HONR 292C SYLLABUS
Knowing Across Cultures:
Encounters with the Other in Literature and Film

Section: 002
Time: MWF 11-11:50
Place: Eddy 9

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Ellen Brinks, English and Honors
Eddy 345
Ellen.Brinks@Colostate.edu
Office Hours Spring Semester 2019: Wednesdays, 12-1:30pm and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The seminar considers how cultural values inform what counts as knowledge, and by whom; the ways humans gain or affirm knowledge; the values attributed to knowledge; and moral implications of how knowledge is constructed, evaluated, and reproduced. We will reflect on these concerns firstly through a series of readings common to all HONR292 courses and secondly, through specific examples of how literature and film construct our knowing of other cultures and peoples.

Literature and film give us a unique form for experiencing a range of cultures and ways of knowing. In particular, they stage dramas that allow readers to consider and feel what it is like to interact with different cultures and with what we consider strange and/or foreign. As recent studies of cognitive science have demonstrated, fictional texts are paradoxically more successful at developing empathy in readers than nonfictional ones are, despite nonfiction’s claims to truth. In a world where collaborative work with and concern for people from diverse cultures will prove essential to our collective survival as a species, it’s essential that we engage imaginatively and empathetically with perspectives distant and distinct from our own. Literature and film are two media that uniquely bring such experiences to the fore, even if their stories are “made up.” Through their representational worlds, we can see human life through others’ eyes, understand different cultural perspectives, and, perhaps most valuably, we can “see ourselves seeing the other,” allowing for critical insight into the cultural determinants that shape our understanding of self and other.

To examine how the foreign is represented in literature and film, three sites of encounter between self and other are chosen as representative and valuable permutations on the theme: 1) the colonial encounter between settler colonists and indigenous peoples; 2) intra-communal tensions; and 3) the encounters arising from migrations and the emergence of global identities. These vividly imagined narratives foreground discrepancies in economic, political, and social power, the shaping role of historical events, and the diverse ways of we are ignorant of and misunderstand others from different cultures, as well as the ways that we share common perspectives and goals. We will grapple with how we construct what we claim to know about people from other cultures and the vital necessity of self-awareness. Literary works and film from the twentieth- and twenty-
first centuries are chosen with regard to how they illuminate how coming to terms with difference or otherness is an essential, inescapable, and enriching point of reference for living humanely in the world today.

**COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After completing this course, a successful student will be able to:

1. Identify and analyze how cultural values influence ways of knowing on individual, societal, and global levels in a diversity of academic disciplines and social contexts.
2. Apply and integrate diverse ways of knowing to analyze and interpret contemporary issues and topics.
3. Articulate how cultural frameworks and social systems influence what knowledge is produced and how knowledge is constructed, expressed, accepted, and contested.
4. Understand the limits of knowing, how knowledge changes, and the social, historical, political, and cultural influences that shape ways of knowing across cultures.
5. Critically assess issues of identity, culture, ownership, and power as they relate to the processes of knowledge production across cultures.
6. Recognize and apply interdisciplinary connections and intercultural overlaps among ways of knowing across cultures.
7. Describe and evaluate how different methodologies influence ways of knowing and what is known.

Expectation for work outside of class time: You will be expected to be able to spend a MINIMUM of six hours outside of class time per week for this course.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Doueiri, Ziad. *The Insult* (Film)
Grenville, Kate. *The Secret River*
Guerra, Ciro. *The Embrace of the Serpent* (Film)
James, Tania. *We Need New Names*
Otsuka, Julie. *The Buddha in the Attic*
Villeneuve, Denis. *Arrival* (Film)


A range of essays and stories for the course are available through Morgan Library electronic course reserves (marked ER in the syllabus). To find them, go to [www.lib.colostate.edu](http://www.lib.colostate.edu) (if off-campus, use secure.colostate.edu then click on csu libraries after login). On the library home page, click on course reserves and enter HONR 292C, section 002.
For electronic reserve items, bring them to class in print or digital form. They are required texts for the course and will be a part of our class discussions. If there is a last minute text I need you to read, I’ll scan the document and forward it to you via email.

Three films will be required viewing: *The Insult*, *Arrival*, and *The Embrace of the Serpent*. You must watch *The Insult* in advance of the first class in which we discuss the work (we will screen *Arrival* and *The Embrace of the Serpent* in class). The film *The Insult* is available in DVD format on Netflix, and stream-able on Amazon for a small fee. You may be able to stream this film for free or for a rental fee via other websites, or you may elect to purchase a new or used copy through other vendors.

**COURSE GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**GRADING**

The requirements that will be used to evaluate student learning are:
1. Discussion question assignments (10% of grade).
2. Two shorter essays (4-5 pages) as well as other short writing assignments, quizzes, or response pages on readings (30% of grade).
3. Speech (15% of grade).
4. Final Critical analysis and research writing project (8-10 pages plus annotated bibliography); 25% of grade).
5. Participation (20% of grade).

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Leadership assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing assignments plus quizzes, etc.</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analytical research paper (1)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech (1)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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To pass the course, you must:
- have a cumulative passing grade on the essays, speech, and any other class assignments
- complete the assigned readings before class
- do a thorough and thoughtful job on any written and oral assignments
- have a satisfactory attendance record
- participate regularly in our classroom discussions
- note that a large number of unexcused absences or plagiarism can override all the above percentages

This course will use the +/- grading system where A+ (100-99) = 4.0; A (98-93) = 4.0; A- (92.9-90) = 3.667; B+ (89.9-87) = 3.334; B (86.9-83) = 3.00; B- (82.9-80) = 2.667; C+ (79.9-77) = 2.334; C...
(76.9-70)= 2.00; D (69.9-60)= 1.00; F (below 60)= 0.00. Please note, CSU does not allow the grades of C-, D+, D-.

Plagiarism is a serious offense. It occurs when one passes off as one’s own work the ideas or words of someone else. We will be going over the proper way to attribute or quote other sources to avoid plagiarism. If you plagiarize in this course, your conduct will be reported and you will likely fail the course.

In accordance with CSU’s commitment to academic integrity, your essays should contain a signed honor pledge: “I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.”

**Academic and Professional Honesty Policy**
This course adheres to the Academic Integrity Policy of the Colorado State University General Catalog (Page 7) and the Student Conduct Code. Honors students enrolled in this course are held to high standards of integrity. Academic integrity is expected within all assignments for this course. Students will be required to make an honor pledge to complete this course. The honors pledge will be completed as a class. For more information about academic integrity, please visit: [http://learning.colostate.edu/integrity/](http://learning.colostate.edu/integrity/).

**Incomplete**
The grade of “I” is a temporary grade awarded to indicate that for reasons beyond the student’s control or that the student could not have reasonably have anticipated, he/she could not complete the requirements for the course. When an instructor assigns an “I,” he/she shall specify in writing the requirements the student shall fulfill to complete the course. After one year, or at the end of the semester in which the student graduates (whichever comes first), an “incomplete” grade will automatically changed to an “F” grade unless the course has been completed and the grade change submitted. Student must be in good academic standing in the class in order to receive an incomplete. (CSU Faculty Council policy)

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Reading Assignments**
In my opinion, this is the most important part of our course. It is only with your mind awake, active, and engaged that these readings and our class discussions can come alive and be most meaningful. There is a difference between reading for pleasure and reading for study purposes, and this is especially true for this course. There are unique challenges for the Western reader in a study of global literatures, because they describe cultures and histories and worlds that are largely unfamiliar to us. Give yourself time to read carefully: look up words online that describe aspects of life and culture that you don’t understand; jot down character names and relationships, as the names may be strange; make a note of recurring or powerful imagery and stylistic features. All this will pay off tremendously in your ultimate understanding of the text.
Discussion Leadership
Students will sign up to lead one discussion session over the course of the semester. S/he will prepare discussion questions for the assigned reading or viewing in advance of class-time. Working from those questions, s/he will lead class in a discussion for approximately 30 minutes.

Papers and Written Work
You will be writing **three** papers for this course (see course schedule on the syllabus for further information on due dates). Paper assignments and guidelines will be handed out well in advance of the due date. To pass this class, you must complete all written assignments. If you need an extension on the paper's due date, you must ask me *at least two days* before the paper is due; otherwise, it will be graded according to my late grading policy (1/2 grade per day).

- Paper One (4-5 pages): 10%
- Paper Two (4-5 pages): 10%
- Paper Three: Argumentative research paper (8-10 pages), with additional pages of annotated bibliography: 25%

In addition, I will assign occasional quizzes or critical article worksheets, and perhaps a few short response pages over the course of the semester (10%).

Attendance
I am strict about attendance. Regular attendance is mandatory. Do not schedule appointments during class time. If you miss class due to a university-sanctioned event, illness, or family emergency, your absence will be excused. You will need to bring a note authenticating this when you return (from a doctor, from the athletic office, or a funeral notice, to name a few examples). You are responsible for getting the notes and any assignments of the class period that you miss. If the absence is excused, any missed assignment will be due after your return to class (we will schedule a new due date together). If the absence is unexcused, any assignment due while you were absent will be graded for lateness (1/2 a grade/day). There are no make-ups for quizzes; if the absence is excused, you will not be penalized; if unexcused, you will receive zero points. After **three** unexcused absences, your grade will be seriously compromised by future absences; if you miss eight classes or more, you will fail the course.
Participation Grading Rubric

Participation is graded on a scale from 0 (lowest) through 4 (highest), using the criteria below. The criteria focus on what you demonstrate and do not presume to guess at what you know but do not demonstrate. This is because what you offer to the class is what you and others learn from. I expect the average level of participation to satisfy the criteria for a "3".

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Absent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Present, not disruptive. Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much. Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic case or reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them. Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the case or reading), without elaboration or very infrequently (perhaps once a class). Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on. Demonstrates sporadic involvement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Demonstrates good preparation: knows case or reading facts well, has thought through implications of them. Offers interpretations and analysis of case material (more than just facts) to class. Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion. Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed case exceptionally well, relating it to readings and other material (e.g., readings, course material, discussions, experiences, etc.). Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of case material, e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further. Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc. Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement.</td>
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Other Class Policies and Expectations

- Come to class on time. Avoid being late and leaving early. It is disruptive to everyone.
- Put away your phones during class time unless you are consulting an e-text we are discussing. Don't even think about texting, facebooking, playing games, emailing or studying for another class. I will give one verbal warning. If you do it a second time, I will ask you to leave and you will be marked as absent.
- Do not eat in class.
- Use the restroom before class. Unless it is an emergency, do not leave during class for a bathroom break.
• You may use your tablets/laptops to take notes for class; however, the above policy stands for those devices as well.

Resources
The CSU Writing Center is an excellent resource to support the development of your writing skills throughout your college career. While students are not required to access services, you are strongly encouraged to seek consultation on your writing projects required for this course. In addition to contact information, there are useful resources available on their website: http://writing.colostate.edu/.

The Morgan Library reference librarians can direct you to books and articles for the research paper and the oral presentation. I recommend contacting Rob Sica, Social Sciences and Humanities Liaison, Morgan Library 154, rob.sica@colostate.edu, 970.491.1047.

Accommodations
Students with documented learning disabilities must self-identify with the Office of Resources for Disabled Students (ORDS) in order to get accommodations and adjustments. Please call for an appointment (491-6385) and after your meeting with ORDS, meet with me to discuss your needs and the recommendations from ORDS.

Reporting student disclosures of interpersonal violence
CSU's Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation policy designates faculty and employees of the University as “Responsible Employees” (https://oeo.colostate.edu/title-ix-sexual-assault-sexual-violence-sexual-harassment/). This designation is consistent with federal law and guidance, and requires faculty to report information regarding students who may have experienced any form of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation. This includes information shared with faculty in person, electronic communications or in class assignments. As “Responsible Employees,” faculty may refer students to campus resources (see below), together with informing the Office of Support and Safety Assessment to help ensure student safety and welfare. Information regarding sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking and retaliation is treated with the greatest degree of confidentiality possible while also ensuring student and campus safety.

• Any student who may be the victim of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation is encouraged to report to CSU through one or more of the following resources:
  o Emergency Response 911
  o Deputy Title IX Coordinator/Office of Support and Safety Assessment (970) 491-1350
  o Colorado State University Police Department (non-emergency) (970) 491-6425
Final Note
It is my genuine wish that all of you excel and grow intellectually. If you are having difficulty with any aspect of the course materials and assignments, please come see me or email me. You are ultimately responsible for your work in this class, but you can expect me to be responsive to all your questions and concerns. I will generally respond within 24 hours to your email.

Here’s to a very fulfilling and productive semester. I look forward to getting to know you!

PICC EVALUATION SYSTEM

Honors Competencies and Skills for Honors Students ("PICC" feedback)
The CSU University Honors Program has prioritized four general competencies skills that should be addressed in each honors course. These skills include (1) **Professionalism, interpersonal skills, and emotional intelligence**; (2) **Interdisciplinary learning integrated with global and/or cultural viewpoints**; (3) **Critical thinking**; and (4) **Creativity and problem solving**. This is a two-stage process. First students complete a self-evaluation of these skills at the beginning of the semester. At the end of the semester instructors will provide feedback for each student, based on assignments and activities. The feedback is part of the University Honors Program; it is for advising purposes only and is confidential. It is not part of a student’s grades or academic record. A standardized rubric is used to provide feedback for growth in these areas and to measure the Honors Programs progress in helping students to develop these skills through their academic career. The feedback categories and activities/assignments used to measure progress in HONR 293 are listed below and noted in the assignment descriptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Category (PICC)</th>
<th>Relevant Course Activities &amp; Assignments</th>
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| **1. Professionalism, interpersonal skills, & emotional intelligence:** Acts ethically & positively to foster a supportive instructional or work environment. Has the emotional intelligence (ability to perceive, evaluate, & manage emotions) & interpersonal skills to work effectively with others. | • Class participation & conduct  
• Discussion question assignments  
• Formal speech |
| **2. Interdisciplinary learning integrated with global &/or cultural viewpoints:** Integrates diverse knowledge, perspectives, &/or skills into arguments &/or strategies; is aware of and can clearly incorporate global &/or cultural perspectives to an argument or issue. | • Class discussions  
• Discussion question assignments  
• Writing projects  
• Final research paper  
• Formal speech |
| **3. Critical thinking:** Student advances a position with specific theses or hypotheses & can conceptualize ideas or lines of thought. Conclusions and related outcomes acknowledge complexities of an issue (implications and consequences) and recognize differing points of view. Formulates & develops claims with sufficient support, including reasoning, evidence, | • Class discussions  
• Discussion question assignments  
• Writing projects  
• Final research paper  
• Formal speech |
Manual & persuasive appeals, & proper attribution where necessary. Uses written and oral communication effectively in persuasive arguments.

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<th>4. Creativity &amp; problem solving: Creatively applies discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based knowledge to discover and design a variety of forms often using a problem-solving strategy</th>
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<td>• Class discussions</td>
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<td>• Discussion question assignments</td>
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<td>• Formal speech</td>
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Instructions for completing the student self-evaluation using online PICC form:
1. Click this link, or go to honors.colostate.edu/picc in your web browser.
2. Log in with your eName and password.
3. Click on the blue “Create New” button at the top of the page to bring up the PICC Entry Form.
4. At the top of this new page is a link to the full PICC rubric, which you should review before completing the form.
5. The Assessment Type, Student, and Semester fields should be filled in for you.
6. Choose your instructor from the drop down menu.
7. Choose the course for which you are filling out this evaluation from the drop down menu.
8. Choose the level (B, D, P, and M, for basic, developing, proficient, and mature, respectively) for each of the four skill categories. Note that comments justifying why you chose this level are required.
9. If you have any general comments, add them to the general comments field. This field is optional.
10. Once you have checked to ensure the form is correct, click the ‘Submit’ button. All done!

If you have any questions or technical problems, email Honors Tech Support at honorstechsupport@colostate.edu

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS**

**How and What Do We Know? What are the Challenges of Knowing? Who Owns Ways of Knowing? What are the Purposes of Knowing?**

Jan 23 Course Introduction

Jan 25 Wallace Stevens, “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird”; Gerald Callahan, “Chimera” (ER)

Jan 28 Eula Biss, “The Pain Scale”; Emily Martin, “The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles” (both on ER)

Jan 30 Colum McCann, “Everything in this Country Must” (ER); Dennis Walder, “History” (ER) – Discussion Leadership on McCann story

Feb 04 Discussion of *The Insult* (dir. Ziad Doueiri); **View film before class** (stream-able on amazon.com for a small rental fee or free with amazon prime membership)

Feb 06 Discussion of *The Insult* -- Discussion Leadership; **First paper assignment passed out**

Feb 08 Eli Clare, *Exile and Pride* excerpt (1-9) (ER)

Feb 11 Anne Fadiman, "The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: Epilepsy and the Hmong"; Binyawanga Wainaina, “How to Write About Africa – Discussion Leadership

Feb 13 Ta-Nehisi Coates, “Letter to My Son” (ER) – Discussion Leadership; PICC evaluation due (go to honors.colostate.edu/picc)

Feb 15 *American Denial* documentary (watch before class) -- Discussion Leadership

**Literature and Film of “Knowing the Other”**

Feb 18 Julie Otsuka, *The Buddha in the Attic*, 1-54 (Quiz); in class: I’ll provide backgrounds to *The Buddha in the Attic*; **First essay due in class**

Feb 20 *The Buddha in the Attic*, 55-79 -- Discussion Leadership

Feb 22 *The Buddha in the Attic*, 81-129 (Quiz); **Second Paper Assignment passed out**

Feb 25 In class film viewing: *Arrival* (dir. Denis Villeneuve)

Feb 27 In class film viewing: *Arrival* (dir. Denis Villeneuve)

March 01 Discussion: *Arrival* -- Discussion Leadership

March 04 Thomas Nagel, “What is it like to be a Bat?” (ER); Frans de Waal, “Anthropomorphism and Anthropodenial” (ER) with worksheet (due in class)

March 06 Tania James, *The Tusk that did the Damage*, 3-48 (Quiz)

March 08 *Tusk*, 49-90; **Second paper due in class**
March 11 *Tusk*, 91-165 (Quiz) -- Discussion Leadership

March 13 *Tusk*, 166-199

March 15 *Tusk*, 200-221 -- Discussion Leadership

**Spring Break (March 18-24)**

March 25 Ramachandra Guha, “Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique” (ER)

March 27 David Schmidtz, “When Preservationism Doesn’t Preserve” (ER)

March 29 “Colors” Radio Lab (listen before class at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRD22dY5lck](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRD22dY5lck))

April 1 *The Secret River*, 3-71 (Quiz); *Final essay instructions passed out*

Apr 03 *The Secret River*, 75-123 – Discussion Leadership

Apr 05 *The Secret River*, 123-185; Fabienne Bayet, “Indigenous People and Wilderness” (ER)

Apr 08 *The Secret River*, 189-271 (Quiz)

Apr 10 *The Secret River*, 275-334 (Quiz) -- Discussion Leadership

Apr 12 Kate Mitchell, “Australia’s Other History Wars” (ER) with worksheet

Apr 15 In class Film: *The Embrace of the Serpent* (dir. Ciro Guerra)

Apr 17 In class Film: *The Embrace of the Serpent*

Apr 19 *The Embrace of the Serpent* -- Discussion Leadership

Apr 22 *The Embrace of the Serpent*

April 24 Mini-Conference/Panel Discussions (*Buddha in the Attic*)
April 26  Mini-Conference/Panel Discussions (*Arrival*)

April 29  Mini-Conference/Panel Discussions (*The Tusk that Did the Damage*)

May 01  Mini-Conference/Panel Discussions (*The Secret River*)

May 03  Mini-Conference/Panel Discussions (*The Embrace of the Serpent*)

May 06  Martha Nussbaum, “Education for Profit, Education for Democracy” (ER)

May 08  Richard Feynman, “The Value of Science” (ER)

May 10  Course Conclusion

**Final Essay due Monday, May 13th, in my office by noon**