

ENGL 2305: Intro to Fiction – Contemporary Fiction and Hybridity

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The goal of this course is to gain an understanding of the forms, structures, and aims of contemporary fiction using both close reading and literary criticism. To do this, we will read and respond to a wide variety of texts from flash fiction to short stories to novels. We will also, as a counterpoint, look at what fiction is not using brief explorations of poetry and nonfiction while actively seeking work that blurs the lines between and within these genres. This hybridity—or the conscious rejection of it—will, hopefully, offer us greater insight into the possibilities, styles, objectives, and philosophy of contemporary fiction while also demonstrating its continued evolution in an increasingly hybrid, fractured world. What we'll be seeking is an understanding of how our relationship to narratives changes even as our desire for narrative does not. Fiction here will serve as the focal point of a larger discussion about stories, culture, and our construction of meaning.

Texts

The Anchor Book of New American Short Stories

Joseph O'Neill's *Netherland*

Anne Carson's *Autobiography of Red*

Colson Whitehead's *The Intuitionist*

Selah Saterstrom's *The Pink Institution*

Requirements

Two 3-5 page papers

In-class writing assignments

One short presentation

Class Participation