WRTG 3020-020
Spring, 2007
Topics in Writing: Folk and Fairy Tales

Dr. Paul Thomas Murphy
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Course Description: In this class, you will be writing about the powers and purposes of folk and fairy tales—about what these tales do beyond providing a simple “moral of the story.” The focus of the class will be upon your writing, and upon communicating ideas, through writing, to an audience. You’ll be working on two essay projects—culminating in one analytical essay and one argumentative essay.

Writings by Bruno Bettelheim, and folk and fairy tales, available through course e-reserves (http://ublibraries.colorado.edu).
A collection of folk/fairy tales of your own choosing.
—And, of course, your own written work: the primary texts in this course.

Coursework: You will be graded upon your spoken and written work for this course. For spoken work, see participation, below. You will be writing several short assignments in this course—short analyses of folktales, as well as assessments of critical interpretations of tales. Also, you will be responsible for two full-length essays. These essays will be the last step in a process of writing and revising. When we are workshopping drafts, you will be submitting drafts of work in progress about every fourth class day. Although I will not be grading these preliminary drafts, they are necessary to class discussion and necessary to the process of your own writing. Therefore, it is imperative that you get your drafts in on time. I’ll be taking 5 points off your essay grade for each class day any draft, including the final draft, is late. You may change the thesis of your essay at any time, as long as we discuss the thesis of your final draft at least once in class.

Participation: Your written and spoken participation is as important as your attendance. Also, I will be considering preparation as an important component of participation. Please read and mark your colleagues’ drafts before you come to class, and be ready to comment on their papers. 10% of your grade depends upon your preparation and participation. To put it simply: if you prepare and participate regularly, you will get 10 points towards your final grade; if you don’t prepare or participate, you will get 0 points. If you foresee a problem with participation, please see me during the first week of classes; if you foresee a problem with preparation, you shouldn’t take this class.

Plagiarism: Your work must be original. If you plagiarize any work in any way, you will fail the course. Ignorance will not be an excuse.
Attendance: I'll allow three absences, but after that you will lose five points from your final grade for each subsequent absence. If you miss a class, find out from another student (or from me) what you missed; you'll be responsible for knowing what went on. Moreover, if you miss a class before a workshop day, please pick up and prepare the drafts for that next workshop. (Those drafts will be in my mailbox, at TB-1.) If you will be missing a class when you are due to pass a draft around, please call me or arrange to have someone bring your copies to class—otherwise, I will consider your draft late.

Come to class on time; late arrivals count as absences.

Special Note on Disabilities: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices>.

Paper and Paragraph Format: All written work must be typed and in MLA citation form. In your heading, please include your name, the course number, and my name. Also, please make 19 copies of any work that we will be discussing in workshop—one for every member of the class. (You need not make copies of your short assignments.) If there is not a copy for everyone, I must consider your draft late. Photocopying is a textbook cost; I cannot accept shortage of cash as an excuse for a late draft. Your analytical and argumentative essays should be as long as they need to be—but you should consider three full pages (900 words) as an absolute minimum length.

Grading: Analytical essay: 35%
Argumentative essay: 35%
Shorter Work: 20%
Participation: 10%
(Also remember that attendance can affect your grade.)

Tentative Schedule for the Course:

Week 1: Introduction; discussions: folk/fairy tales.
Week 2: Discussions: folk/fairy tales, Bettelheim’s Introduction and analyses
Week 3: Discussions: folk/fairy tales, Darnton’s “Peasants Tell Tales.”
Week 4: Discussions: folk/fairy tales, analysis.
Week 5: Discussion of folk/fairy tales; workshops: thesis paragraphs
Week 6: Workshops: thesis paragraphs; discussion of tales
Week 7: Workshops: analytical supporting points
Week 8: Workshops: analytical supporting points and full drafts; discussion of tales.
Week 9: Workshops: analytical full drafts
Week 10: Workshop: analytical full drafts; discussion: argument
Week 11: Workshops: argumentative thesis paragraphs; analytical essay due
Week 13: Workshops: argumentative proposals, argumentative full drafts
Week 14: Workshops: argumentative full drafts
Week 15: Workshops: argumentative full drafts
Week 16: Argumentative Essay Due