

RUS 494 #85422
SLC 494 #85425
ENG494 #90180
General Studies HU and L
TTh 1:30-2:45 pm, Wrigley Hall 1-08

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Office Hours: TTh 3-4 & by appt.

Art in Exile: Vladímír Vladímirovich Nabókov

Fall 2014



Course Description

This course is offered in English. The scandalous success of *Lolita* (1955) allowed Vladimir Nabokov to retire from teaching at Cornell University and move to Switzerland to devote himself to fiction, translation, criticism, and lepidoptery. This was only one of the many metamorphoses that Nabokov, a Russian noble, underwent while in exile, moving from Russia to the Crimea, Cambridge UK, Berlin, Paris, Cambridge MA, Ithaca, Hollywood, and finally Montreux. This course examines the Russian roots of Nabokov's Russian (in translation) and American novels about exile: his first novel, *Mary* (1926), *The Defense* (1929), *Invitation to a Beheading* (1932), and his tribute to nineteenth-century Russian literature, *The Gift* (1938), which he considered his greatest Russian novel. These are followed by *Lolita* (1955), *Invitation to a Beheading* (1957) and *Pale Fire* (1962), his memoirs, (1966), and some essays and short stories. Films include *Lolita* by Stanley Kubrick (1962) and Adrian Lyne (1997).

Learning Outcomes

Over the course of the semester, students will:

1. Develop an appreciation for Nabokov's life as writer, translator, and lepidopterist, the major works, and some scholarship and films about him and his works.
2. Discover and discuss Nabokov's work as a translator and his views on translation in the context of translation theory.
3. Argue with Nabokov's position on important literary debates in the context of Russian literary history more generally, especially Pushkin.
4. Identify and write about key issues in Nabokov's life and works in relation to Russian literature.

Required Texts

1. *Mary* (1926, English 1970) (New York Knopf/Vintage, 1989) 978-0-679-72620-3, \$15
2. *The Defense* (1929, English 1964) (New York Knopf/Vintage, 1990) 978-0-679-72722-4, \$15
3. *Glory* (1932, English 1971) (New York Knopf/Vintage, 1991) 978-0-679-72724-8, \$15
4. *The Gift* (1938, 1952, English 1963) (New York Knopf/Vintage, (1991) 978-0-679-72725-5, \$16
5. *Speak, Memory* (1951, 1966, Russian 1954) (New York Knopf/Vintage, 1989). 978-0-679-72339-4, \$16
6. *The Annotated Lolita* (1955, Russian 1967, 1976) (New York Knopf/Vintage, 1991) 978-0-679-72729-3, \$21
7. *Pale Fire* (1962, Russian 1983) (New York Knopf/Vintage, 1989) 978-0-679-72342-4, \$15
8. *Pnin* (1957, Russian 1983) (New York Knopf/Vintage, 1989) 978-0-679-72341-7, \$14

Recommended Translations of Russian Literature by Nabokov

Mikhail Lermontov (1840), *A Hero of Our Time* (1842), translated 1958.

The Song of Igor's Campaign (13th century), translated 1961.

Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837), *Eugene Onegin* (1824-31), translated 1964.

Recommended Books about Nabokov

Vladimir Alexandrov, *Nabokov's Otherworld*, 1991

Brian Boyd, *Vladimir Nabokov: The Russian Years*, 1990

Brian Boyd, *Vladimir Nabokov: The American Years*, 1991

Brian Boyd, *Nabokov's Pale Fire*, 1999

Brian Boyd and Robert Michael Pyle, ed., *Nabokov's Butterflies: Unpublished and Uncollected Writings*, with new translations from the Russian by Dmitri Nabokov, 2000.

Julian W. Connolly, *Nabokov and His Fiction: New Perspectives*, 1999

D. Barton Johnson, *Worlds in Regression: Some Novels of Nabokov*, 1985

Stacy Schiff, *Véra (Mrs. Vladimir Nabokov)*, 1999

Gavriel Shapiro, *Nabokov at Cornell*, 2003

Maxim D. Shroyer, *The World of Nabokov's Stories*, 1999

Michael Wood, *The Magician's Doubts: Nabokov and the Risks of Fiction*, 1995

Websites

<http://www.libraries.psu.edu/nabokov/> is the official website of the Vladimir Nabokov Society. Maintained at Penn State, it contains list of all the places (names of hotels, street addresses, etc.) where Nabokov lived with some photos, a chronology of his life, a bibliography of his work, of works about his works, and of films based on his works, some literary critical articles, and information about the two main journals *The Nabokovian* and *Nabokov Studies*.

<http://www.keystogift.com/> is a concordance to *The Gift*.

Assignments (% of final grade)

This course includes three papers. All papers can be revised for a better grade and I will average the grades. Late papers will not be accepted. Please number pages and include the word count. Papers can be creative or traditional expository prose, but whatever format and voice you choose, there must be an argument. Please submit all papers to me by email, by midnight of the due date.

1. Write a short response paper (500 words, about 2 pages) comparing Nabokov's and Tolstoy's ideas about art. What are your views on art? Do you share either of their views? Due Tuesday, September 2. (20%)

- Leo Tolstoy, *What is Art?* 1896, 50-53.
- Vladimir Nabokov, "L'envoi," *Lectures on Literature* (1950s), 181-82.

2. Paper on *The Gift* (1,250 words, about 5 pages), due Monday, October 6 (30%)

3. One paper (1,750 words, about 7 pages) on either *Lolita* or *Pale Fire*. The paper on *Lolita* can be a film review, comparing the novel and the 2 films. Please submit a one-paragraph abstract of your paper to me before you begin writing. The paper is due Monday after we finish the novel, either Monday, November 10 (revisions due November 17) or Monday November 24 (revisions due December 1) (40%)

4. Class participation (10%). Please come to class prepared **with your book**, prepared to participate in reading and discussion. Class participation includes listening carefully to your classmates.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory and worth half your participation grade (5%). Let me know ahead of time if you cannot come to class for health reasons. After 3 unexcused absences, your grade for the course will drop a half grade, and a half grade for each additional absence. If you miss 8 classes (one month), you will have missed 25% of the course and I can no longer give you a grade, which means you will need to drop the course or I will need to fail you. You can keep track of your grades and number of classes missed on Blackboard in your grade center.

If you require accommodations on assignments for a disability, university-sanctioned event, or religious holiday, you must let me know in advance. See the links below for the accommodations the university provides and that this class follows:

- Religious accommodations: <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-04.html>
- University-sanctioned activities: <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-02.html>

Readings BB (on Blackboard)

1R 8/21 Introduction: Which Nabokov?

- 2T 8/26 *Speak, Memory*, Foreword, Chapters 1-3 (9-77)
 • Vladimir Nabokov, “L’envoi,” *Lectures on Literature* (1950s), 181-82. BB

Wednesday, 8/27 Drop/Add ends

- R 8/28 Chapters 4-7 (78-152)
 • Leo Tolstoy, *What is Art?* 1896, 50-53. BB

- 3T 9/2 Chapters 8-11 (153-227)
 • Paper 1 due Tuesday

- R 9/4 Chapters 12-15, Index (228-316)

- 4T 9/9 *Mary*, Epigraph, Introduction, Chapters 1-17 (xi-114)

Wednesday, 9/10 Swap/Late Add ends

- R 9/11 *The Gift*, Foreword, Chapter 1 (3-76)

- 5T 9/16 *Lolita*, Adrian Lyne (1997, 137 min.)

- R 9/18 *The Gift*, Chapter 2 (77-145)

- 6T 9/23 *The Gift*, Chapter 3 (146-211)

- R 9/25 *The Gift*, Chapter 4 (212-300)

- 7T 9/30 *The Gift*, Chapter 5 (301-66)

- R 10/2 *The Defense*; Chapters 1-5 (1-82)
The Luzhin Defense, Marleen Gorris (2000, 112 min.)

- 8T 10/7 *The Defense*, Chapters 6-10 (83-168)
 Paper 2 due Monday 10/6

- R 10/9 *The Defense*, Chapters 11-14 (169-256)

- 9T 10/14 No class – Fall Break

- R 10/16 *Glory*, Foreword, Chapters 1-16 (1-69)

- 10T 10/21 *Glory*, Chapters 17-32 (69-140)

- R 10/23 *Glory*, Chapters 33-48 (140-205)

- 11T 10/28 *Lolita*, “In Place of Note on the Text,” Foreword, Part 1, Chapters 1-17 (1-74)

R 10/30 *Lolita*, Chapters 18-33 (74-142)

12T 11/4 *Lolita*, Part 2, Chapters 1-19 (145-229)

Wednesday, 11/5 Course Withdrawal deadline

R 11/6 *Lolita*, Part 2, Chapters 20-36 (229-309), On a Book Entitled *Lolita* (311-17)
Lolita: The Movie

- *Lolita*, Stanley Kubrick (1962, 152 min.)
- Nabokov's screenplay

13T 11/11 No class – Veteran's Day

- Paper 3 due Monday 11/10

R 11/13 *Pale Fire*, epigraph, Foreword, Pale Fire, a Poem in Four Cantos (7-69)

14T 11/18 *Pale Fire*, Commentary, lines 1-171 (73-154)

R 11/20 *Pale Fire*, Commentary, lines 172-549 (154-227)

15T 11/25 *Pale Fire*, Commentary, lines 550-1000 (227-301), Index (305-15)
Paper 3 due Monday

R 11/27 No class - Thanksgiving

16T 12/2 *Pnin*, Chapters 1-4 (7-110)

- Nabokov's lectures on and translations of Russian literature

R 12/4 *Pnin*, Chapters 5-7 (111-191)Coda: "The Visit to the Museum" (Paris, 1939)
(277-86)

Disability Accommodations: Qualified students with disabilities who will require disability accommodations in this class are encouraged to make their requests to me at the beginning of the semester either during office hours or by appointment. **Note:** Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required. Disability information is confidential.

Establishing Eligibility for Disability Accommodations: Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class, but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), should contact DRC immediately. Their office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: 480-965-1234 (V), 480-965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc. Their hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. If you have any questions, please contact P.F. Lengel or Jenny Smith at 965-6506.

Plagiarism

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. Here are some ASU guidelines that you will have covered or will cover in ASU101:

https://provost.asu.edu/index.php?q=academicintegrity/students#avoid_plagiarism. We will review proper ways to acknowledge ideas and quotations by others before you write your first paper. Papers for this course do NOT require research, just that you read the texts carefully, think about how they work and what that means, and articulate YOUR ideas clearly.

Guidelines for Papers

Papers must be double-spaced and responsive to all aspects of the assignment, including length (provide a word count on the first page), and prepared according to the Modern Language Association or *Chicago Manual of Style*. *Make sure you document every reference--in quotation or paraphrase--* using the in-text format: “blah blah blah” (304). Feel free to write in the first person. Most important, a paper is an argument: no argument, no paper. Support your thesis with evidence. Revised papers should be more than a few changes, a word here or there and a sentence more or less, but should engage with my comments. **Please read the handouts on writing and editing on BB.**

Paper grades

An “A” paper demonstrates that the writer has not only mastered the concepts of the course, but also has applied them in an imaginative and incisive way. The paper shows a command of language that allows the writer to express worthwhile ideas or perceptions clearly, effectively, in detail and with virtually no mechanical errors. There is grace to the sentence structure, which is clear and varied throughout. The paper consistently includes adequate documentation. The “A” grade is reserved for exceptional papers; “A-” papers tend to be exceptional in part but marred by one or two problems.

A “B” paper demonstrates that the writer has understood the concepts of the course, and has applied them with some originality. The paper shows the writer can organize a coherent essay with few mechanical errors. The thesis statement is clear and is responsive to the assigned topic. It is supported with strong, logical argumentation and use of evidence. The paper for the most part includes adequate documentation.

A “C” paper demonstrates that the writer has understood most of the concepts of the course, but needs to pay more attention to detail in reading or writing. Thesis statement and topic sentences are weak, and documentation is erratic.

A “D” paper demonstrates that the writer has only a minimal understanding of the concepts of the course. Significant gaps in the writer's comprehension indicate the need for more study. Moreover, the writer's basic compositional skills are below satisfactory for university work. Documentation is unsatisfactory.

An “F” paper demonstrates that the writer has little, if any, understanding of the concepts of the course. Because of the writer's lack of skill or concern, the work includes gross errors as well as a conspicuous lack of content. Documentation is negligible. The paper may also fail to address parts of the assignment.

A paper may combine different levels of work. In that case, the grade will depend on the paper's overall demonstration of knowledge of the material and of writing skills.

Emails

You should regard all writing for this class as professional writing, including your emails to me. You can address me as “Dear Professor Hoogenboom,” and you should put your name at the end. My emails to you will have this format too.