

Forms of the Essay

Professor Sonja Livingston

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Thursdays, 5:30-8:30

Patterson 317

This class focuses on the literary essay in both classic and contemporary forms. We'll examine traditional examples of American essays as well as more recent and/or experimental models, including the brief essay, the video essay, and the lyric essay as a means to explore and discuss the limitations and opportunities of the essay. Attention will be paid to form, craft, voice, style and content, with the question—*what makes this literature?*—applied to all we read and write.

The class engages advanced writing students in the critical study of literary nonfiction with an emphasis on contemporary practice and new developments in the genre. Through assigned readings, student writing and presentations, we'll explore the unique qualities of the essay as a literary form.

Required Texts:

Best American Essays of Century

Edited by Joyce Carol Oates, Houghton Mifflin

ISBN: 9780618155873

***Brief Encounters: A Collection of Contemporary Nonfiction**

Edited by Judith Kitchen & Dinah Lenney

ISBN: 978-0-393-35099-9

(*forthcoming 11/15—will be used in late November)

The Next American Essay

Edited by John D'Agata

ISBN: 1555973752