assignments
- Preferred Referencing Style
- Student Representatives
- Student Communication
- Essential Online Information for Students
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 3-8

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. 2000 word essay
Due Friday September 25

This essay addresses the texts covered in the first half on the course, dealing with the true crime genre. Write on at least two 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 texts?
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 of one or more of these claims across a range of texts.

3. Creative Portfolio (2500 words or equivalent)
Due Friday November 6

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>Grade</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>July 27</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>August 3</td>
<td>Writing your creative portfolio: introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>August 10</td>
<td>Truman Capote, <em>In Cold Blood</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>August 17</td>
<td>James Ellroy, <em>My Dark Places</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>August 24</td>
<td>John Bryson, <em>Evil Angels</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>Helen Garner, <em>Joe Cinque's Consolation</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>September 7</td>
<td>Peter Carey, <em>True history of the Kelly Gang</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>September 14</td>
<td>John Silvester and Andrew Rule, <em>Underbelly: The Gangland War</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>September 21</td>
<td>Writing true crime: Guest lecturer Helen Garner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 25</td>
<td>Research essay due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Mid-Semester Recess: 28 September to 9 October</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>October 12</td>
<td>True crime writing and the law: Guest lecturer Ray Watterson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>October 19</td>
<td>Writing workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>October 26</td>
<td>Writing workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>November 2</td>
<td>Portfolio consultations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November 6</td>
<td>Creative portfolio due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>