

SPRING 2014

FICTION WRITING WORKSHOP

M 4:00-6:45

Health 405

ANDREW SEAN GREER

What could be simpler? This will be a workshop focused on providing a discussion and feedback about student works of fiction, as well as short exercises on the craft of fiction.

Students are expected to:

attend every class

Sign up for and create two short works of fiction for our workshop discussion

Write considered responses to student work, making an extra copy for the professor

Participate, be mentally present and not homesick, heartbroken or hungover

When writing your responses, try to keep in mind *what the story wants to be*. Not how you would have written it differently. Sometimes what is sore and aching about a story, though it seems like the part to cut, is in fact exactly what is new and exciting about it--the rest of the story is simply not matching up. Cross-genre works are happily accepted, but will be held up to the standard of such cross-genre writers as Virginia Woolf, Oscar Wilde, Chang-Rae Lee, Margaret Atwood and Doris Lessing. All students are expected to respect their fellow workshop-mates, not only in their tone and presentation, but in allowing the discussion to include everyone. Even the quiet ones. It's always the quiet ones.

Every other class will feature 30 minutes at the beginning focusing on a different aspect of fiction writing, starting with the sentence and ending with the novel. I don't expect there to be any assignments from these exercises, but life holds surprises for us all.

Be bold, try and try and fail and fail. This is not the moment to turn in the perfect story you want us to edit before it goes to the *New Yorker*. This is time to stretch your muscles and find what comes easily, what comes with difficulty, and how you can best tell your story. Because the key to great storytelling is not a great story; it is a story well-told.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

JAN 27

Introduction: sentences

FEB 3

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FEB 10

Two sentences

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FEB 17

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FEB 24

paragraphs

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MAR 3

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MAR 10

pages

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MAR 17

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SPRING BREAK

APR 7

Stories

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APR 14

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APR 21

Dialogue

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APR 28

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MAY 5

Novels

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MAY 12

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(a very rough idea of how things will go--depends on our conversations)