

## ENG 213W: Fictions of Desire: “Fictions of Addiction”

Meeting location: Callaway Center C203  
Meeting time: MWF, 9:00-9:50

Instructor: Corey Goergen  
Contact: cgoerge@emory.edu  
Office Hours: MW 10:00-11:30, Callaway N316

### Course Description

In her recent article, “The Irrationality of Alcoholics Anonymous,” Gabrielle Glaser questions the dominance of Alcoholics Anonymous in Western conceptions of addiction treatment. Suggesting that AA owes its popularity more to depictions of addiction in popular culture than to medical evidence, she argues,

The history of AA is the story of how one approach to treatment took root before other options existed, inscribing itself on the national consciousness and crowding out dozens of newer methods that have since been shown to work better.

This course considers the long history of overlap between medical knowledge and narrative structures, particular with regards to addiction. It asks both how narrative informs medical science and how medical science informs the construction of new narratives. In opening these questions, students will trace the history of narratives about problematic drug consumption through the eighteenth century to today, considering a range of genres, authorial voices, and disciplinary approaches. In raising questions about fiction’s role in shaping what we know about addiction, the course asks important questions about the ways in which drug (ab)use is often understood through the intersecting lenses of class, gender, race, and sexuality. At the same time, it asks if the narrative successes of AA suggests that the temptations of narrative might be, at times, therapeutic in its own right.

### Learning Outcomes

In completing this course, students will demonstrate the ability to 1. Develop and practice with skills of close reading, 2. Consider the historical and literary properties and value of a wide range of literary and non-literary texts, 3. Trace the generic conventions of representations of addiction in Western fiction, 4. Mark how individual authors adhere to and deviate from those conventions, 4. Recognize and identify the two-way influences between narrative representations and medical and scientific paradigms of addiction and apply these skills to texts and genres encountered outside of class, and 5. Communicate their findings in a variety of modes of communication.

### Required Texts

Anonymous. *Go Ask Alice*. Simon Pulse, 2005.

DeQuincey, Thomas. *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. Broadview Press, 2009.

Edgeworth, Maria. *Belinda*. Oxford UP, 2009.

Quinones, Sam. *Dreamland: The True Tale of America’s Opiate Epidemic*. Bloomsbury USA, 2016.

Stevenson, Robert Louis. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*. Oxford UP, 2008.

Various texts on course reserves (<http://web.library.emory.edu/using-the-library/course-reserves/>).

## **Assignments**

In addition to a final, and minor regular writing assignments (described below), students are responsible for three major writing assignments: an annotation project, a piece of short literary criticism, and a larger research-based investigation into the addiction narrative's role in a discourse not covered by class materials. More information on each of these assignments will be made available ahead of their due dates.

## **Weekly Postings**

By Thursday evening each week, you are responsible for a paragraph-length post to the blackboard message board (classes.emory.edu). Your posting will respond to class readings and classroom discussions in a way that opens up the potential for further discussion. Feel free to respond meaningfully and thoughtfully to other students' posts as well. Thoughtful questions are as valuable here as clever observations.

## **Discussion Starter**

Based on a sign-up sheet early in the semester, you will be responsible for instigating classroom discussion once during the semester. This is not a major project: a few thoughtful observations or an outside source that point to discussion questions for the class will suffice, but I would like to see real thought put into how to help bring the class towards a discussion of the text in question, how it relates to the course, and your particular interests in it.

By the class before your meeting, email me with a general description of your plan and any materials you'd like me to post to the class blog ahead of class. This will help me shift my plans so we don't cover the same ground.

## **Assignment Weights**

Assignment 1: Annotation Project	10%
Assignment 2: Literary Criticism	15%
Assignment 3: Addiction Narrative Research Project	30%
Final	15%
Weekly Postings	10%
Discussion Starter	5%
Class Participation	15%

## **Email**

Email is the best way to contact me if you have questions or concerns. Generally, I will respond to all student email within 24 hours (although on weekends and holidays, it may take a little longer). Likewise, there may be instances when I will need to contact you by email, so check your Emory-based email account at least once every 24 hours.

## **Attendance Policy**

Much classroom time in this course will be devoted to classroom discussion and other forms of collectively producing knowledge. As such, your attendance in class is necessary not only to your success but also to the success of your classmates. You are therefore expected to be in class, on time. Students are allowed 3 unexcused absences without penalty. Students who miss between 4 and 6 classes will be penalized one letter grade. Students who miss more than 6 classes will be penalized two letter grades.

### **Late Work**

Students are expected to complete both major and minor assignments on time. No late work will be accepted on minor assignments. Late major assignments will only be accepted within 24 hours of the due date, and then with a 20% penalty. Papers will not be accepted after 24 hours. If you are absent on the day something is due, it is your responsibility to get the assignment to me on time. Finally, computer issues will *never* excuse late work. Keeping track of electronic documents is necessary to success at the college level. Save early, often, and in multiple places.

### **Electronic Devices**

Both for reasons of accommodation and because they sometimes offer significant contributions to class activities, you may use computers or tablets during class (so long as they are turned to silent). Cellphones should remain put away at all times, and I reserve the right to ask particular students to put other devices away if they become distractions. Students found to be using their devices for purposes unrelated to the classroom will be counted absent for the day.

### **Academic Honesty**

I take academic honesty very seriously, and I expect my students to do the same. Any assignment found to be plagiarized will receive a zero at the minimum, but I also plan to report instances of academic misconduct to the Honor Council. For more information, see [http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policy/honor\\_code.html](http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policy/honor_code.html).

### **Public Writing, Public Debate**

An important goal of this class is contributing to a class-wide discussion of the issues at hand. This happens in a number of spaces: the classroom, the blog, and in your formal assignments, which are designed in part to spur in-class and online conversation. Keep this in mind as you develop your ideas. Likewise, I expect that students take their role as listener and reader seriously: this classroom aims to be a safe space for all to express their opinions and experiences without judgment or ridicule. Disagreements can and will happen, of course, but those disagreements will be investigated ways that respect every participant's right to her or his opinion.

### **Emory Counseling Services**

Free and confidential counseling services and support are available from the Emory Counseling Center (404) 727-7450. This can be an invaluable resource when stress makes your work more challenging than it ought to be.

### **Access, Disability Services, and Resources**

My goal is to help you succeed both in this course and at Emory. Please let me know if there are factors keeping you from performing to your best ability. Those factors might include your personal learning style, classroom dynamics that might make you uncomfortable, ESL issues, disability or chronic illness, and/or personal issues impacting your work. I will work to help you resolve those issues when they arise.

Students with medical/health conditions that might impact academic success should visit Access, Disability Services and Resources (ADSR, formerly the Office of Disability Services, ODS) to determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations. Students who receive accommodations must present the Accommodation Letter from ADSR to their professor at the beginning of the semester, or when the letter is received.

### **Emory Writing Center**

I encourage you to use the Emory Writing Center as you draft and revise your assignments for this class. The Writing Center is located in Callaway N212. Regular appointments are 45 minutes long. You should bring a hard copy of your assignment, any relevant writing (notes, a draft, the url for your website, etc.), and a plan for what you want to work on. In addition to regular appointments, they offer walk-in visits, a good resource when you have a quick question or can't get an appointment. To view their hours, make an appointment, and get more information, go to [writingcenter.emory.edu](http://writingcenter.emory.edu).

### **English as a Second Language Program**

ESL Tutoring and other services are available for help with writing and speaking assignments associated with Emory College courses. Tutors are specifically trained to help ESL students develop their academic language skills. Any Emory undergraduate enrolled in an Emory College course who is a non-native speaker of English may use their services. For more information, please visit <http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/learning/esl/>.

### **Disability Studies Initiative**

The Disability Studies Initiative at Emory is a working group generated across departments and schools that is dedicated to interdisciplinary research and teaching by faculty and students. The Initiative is led by a group of faculty and students who are interested in the social, cultural, historical, political, and legal dimensions of disability in our world. Our mission is to promote the growth and increase the profile of Disability Studies at Emory University. For more information, please visit [disabilitystudies.emory.edu](http://disabilitystudies.emory.edu).

Extra credit may be available to students who attend events sponsored by the DSI or by other parts of the university if the content is relevant to our class. These opportunities will be mentioned in class (and feel free to bring anything you see to my attention).

**Schedule** (Subject to change with notice from the instructor.)

#### **Framing Addiction**

WED AUG 24                      **Introduction** Images of Addiction

FRI AUG 26                      **Transcendence and Habit:** Hume, "Of Superstition and Enthusiasm"; Defoe, excerpt from *Robinson Crusoe*; Collins, excerpt from *The Moonstone*.

#### **Fashionable Dissipation**

MON AUG 29                      Rochester "The Maimed Debauchee" (Course Reserves); Porter, "The Drinking Man's Disease: The 'Pre-History' of Alcoholism in Georgian Britain" (course reserves)

WED AUG 31                      [DROP ADD ENDS] Room, "The Cultural Framing of Addiction" (course reserves);

FRI SEPT 2                      Johnson, *Life of Savage* (course reserves); Sedgwick, "Epidemics of the Will" (course reserves)

MON SEPT 5	[LABOR DAY: NO CLASS]
WED SEPT 7	Johnson, <i>Life of Savage</i> ; <i>Rambler</i> 4, 89 (course reserves); Edgeworth, Advertisement to <i>Belinda</i> (4)
FRIDAY SEPT 9	Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i> (1-68); excerpts from Makittrick Adair
MON SEPT 12	Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i> (69-135)
WED SEPT 14	Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i> (136-210)
FRI SEPT 16	Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i> (211-284)
MON SEPT 19	Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i> (285-341)
WED SEPT 21	Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i> (342-416)
FRI SEPT 23	<b>Annotation Project Due</b> Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i> (417-478)

### Romantic Confessions

MON SEPT 26	Moore, “The Gin Shop; or, a Peep into Prison,” “The Riot; or, Half a Loaf Is Better Than No Bread” (course reserves); Taylor (Course reserves)
WED SEPT 28	Coleridge, “Kubla Khan” (course reserves); Robinson, “The Maniac”, “To the Poet Coleridge” (course reserves);
FRI SEPT 30	No Class, Instructor out of town: Annotation Project Group Assignment
MON OCT 3	DeQuincey, <i>Confessions of an English Opium Eater</i> (48-87)
WED OCT 5	DeQuincey, <i>Confessions of an English Opium Eater</i> (87-131, 292-294)
FRI OCT 7	Rossetti, “Goblin Market” (course reserves)
MON OCT 10	[FALL BREAK: NO CLASS]
WED OCT 12	Stevenson, <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i> (1-44)
FRI OCT 14	Stevenson, <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i> (44-67); Warhol, “The Rhetoric of Addiction from Victorian Novels to AA” (course reserves)

### Recovery Narratives

MON OCT 17	From <i>Alcoholics Anonymous: The Big Book</i> (course reserves); Glaser, “The Irrationality of Alcoholics Anonymous” (course reserves)
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WED OCT 19	Edwards, <i>The Days of Wine and Roses</i> (course reserves)
FRI OCT 21	Edwards, <i>The Days of Wine and Roses</i> (course reserves); Ettore, from <i>Women and Substance Abuse</i> (course reserves)
MON OCT 24	Anonymous, <i>Go Ask Alice</i> (Diary Number One, 1-120)
WED OCT 26	Anonymous, <i>Go Ask Alice</i> (Diary Number Two, 121-214)
FRI OCT 28	<b>Literary Criticism Due</b> Holiday, from <i>Lady Sings the Blues</i> (course reserves);
MON OCT 31	Herzberg, “‘The Pill You Love Can Turn on You’: Feminism, Tranquilizers, and the Valium Panic of the 1970s” (course reserves)
WED NOV 2	Courtwright, “The NIDA Brain Disease Paradigm: History, Resistance, and Spinoffs” (course reserves), from <i>Forces of Habit</i> (course reserves)
FRI NOV 4	<i>RetroReports: Crack Babies and OxyTots</i>

### **The War on Drugs**

MON NOV 7	Villeneuve, <i>Sicario</i>
WED NOV 9	Quinones, <i>Dreamland: The True Tale of America’s Opiate Epidemic</i> (1-39)
FRI NOV 11	Quinones, <i>Dreamland: The True Tale of America’s Opiate Epidemic</i> (40-79)
MON NOV 14	Quinones, <i>Dreamland: The True Tale of America’s Opiate Epidemic</i> (80-139)
WED NOV 16	Quinones, <i>Dreamland: The True Tale of America’s Opiate Epidemic</i> (139-184)
FRI NOV 18	<i>The Wire</i> , episode 1
MON NOV 21	<i>The Wire</i> , episode 2
WED NOV 23	[THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS]
FRI NOV 25	[THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS]
MON NOV 28	<b>Research Project Due</b> DuVernay, <i>13<sup>th</sup></i> (Netflix)
WED NOV 30	DuVernay, <i>13<sup>th</sup></i> (Netflix)
FRI DEC 1	DuVernay, <i>13<sup>th</sup></i> (Netflix)
MON DEC 5	Evaluations
FRI DEC 9	<b>11:30-2:00 Final Exam</b>