

# English 618

Mark Brazaitis, ENGL 618, Spring 2003, Creative Writing: Fiction

## ENGLISH 618

Professor Mark Brazaitis

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Class Hours: Thursday, 4 p.m. to 6:50 p.m.

Office Hours: Tuesdays (2:30-5), Thursdays (2:30-4) and by appointment

Objective: In this class, you will learn to become a better fiction writer. To become a better fiction writer, you must dedicate yourself to both writing and reading fiction, and this class will allow you (read: require you) to do both.

Requirements: Over the course of the semester, you will read three collections of short stories (Lorraine Lopez's *Soy la Avon Lady*, Elizabeth Oness' *Articles of Faith* and Rod Val Moore's *Igloo Among Palms*) and one novel (Janet Peery's *The River Beyond the World*). You will also write at least two of your own short stories (or novel excerpts).

Take-Home Assignments: Take-home exercises will be assigned during every class in the first ten weeks of class. Doing them is optional. (Why do them? They're fun—and your professor will give you feedback on them.) If you miss a class at which a take-home exercise is assigned, it will be emailed to you. All take-home assignments should be typed.

Grades: Grades in this class will be based on the effort you put into the class, both in terms of your own writing and how you respond to the work of other students. Attendance is critical. More than one absence is a problem; more than two is a serious problem.

Submitting Work: Your stories (or novel excerpts) are due a week before they are critiqued and will be handed out in class. You should make photocopies for everyone in the class and your instructor. If you fail to hand in your story on time, it's your responsibility to get your story to your classmates well ahead of the next class. If you miss a class at which stories are handed out, they will be available in a box outside my office.

### Class Schedule and Day-to-Day Assignments

Thursday, January 16: Getting acquainted

Thursday, January 23: **Read:** "Sophia" in *Soy la Avon Lady*; "Grinshaw's Mexcio" in *Igloo Among Palms*; and "The Oracle" in *Articles of Faith*.

Thursday, January 30: **Read:** "Frostbite" in *Soy la Avon Lady*, "Igloo Among Palms" in *Igloo Among Palms*; and "A Confusion of Light" in *Articles of Faith*. Workshop of stories.

Thursday, February 6: **Read:** "A Tatting Man" and "Soy la Avon Lady" in *Soy la Avon Lady*. Workshop of stories.

*Note: On Tuesday, February 11th, at 7:30 p.m., Ethel Morgan Smith and Mary Ann Samyn will give a reading in the Gold Ballroom of the Mountainlair.*

Thursday, February 13: **Read:** "Thing One and Thing Two" and "Liquid, Fricative, Glide" in *Igloo Among Palms*. Workshop of stories.

Thursday, February 20: **Read:** "Rufus" and "A Crescent in the Skin" in *Articles of Faith*. Workshop of stories.

Thursday, February 27: **Read:** "The Crown on Prince" and "After Dad Shot Jesus" in *Soy la Avon Lady*. Workshop of stories.

Thursday, March 6: **Read** "Miss Mustachioed Bat" and "Planet of the Evangelists" in *Igloo Among Palms*. Workshop of stories.

Thursday, March 13: **Read** "The Narrow Gate" and "The Music Underneath" in *Articles of Faith*. Workshop of stories.

Thursday, March 20: **No Class—Spring Break—Enjoy**

Thursday, March 27: **Read:** *The River Beyond the World*. Workshop of stories.

Thursday, April 3: Continue discussion of *The River Beyond the World*. Workshop of stories.

*Note: On Tuesday, April 8th, at 7:30 p.m., John Hoppenthaler will give a reading in the Gold Ballroom of the Mountainlair.*

Thursday, April 10: Workshop of stories.

Thursday, April 17: Workshop of stories.

Thursday, April 24: Workshop of stories.

Thursday, May 1: Discussion about publishing.

**A Note on Your Work:** I am committed to reading carefully everything you submit for class. Unfortunately, I will not be able to look at any additional writing you may have. I simply do not have the time—and I would not want to disappoint you with a sloppy and incomplete critique of your work.