



W280: Principles of Literary Editing and Publishing

Developing Editorial Aesthetics

Associate Instructor: **Yael Massen**

Section: **5826 1:00-2:15 TR WH 006**

Office Hours: **Eskenazi Museum of Art Gift Shop (2nd Floor) T 12:00-1:00, R 12:00-1:00 (or by appt.)**

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INTRODUCTION:

Principles of Literary Editing and Publishing offers a variety of experiences to help you think more critically about the nature of editing and publishing creative writing. As part of your enrollment in this course, you will survey the history and development of the wide-ranging American literary aesthetic. By analyzing diverse types of contemporary poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction, you will better understand writers' intentions, and begin to construct your own aesthetic preferences and potential biases. Practical considerations of editing and publishing such as anticipating readers' expectations, designing publications, and marketing the literary product will be covered as well. The activities of W280 are grounded in learning how editors and publishers act as essential intermediaries between writers and readers.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS:

Course Packet (Print out from Canvas)

See list of pre-approved poetry, nonfiction, and fiction selections (attached)

Poetry Foundation Glossary of Terms: <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/learning/glossary-terms>

You are encouraged to read voraciously on your own. I would be more than happy to provide you with book/journal recommendations.

GRADING:

Grading Policy

Grades for this course will be calculated on a 1000-point scale, in which students must earn 600-699 points for a grade in the D range, 700-799 for a grade in the C range, 800-899 for a grade in the B range, and 900-1000 for a grade in the A range. Students that fail to reach 600 points will fail the class. Points may be earned in the following ways:

Assignments	Points
Attendance/Participation	150
Discussion Questions/SA	100 (10 pts. each set of Questions, 5 pts. each SA)
2 Book Reviews	300 (150 each)
Literary Journal Paper and Presentation	150 (100 paper, 50 presentation)
Chapbook Final Project	300
Total	1000

ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN:

Discussion Questions/Short Assignments (SA):

You are required to bring to class five thoughtful questions in response to your weekly readings in which you will

discuss some aspect of the publishing world and share your findings with the class. Your readings should be thoughtfully annotated, and I reserve the right to check your annotations for credit at any point in the semester. In your questions, I expect you to direct discussions on insights gathered from a corresponding essay. In your questions and discussions, you are required to integrate what you have learned from this essay with the assigned texts for the week. You may focus on one of the assigned readings, or both. Your annotations are meant to provide you with a written reference for classroom discussion. You must use evidence from each essay to support your observations/positions in your responses. In addition to evidence from the texts, you are expected to use appropriate craft terminology in your discussions. You will become more familiar with these terms over the course of the semester. I suggest bookmarking the following link from the Poetry Foundation's Website (<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/learning/glossary-terms?category=techniques-and-figures-of-speech>) if you are unfamiliar with poetic or craft terminology.

Book Review:

You will write **two** short 500-800 word book reviews, one focused on a collection of poetry and one focused on a collection of prose (short stories or nonfiction essays). Your book reviews will respond to two collections of your choice from the pre-selected list I have provided in this syllabus. The collections you focus on in this reflection may include some of the texts we have discussed in class, but you are not to parrot back to me already-discussed ideas and conversations—I want to see how you as an independent thinker have generated insights about the collection you've chosen. You are encouraged to incorporate some of the material from essays we have read throughout the semester, and draw comparisons/contrasts with the works of other writers we have read in this course. As with your weekly discussion questions, your book reviews must use textual evidence and appropriate craft terminology to support your observations/positions in your responses. Additionally, you may not use a book you reviewed as an example of a product from an independent press for your presentation below (a separate assignment).

Literary Journal/Independent Press Presentation and Paper

In a group, you will investigate and critique a chosen journal or independent press and report (in class and in writing) on your findings regarding its editorial aim and process. What is the aesthetic of this press? What is their vision? Affiliation? What are their marketing strategies? How often do they publish works of literature? Who is on the masthead and how does this influence the work published by the journal/publishing house? Provide a close examination of one product of this journal/press and how this product is representative of its editorial choices. How do you respond to the editorial choices of the journal/press your group has selected?

Chapbook/Original Literary Journal Final Project:

As a final project, you will work with a group of your peers to gather a chapbook-length (24-32 pages) anthology of writing you, as an editorial board, select. Using your editing skills, you will design, copyedit, proofread, and publish this chapbook/chapbook-sized literary magazine together. You are responsible for creating a finished product that can belong to a publishing house of your own creation, or one affiliated with *IR Online: An Undergraduate Project*, a publication produced by undergrads enrolled in this course in previous semesters. Groups are responsible for their own production timetables, distribution of work, and final product. Group members must account for their contributions to the publishing house and final product by maintaining a log/weekly reflection of their work duties, responsibilities, and progress. These logs will be submitted at the end of the semester in addition to their group project. Students are afforded a great deal of space to dream this project any way they wish. You are encouraged to create social media platforms to promote the product of this project. Your instructor is the chair of the board/editor-in-chief of for each independent publishing house; all final decisions must be presented to the advisory board for final approval. Students cannot pass W280 without submitting this final project.

Participation:

You must come to class prepared. The basic level of "prepared" is comprised of showing up on time with the appropriate materials for the day read, printed, and annotated. If you do not have class materials, or if you have not read the day's readings, the instructor reserves the right to ask you to leave class. If materials for this course are unavailable (i.e. the link is not working, the pdf is not posted on Canvas), it is your responsibility to contact the instructor ahead of class. Beyond this basic level, your grade is based on your active participation in classroom

discussion, both in spoken comments and written responses.

I understand speaking in classroom is difficult for some people. This is a challenge you must all confront with courage. We are not in this classroom to judge who has “the right” responses or is “better, smarter, louder, etc.” than the other students. We will listen to one another as carefully as we read. Additionally, if content in this course is unfamiliar to you (i.e. “I am unfamiliar with a word in this story” “this poem makes reference to an artwork outside of the text,” “this word is in another language”), you are to make use of your resources (books, search engines, other human brains) and try to establish an understanding with what was once foreign to you.

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

Attendance

You may miss up to three classes without any point-value impact on your grade. The content you miss is on you, and your responsibility to catch up by contacting a peer (this is a good time to ask for two other students’ email addresses). Attending office hours is not an appropriate method of making up missed class time. Each subsequent absence after the three-class emergency absences will result in your grade being dropped a value (i.e. A- to B+). Three tardies will count as one absence. Late work is not accepted, and work will not be accepted in any form except for printed copy, unless otherwise stated/approved. If you know you will be absent on a day an assignment is due, you must take appropriate measures (i.e. ask another classmate to turn in your copy for you) to ensure your assignment is submitted early or on time.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism refers to the act of submitting someone else's writing or ideas as your own. The policy concerning plagiarism is simple: plagiarism will result in an F for the course and probable further disciplinary action will be taken by the powers that be in IU’s administration. All students are required to read and sign a copy of the IU policy concerning plagiarism.

Additional Notes on Grading Policies

I reserve the right to change this syllabus at any point in the semester.

Student Resources

The following links are resources that may or may not be of assistance to you or someone you know (they’ve helped me in the past):

IU Student Advocates Office: <https://studentaffairs.indiana.edu/student-advocates/> (812) 855-0761

IU CAPS: <http://healthcenter.indiana.edu/counseling/> (812) 855-5711

IU SACS/Crisis Line: <http://healthcenter.indiana.edu/counseling/services/sexual-assault.shtml> (812) 855-8900

IU Dean of Students: <https://studentaffairs.indiana.edu/dean-students/> (812) 855-8187

IU Disability Services: <https://studentaffairs.indiana.edu/disability-services-students/> (812) 855-7578

Poetry Options for Book Review

Kaveh Akbar: *Portrait of the Alcoholic* (chapbook)

Hadara Bar-Nadav: *Fountain and Furnace* (chapbook)

Melissa Broder: *Last Sext*

Jericho Brown: *The New Testament*

Jos Charles: *Safe Space*

Tiana Clark: *Equilibrium* (chapbook)

Aracelis Girmay: *The Black Maria*

francine j. harris: *Play Dead*

Ada Limón: *Bright Dead Things*

Nate Marshall: *Wild Hundreds*

Adrian Matejka: *Map to the Stars*

Sharon Olds: *Odes*

Tommy Pico: *IRL*

Max Ritvo: *Four Reincarnations*

Robyn Schiff: *A Woman of Property*

Safiya Sinclair: *Cannibal*

Solmaz Sharif: *Look*

Brenda Shaughnessy: *So Much Synth*

Ocean Vuong: *Night Sky with Exit Wounds*

Monica Youn: *Blackacre*

Nonfiction/Hybrid Form Options for Book Review

Eula Biss: *Notes from No Man's Land; On Immunity*

Jeff Chang: *We Gon' Be Alright*

Roxane Gay: *Bad Feminist*

Leslie Jamison: *The Empathy Exams*

Kiese Laymon: *How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America*

Sarah Manguso: *Ongoingness: The End of a Diary*

Maggie Nelson: *The Argonauts; Bluets*

Claudia Rankine: *Citizen*

Sun Yung Shin: *Unbearable Splendor*

Tracy K. Smith: *Ordinary Light*

Fiction Options for Book Review

Osama Alomar: *Fullblood Arabian* (chapbook)

Mía Alvar: *In the Country*

Mona Awad: *13 Ways of Looking at a Fat Girl*

Junot Díaz: *This is How You Lose Her*

Megan Giddings: *Arcade Seventeen* (chapbook)

Randa Jarrar: *Him, Me, Muhammed Ali*

Han Kang: *The Vegetarian*

Etgar Keret: *The Bus Driver Who Wanted to Be God*

Kelly Link: *Magic for Beginners*

Sarah Majka: *Cities I've Never Lived In*

Helen Oyeyemi: *What Is Not Yours Is Not Yours*

Karen Russell: *Vampires in the Lemon Grove*

George Saunders: *CivilWarLand in Bad Decline*

Kirstin Valdez Quade: *Night at the Fiestas*

Alexander Weinstein: *Children of the New World*

Colson Whitehead: *The Underground Railroad*

Recommended Literary Journals**University-affiliated/Graduate-run:**

<i>Indiana Review</i>	<i>jubilat</i>	<i>Mid-American Review</i>
<i>Iowa Review</i>	<i>The Journal</i>	<i>Nashville Review</i>
<i>Gulf Coast</i>	<i>Crazyhorse</i>	<i>Callaloo</i>
<i>The Missouri Review</i>	<i>Southern Indiana Review</i>	<i>Susquehanna Review</i>
<i>Colorado Review</i>	<i>Copper Nickel</i>	<i>(undergraduate)</i>
<i>Black Warrior Review</i>	<i>DIAGRAM</i>	<i>Gandy Dancer (undergraduate)</i>
<i>Ninth Letter</i>	<i>New England Review</i>	<i>Bat City Review</i>
<i>Kenyon Review</i>	<i>Blackbird</i>	<i>Subtropics</i>
<i>Prairie Schooner</i>	<i>Washington Square</i>	<i>Virginia Quarterly Review</i>

Independent journals:

<i>The Offing</i>	<i>Fence</i>	<i>Boston Review</i>
<i>Tupelo Quarterly</i>	<i>A Public Space</i>	<i>The Paris Review</i>
<i>Poetry Magazine</i>	<i>Tin House</i>	<i>Glimmer Train</i>
<i>The Sun</i>	<i>n+1</i>	<i>McSweeney's Internet Tendency</i>
<i>The Believer</i>	<i>Guernica</i>	<i>Granta</i>
<i>The Adroit Journal</i>	<i>The New Yorker</i>	<i>Freeman's</i>
<i>32 Poems</i>	<i>Threepenny Review</i>	<i>The Paris-American</i>

Assorted Independent Book Publishers

Graywolf Press	Tupelo Press	Persea Books
Coffee House Press	Alice James Books	Rose Metal Press
Copper Canyon Press	University of Pittsburgh Press	Button Poetry
Milkweed Editions	Sibling Rivalry Press	Saturnalia Books
Wave Books	BOA Editions Ltd.	YesYes Books
Ahsahta Press	Dzanc Books	Wesleyan University Press

The "Big Five" Publishers

Hachette	Macmillan	Simon & Schuster
HarperCollins	Penguin Random House	

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Note: Items are listed on dates they are due/will be discussed in class. Prepare accordingly.

CE: Craft Essay, N: Nonfiction Essay, F: Short Story or Fiction excerpt, P: Poem

Week 1: Introductions, What in the World Are We Doing?

1/10 – Introductions/Syllabus, Canvas (**CE:** Rosser et al. “The Future is a Magazine: A Roundtable on the Contemporary Literary Magazine)

1/12 – Questions due, Canvas (**CE:** Aaron Gilbreath “Publishing What We Are Trying to Write,” Cheryl Strayed “Dear Sugar Column #48, Write Like a Motherfucker”; **N:** Ross Gay “Some Thoughts on Mercy,” Kiese Laymon “You Are the Second Person,” Cheryl Strayed “The Love of My Life”)

Week 2: Poetry Intensive aka CRAFT CRAFT CRAFT

1/17 – Questions Due, Canvas (**CE:** Denise Levertov “On the Function of the Line,” Rebecca Hazelton “Why Write in Form?”; **P:** Tarfia Faizullah “100 Bells,” Heather Christle “Self-Portrait with Fire,” Ilya Kaminsky “Author’s Prayer,” Rickey Laurentiis “Ghazal for Emmett Till,” Cori Winrock [Boston Review Poems](#), Lyrae Van Clief-Stefanon “Bop: The North Star,” Patrick Rosal “You Cannot Go To...”)

1/19 – Questions Due, Canvas (**CE:** Jeanette Winterson “Art Objects,” Todd Davis “The Poem as a Bodily Thing: An Interview with Ross Gay”; **P:** Hadara Bar-Nadav “Thumb,” Matthea Harvey “The Inside Out Mermaid,” Aracelis Girmay “For Estefani Lora, Third Grade, Who Made Me a Card,” Ross Gay “Ode to Sleeping in My Clothes,” “Ode to Buttoning and Unbuttoning My Shirt,” “Within Two Weeks the African American Poet Ross Gay Is Mistaken...”)

Week 3: Fiction Intensive aka CRAFT CRAMMING

1/24 – SA Poem and Reflection due, Questions due, Canvas (**CE:** Anna Keesey “Making a Scene: Fiction’s Fundamental Unit”; **F:** Phil Klay “Redeployment,” Jhumpa Lahiri, “A Temporary Matter”)

1/26 – Questions due, Canvas (**CE:** Dorothy Allison “Place”; **F:** Karen Russell “Vampires in the Lemon Grove,” Pam Houston “How to Talk to a Hunter”)

Week 4: The Sea We’re Swimming In, Literary Citizenship

1/31 – SA Scene and Reflection due, Questions due, Canvas (**CE:** Hilda Raz “*Prairie Schooner’s* Traditions of Transport: Publishing in the Academy,” Megan M. Garr “The Literary Economy is Pathetic,” Roxane Gay “Too Many of Us, Too Much Noise,” Ian Morris “Serial Killers: Toward a Future of the Literary Magazine

in America,” Jason Epstein “Publishing: The Revolutionary Future,” Rick Moody, “Comments,” Jodee Stanley “The Changing Shape of Literary Magazines; or What the Hell Is This Thing?”)

2/2 – Questions due, Canvas (**CE:** M. Lincoln Schuster, “An Open Letter to a Would-be Editor,” Maria Popova “John Updike’s 6 Rules for Constructive Criticism, Stacey Richter “The Chair of Rejection,” Ben Percy “Bottles in a Midnight Sea,” Nathaniel Tower “Ten Levels of Rejection (And What to Do About Them)”), Websites (Submittable, Duotrope, Rejection Wiki)

Week 5: Pieces of Pies, Publishing, Pen Names...

2/7 – Questions due, Canvas (**CE:** Marcelle Heath “Cate Marvin Discusses the VIDA Count: An Interview,” Claire Fallon “The Most Intersectional VIDA Count Yet Paints A Troubling Picture”), YouTube (Cave Canem National Book Award Introduction <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7V58BYM4DtE>), Websites (CantoMundo, Kundiman, Cave Canem, VONA, Lambda Literary Foundation, TENT: Creative Writing)

2/9 – Questions due, Canvas (**CE:** Jenny Zhang “They Pretend to Be Us While Pretending We Don’t Exist,” Sherman Alexie “Sherman Alexie Speaks Out on The Best American Poetry 2015,” Kazim Ali “An Open Letter to Aimee Nezhukumatathil,” Claudia Rankine “Open Letter: A Dialogue on Race and Poetry,” Tony Hoagland “Dear Claudia: A Letter in Response”; **P:** Yi-Fen Chou (Michael Derrick Hudson) “The Bees, the Flowers, Jesus, Ancient Tigers, Poseidon, Adam and Eve,” Tony Hoagland “The Change,” Calvin Trillin “Have They Run Out of Provinces Yet?”)

Week 6: So much reading!

2/14 – Book Review 1 Due, In-house work day for group literary journal presentations; Canvas (**P & F** selections from *Kenyon Review* v. 35, Fall 2013)

2/16 – In-house work day for group literary journal/small press presentations

Week 7: Be interesting, or GET OUT!

2/21 – Literary journal/small press group presentations (1)

2/23 – Literary journal/small press group presentations (2), All literary journal/small press papers due

Week 8: Building our own (publishing) houses

2/28 – Developing an aesthetic: Building our houses: Solicitations and submissions, Assigning roles & tasks; Canvas (**CE:** Lindsay Waters “Literary Aesthetics: The Very Idea,” Audre Lorde “Poetry Is Not a Luxury,”

P: Cate Lycurgus “Conditional,” Danez Smith “Dinosaurs in the Hood,” Fatimah Asghar “Pluto Shits on the Universe,” Jameson Fitzpatrick “I Woke Up”)

3/2 – Visit from *Indiana Review* Fiction Editor, Maggie Su, Q&A; Canvas (**F:** Maggie Su, “Echolocation”)

Week 9: Developing editorial aesthetics, or You’ll eat it, and you’ll like it

3/7 – Developing an aesthetic: Marketing and production: How do you make a chapbook?; Canvas (**F:** Megan Giddings *I Could Feel the Afterglow*) Websites (Floating Wolf Quarterly, BOAAT, Platypus Press, Sibling Rivalry Press, Black Lawrence Press, New Michigan Press)

3/9 – Visit and Q&A with Joshua Johnston, creator of *Frontier Slumber* chapbook press, and *Indiana Review* Poetry Editor, Emily Corwin (**P:** Emily Corwin, *Darkling*)

Week 10: Time to relax for a little bit

3/14 – No class, Spring Break

3/16 – No class, Spring Break

Week 11: Surprise Week!

3/21 – Who knows? Field Trip? Guest Speaker? Visit to the Lilly Library? (Outcome: Visit by Poet and Nonfiction Author, Ross Gay, Discussion of *Some Call it Ballin’* and Q&A)

3/23 – Do you know? I don’t know! Dance party? Reading event? (Outcome: Skype call with Natalie Mesnard of the Community of Literary Magazines and Presses (CLMP), Q&A on small publishing, internship opportunities in NYC, Unusual Literary Magazines (i.e. *One Story* and *Tuesday; An Art Project*), Social Media and Online Presence)

Week 12: Becoming editors & other fancy things

3/28 – Cover art, marketing, social media, graphic design, literary events, literary agencies, literary awards/contests; Websites (Bread Loaf Writing Conference, AWP, The Field Office Agency)

3/30 – Book Review 2 due; TBD- Based on needs

Week 13: Let’s make a thing!

4/4 – In-house work day (bring all supplies necessary)

4/6 – In-house work day (bring all supplies necessary) (Submissions close 4/10)

Week 14: Picky, picky, picky

4/11 – Poetry Selection Meeting

4/13 – Prose Selection Meeting

Week 15: Editing & reading & running to the end

4/18 – TBD- Based on needs

4/20 – TBD- Based on needs

Week 16: Where we part

4/25 – TBD- Based on needs

4/27 – Last day of class, Chapbook Final Projects due