

Huron University College
Department of English and Cultural Studies
English 1028G: The Storyteller's Art II: Topics in Narrative
Winter 2023

Class: Mon. 3:30pm-5:30pm; Wed. 4:30pm-5:30pm

Instructor: Dr. Sarah Blanchette (she/her)

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Antirequisite(s): ENG1024E, ENG1036E

Prerequisite(s): Grade 12U English or permission of the Department. For part time students who have been admitted without the OSSD, this permission will be granted as a matter of course.

Course Description

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak to be a global pandemic. COVID-19 is the deadliest pandemic in human history since the so-called “Spanish flu” or H1N1 influenza pandemic of 1918-1920 that killed approximately 20 – 50 million people across the globe. Consequently, all of us have experienced an extraordinary historical event that has radically altered our society and our lives.

This course explores literary and culture narratives of contagion and disease to unpack why we are culturally fascinated with narratives of pandemics, both real and imagined, because of our analogous interest with deconstructed binaries of self/Other, societal breakdown, and death.

How do we rely on narrative to understand disease on an individual and global scale? How do stories of illness become “viral” and “infect” the minds of those they reach? How can we utilize fiction as a means of escapism/survival from bleak realities? What are the societal “illnesses” that metaphorically plague our communities?

This course focuses on developing strong analytical and writing skills and will feature a range of texts, mediums, and genres. Some texts that may be included on the syllabus include: Katherine Anne Porter’s “Pale Horse, Pale Rider,” Emily St. John Mandel’s *Station Eleven*, and Bo Burnham’s *Inside*.

Please email the instructor if you have questions about the course.