

Slavic and Eastern Languages 275/ English 226 (S:3)
Boston College
Fall Semester 2006
Classes MFW 2-2:50 Lyons 202; moved to Merkert 124

Professor Maxim D. Shrayer
Lyons Hall 210, 617-552-3911
Office hours: M 1-2; F 3-4*

NABOKOV

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The bilingual and bicultural achievement of Vladimir Nabokov. A polemical examination of Nabokov's Russian and English periods, with particular attention to connections among his aesthetics, ethics, and metaphysics and to issues of gender, sexuality, authorship, and exile. Readings include selected Russian and English novels and short stories, Nabokov's autobiographic and discursive writings, as well as stories by Anton Chekhov and Ivan Bunin. All lectures, discussions, readings, and papers are in English; knowledge of Russian is not required. Students and speakers of Russian read as much of the materials as possible in the original and contribute to the discussions with relevant linguistic and cultural observations.

REQUIRED TEXTS (for sale at the BC Bookstore and on reserve at O'Neill Library; use ONLY the following editions):

Nabokov, Vladimir. Annotated Lolita. Vintage International, 1991.

---. Defense. Vintage International, 1990.

---. Gift. Vintage International, 1991.

---. Glory. Vintage International, 1991.

---. Invitation to a Beheading. Vintage International, 1989.

---. Pnin. Vintage International, 1989.

---. The Real Life of Sebastian Knight. Vintage International, 1992.

---. Speak, Memory. Vintage International, 1989.

---. The Stories of Vladimir Nabokov. Vintage International, 1996 [Stories].

Grayson, Jane. Vladimir Nabokov. Overlook Press, 2002 [Grayson].

Shrayer, Maxim D. The World of Nabokov's Stories. University of Texas Press, 2000 [Shrayer].

Nabokov: A Selection of Reading Materials. BC Press, 2006 [Selection].

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

—attendance and active participation in class discussion;

—two papers (4 double-sp. pp., 900-1000 words), due, respectively, Oct. 11th and Nov. 29th;

* To schedule an appointment, please contact Ms. Demetra Parasirakis at (617) 552-3910 or demetra.parasirakis@bc.edu.

- midterm written examination, Oct. 20th @ 2 PM;
- final written examination, December 13th @ 12:30 PM.

The FINAL GRADE will be calculated as follows:

- 35% daily attendance and class participation;
- 30% two papers;
- 15% midterm examination;
- 20% final examination

A = excellent **B** = good **C** = satisfactory **D** = unsatisfactory but passing **F** = failure
plus and minus are discretionary qualifiers.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Class attendance is MANDATORY. Students will need to present official documentation for each missed class and will be penalized for unexcused absences. Please be reminded of the Boston College policy on academic integrity and attendance (see pp. 34-37 of the 2006-07 BC Catalog; online

<http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity>).

BC expects all its students to adhere to its policy on academic integrity by following the accepted norms of intellectual honesty in their academic work. Any form of cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty or collusion in another's dishonesty is a fundamental violation of these norms. The following has been excerpted from BC's statement on academic integrity:

Policy and Procedures

The pursuit of knowledge can proceed only when scholars take responsibility and receive credit for their work. Recognition of individual contributions to knowledge and of the intellectual property of others builds trust within the University and encourages the sharing of ideas that is essential to scholarship. Similarly, the educational process requires that individuals present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique, and eventual reformulation. Presentation of others' work as one's own is not only intellectual dishonesty, but also undermines the educational process.

Standards

Academic integrity is violated by any dishonest act which is committed in an academic context including, but not restricted to the following:

Cheating is the fraudulent or dishonest presentation of work. Cheating includes but is not limited to: the use or attempted use of unauthorized aids in examinations or other academic exercises submitted for evaluation; fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data, results, sources for papers or reports, or in clinical practice, as in reporting experiments, measurements, statistical analyses, tests, or other studies never performed; manipulating or altering data or other manifestations of research to achieve a desired result; selective reporting, including the deliberate suppression of conflicting or unwanted data; falsification of papers, official records, or reports; copying from another student's work; actions that destroy or alter the work of another student; unauthorized cooperation in completing assignments or during an examination; the use of purchased essays or term papers, or of purchased preparatory research for such papers; submission of the same written work in more than one course without prior written approval from the instructors involved; dishonesty in requests for make-up exams, for extensions of deadlines for submitting papers, and in any other matter relating to a course.

Plagiarism is the act of taking the words, ideas, data, illustrations, or statements of another person or source, and presenting them as one's own. Each student is responsible for learning and using proper

methods of paraphrasing and footnoting, quotation, and other forms of citation, to ensure that the original author, speaker, illustrator, or source of the material used is clearly acknowledged.

Other breaches of academic integrity include:

the misrepresentation of one's own or another's identity for academic purposes; the misrepresentation of material facts or circumstances in relation to examinations, papers, or other evaluative activities; the sale of papers, essays, or research for fraudulent use; the alteration or falsification of official University records; the unauthorized use of University academic facilities or equipment, including computer accounts and files; the unauthorized recording, sale, purchase, or use of academic lectures, academic computer software, or other instructional materials; the expropriation or abuse of ideas and preliminary data obtained during the process of editorial or peer review of work submitted to journals, or in proposals for funding by agency panels or by internal University committees; the expropriation and/or inappropriate dissemination of personally-identifying human subject data; the unauthorized removal, mutilation, or deliberate concealment of materials in University libraries, media, or academic resource centers.

Collusion is defined as assistance or an attempt to assist another student in an act of academic dishonesty. Collusion is distinct from collaborative learning, which may be a valuable component of students' scholarly development. Acceptable levels of collaboration vary in different courses, and students are expected to consult with their instructor if they are uncertain whether their cooperative activities are acceptable.

REFERENCE WORKS:

A number of reference works on Russian literary history are in print. The following titles have been popular among students:

Gilbert, Martin. Atlas of Russian History. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
O'Neil Reference G2111.S1 G52 1993

Kasack, Wolfgang. Dictionary of Russian Literature since 1917. New York: Columbia UP, 1988. O'Neill Reference PG2991.4 .K3513x 1988

Terras, Victor, ed. Handbook of Russian Literature. New Haven: Yale UP, 1985.
O'Neill Reference PG2940 .H29 1985

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND NABOKOV WEB SITE:

A reliable, albeit not exhaustive, bibliography of Nabokov criticism, both books and articles, can be found at ZEMBLA, the Vladimir Nabokov web site. The URL is <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/nabokov>. I encourage you to use ZEMBLA. In addition to very useful bibliographical information, the site also contains various name and subject guides to Nabokov's works, a chronology of Nabokov's life and work, as well as numerous visual materials.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETING, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS:

W, September 6	Introduction. Grayson, 1-78
F, September 8	<u>Stories</u> , "Russian Spoken Here"; "The Seaport"; "Razor"; "A Guide to Berlin"; <u>Shrayer</u> , 1-15; 71-81; Grayson, 79-137
M, September 11	<u>Stories</u> , "Revenge"; "Details of a Sunset"; "La Veneziana"; " <u>Shrayer</u> ,

	17-33; 38-66
W, September 13	<u>Stories</u> , "Christmas"; "The Return of Chorb"; <u>Shrayer</u> , 33-38; 86-108
F, September 15	<u>The Defense</u> , 1-74
M, September 18	<u>The Defense</u> , 74-184
W, September 20	<u>The Defense</u> , 185-256
F, September 22	<u>Stories</u> , "The Aurelian"; <u>Selection</u> , Bunin, "Gentle Breathing"; <u>Shrayer</u> , 108-134; 66-70
M, September 25	<u>Glory</u> , ix-84
W, September 27	<u>Glory</u> , 84-148
F, September 29	<u>Glory</u> , 149-205
M, October 2	NO CLASS: YOM KIPPUR
W, October 4	<u>Stories</u> , "A Letter that Never Reached Russia"; "The Admiralty Spire"; <u>Shrayer</u> , 293-312; <u>Selection</u> , Shrayer, "Nabokov and Women Writers"
F, October 6	<u>Stories</u> , "The Visit to the Museum"; "Perfection"; <u>Shrayer</u> , 52-66; 81-86
M, October 9	NO CLASS: COLUMBUS DAY
W, October 11	FIRST PAPER DUE IN CLASS: NO EXTENSIONS
<i>Paper Assignment: Discuss any formal and/or thematic feature in a short story or novel by Nabokov that we have read so far in the course (i.e. up to Invitation to a Beheading). Pay close attention to the relationship among aesthetics, ethics, and metaphysics. A topic may be chosen in consultation with the instructor.</i>	
W, October 11	<u>Invitation to a Beheading</u> , 5-55
F, October 13	<u>Invitation to a Beheading</u> , 56-156
M, October 16	<u>Invitation to a Beheading</u> , 157-223
W, October 18	<u>Stories</u> , "Cloud, Castle, Lake"; "Recruiting"; <u>Shrayer</u> , 134-161
F, October 20	MIDTERM EXAMINATION (<i>which will cover everything we will have read by October 20, i.e. up to The Gift</i>)
M, October 23	<u>The Gift</u> , "Foreword" + 1-76

W, October 25	<u>The Gift</u> , 77-211
F, October 27	<u>The Gift</u> , 212-300
M, October 30	<u>The Gift</u> , 301-366
W, November 1	<u>Selection</u> , Chekhov, "Lady with a Lapdog"; <u>Stories</u> , "Spring in Fialta"
F, November 3	<u>Stories</u> , "A Russian Beauty"; <u>Selection</u> , Bunin, "Henry" ["Genrikh"]; <u>Shrayer</u> , 191-292
M, November 6	<u>The Real Life of Sebastian Knight</u> , 3-118
W, November 8	<u>The Real Life of Sebastian Knight</u> , 119-203
F, November 10	<u>Speak, Memory</u> , 1-227; <u>Stories</u> , "Mademoiselle O"; "First Love"
M, November 13	<u>Speak, Memory</u> , 229-310, <u>Stories</u> , "Vasilii Shishkov"; <u>Shrayer</u> , 312-317; 161-189
W, November 15	<u>Lolita</u> , xvii-lxvii + 3-40
F, November 17	<u>Lolita</u> , 40-142
M, November 20	<u>Lolita</u> , 145-215
W, November 22 & Friday, November 24	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING RECESS
M, November 27	<u>Lolita</u> , 215-309; <u>Selection</u> , Shrayer, "Nabokov's Sexography" <u>Optional</u> : Stanley Kubrick, <i>Lolita</i> (1962); Adrian Lyne, <i>Lolita</i> (1998); both films on reserve at Media Center
W, November 29	SECOND PAPER DUE IN CLASS: NO EXTENSIONS <i>Paper Assignment: You are a book critic for a major mainstream publication (e.g. The New York Times Book Review, The Times Literary Supplement, The New York Review of Books, The New Republic, etc.). Write a book review of The Gift, The Real Life of Sebastian Knight, or Lolita.</i>
W, November 29	<u>Lolita</u> , 311-17; in-class screening of 1966 Nabokov Interview
F, December 1	<u>Pnin</u> , 7-61
M, December 4	<u>Pnin</u> , 62-136; <u>Stories</u> , "Conversation Piece, 1945"; <u>Selection</u> , Shrayer, "Jewish Questions in Nabokov's Life and Art"
W, December 6	<u>Pnin</u> , 137-191; <u>Stories</u> , "Signs and Symbols";

F, December 8

Stories, "The Vane Sisters"; Selection, Nabokov, "The Art of Literature and Commonsense"; Shrayer, 317-320

W, December 13

FINAL EXAMINATION: 12:30 PM in Lyons 202

Please register all your questions, doubts, and suggestions with me as soon as they have arisen. I am delighted to be working with you and look forward to a rewarding intellectual dialogue.

M.D.S.