

**First Year Seminar**  
**GNEED 1300-17; Fall 2010**  
**Eccentrics and Misfits in the Mystery Novel**  
**and What They Tell Us About Ourselves and Our Society**  
**Dr. Frank Walmsley**

Office: Moody 408H  
x7322  
fwalmsle@trinity.edu  
Office Hours: Tues, Wed. 1:00 – 4:00 pm; others by appointment

Peer Tutor: Cristina Hamme  
chamme@trinity.edu  
Office Hours: Tues, Thurs 7:30 pm

The books to be read will be:

1. *Dreaming of the Bones* by Deborah Crombie
2. *Snakeskin Shamisen* by Naomi Hirahara
3. *The Big Over Easy* by Jasper Fforde
4. *Three Bags Full* by Leonie Swann
5. *The Water Room* by Christopher Fowler

The Trinity Bookstore has been asked to stock these books. Used copies may be available at Amazon.com.

The purposes of First Year Seminar are:

- To improve communication, both written and verbal
- To develop critical thinking skills
- To learn research skills
- To evaluate materials
- To be respectful of divergent opinions

This class will fulfill these purposes through three types of written papers, discussion of the materials read in the assigned books, and in the research papers. The authors of the books use eccentric detectives and characters to raise issues about ourselves and our society. The personalities of the characters in the books will be discussed including their relevance to the story which leads to seeing if the story is well crafted. In addition we will view videos of other eccentric detectives: Sherlock Holmes, Adrian Monk, and Hercule Poirot.

## **Grading**

Class participation: 30%. First paper: 5%. Second paper: 5%. Third paper: 15%. Fourth paper: 5%. Fifth paper: 15%. Last paper: 25%. Attendance at all class sessions is mandatory.

**Class Participation.** Students are expected to come to each class prepared having read the material carefully, fully, and with thought. Questions raised during the reading should be researched. This will enable everyone to participate in the discussion of the topics for the day. Since class participation is a significant part of the course grade, each student is expected to participate in the discussion by raising questions and by responding to issues. If a topic is controversial, listen carefully, respond politely and recognize that the others may have valid points embedded in their opinions and recognize that maybe you have some invalid points in yours. We are learning together. The nature of the class requires all of this. Accordingly, each unexcused absence beyond two (that is, the equivalent of one full week) will result in the lowering of the course grade by one unit (e.g., from A- to B+). Dr. Walmsley will decide whether an absence is excused or not.

**Papers.** All papers must be written in grammatically correct English. The writing must be clearly understood. For help with these points, consult Dr. Walmsley, Cristina (the Peer Tutor), a writing style guide, or the Writing Center in the library. Where appropriate, references must be cited completely. References are where specific information is obtained. I believe that general bibliographic listings are not appropriate in this course because they are too vague; citations must be specific. The format for references should be MLA style. All papers must be your own original work. Know what plagiarism and theft of intellectual property are and review Trinity University's rules on academic integrity. All students fall under the University Honor Code and are required to pledge all written work submitted for a grade: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this work." and their signature. The pledge may be abbreviated "pledged" with a signature. For work submitted electronically, including "Pledged" on page one or a separate email indicating the paper and the pledge will be sufficient. There is no group work in this class. Consultation with the professor and/or the peer tutor can be invaluable.

## **Written Papers**

All papers will be typed with 1" margins on all sides in either Times New Roman or Arial font at 10, 11, or 12 point. These are to be turned in via email to both Dr. Walmsley and to Cristina (the Peer Tutor) or sent to TLEARN (upload an assignment) in either MSWord or Adobe Acrobat format. Drafts of papers in advance of the due date are strongly encouraged and will be evaluated promptly.

**First Paper:** This will be a discussion of an assigned topic from "Dreaming of the Bones". It is to be one page single spaced. You will need to adjust your discussion to fit

this space requirement. This paper is due by 10 pm the day before discussion of the book begins.

Second Paper: This is to be a list of at least 15 items suitable for discussion based on your reading of the "Snakeskin" book. This paper is due by 10 pm the day before discussion of the book begins.

Third Paper: This will be a research paper on a topic from "The Big Over Easy" book. A list of topics is part of this syllabus. A topic must be chosen no later than September 16 – first come, first choice. Email your first and second choices to Dr. Walmsley via TLearn. The topics are listed in the order in which they will be discussed. The paper is to be 5 to 7 pages long double spaced. The paper should be appropriately referenced and the style should be that of a formal report. The topics are broad so it is necessary for you to choose an aspect of the topic for research and relate the topic to its inclusion in the book. For each topic, the student will lead a 15 to 20 minute discussion about the topic after a brief introduction. The paper is due by noon the day before the topic is discussed.

Fourth Paper: Like the second paper, this is to be a list of at least 15 items suitable for discussion based on the "Three Bags Full" book. This paper is due by 10 pm the day before discussion of the book begins.

Fifth Paper: This will be a research paper on a topic from "The Water Room" book. A list of topics is part of this syllabus. A topic must be chosen no later than October 21 – first come, first choice. Email your first and second choices to Dr. Walmsley via TLearn. The topics are listed in the order in which they will be discussed. The paper is to be 5 to 7 pages long double spaced. The paper should be appropriately referenced and the style should be that of a formal report. The topics are broad so it is necessary for you to choose an aspect of the topic for research and relate the topic to its inclusion in the book. For each topic, the student will lead a 15 to 20 minute discussion about the topic after a brief introduction. The paper is due by noon the day before the topic is discussed..

Sixth Paper: A short mystery novel including an eccentric detective or other character. It is to be at least 20 pages long double spaced. An outline is due as given on the schedule and the final paper is due as given on the class-by-class table in the syllabus. Writing styles for mystery novels can vary depending on the story and on the author – choose what fits best. The paper is due by 11:59 pm on December 11, 2010.

## Class by Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Date	Topic
R 8/26	Introductions	T 10/19	Big #9, #10
T 8/31	Intro to Mystery Novels	R 10/21	Big #11, #12
R 9/2	Sherlock Holmes	T 10/26	Big #13, #14
T 9/7	Mr. Monk	R 10/28	Three Bags
R 9/9	Why?; Eccentrics	T 11/2	Three Bags (cont.)
T 9/14	Hercule Poirot	R 11/4	Water #1, #2
R 9/16	Dreaming of the Bones	T 11/9	Water #3, #4
T 9/21	Dreaming (cont.)	R 11/11	Water #5, #6
R 9/23	Snakeskin	T 11/16	Novel Writing
T 9/28	Snakeskin (cont.)	R 11/18	Water #7, #8
R 9/30	Big #1, #2	T 11/23	Water #9, #10
T 10/5	TBA	R 11/25	Thanksgiving
R 10/7	Big #3, #4	T 11/30	Water #11, #12 Novel Outline due
T 10/12	Big #5, #6	R 12/2	Water #13, #14
R 10/14	Big #7, #8	T 12/7	Wrap Up Course Evaluation

## GNED 1300 Fall 2010 Discussion Topics

### Jasper Fforde

- JF1. Rearing children (pp 17, 29; 23)
- JF2. Peer jury system (3 pigs; p 30)
- JF3. The elderly (Mrs. Hubbard)
- JF4. Diet and health (Jack Spratt)
- JF5. Anthropomorphism (p 64)
- JF6. Nouveau riche (Laura Dumpty; pp 64-69)
- JF7. Former boyfriends and former girlfriends (ch 5 & 7)
- JF8. Simplified English language: spelling (p 77)
- JF9. Sacred objects (ch 11)
- JF10. Treatment of mentally ill (ch 12)
- JF11. Developing products to put oneself out of business (ch 18)
- JF12. Disloyalty to employer for purposes of advancement (pp 193-197)
- JF13. Modern architecture (ch 28)
- JF14. Prejudice (p 256)
- JF15. Direction of scientific research (p 297)
- JF16. Biological (business) warfare (328-329)
- JF17. Embellished reporting (pp 358-359)
- JF18. Fear of death (pp 258-259; 372-373)

## **Christopher Fowler**

- CF1. Clash between commerce and culture (pp 12-13)
- CF2. Differences between generations (p 14)
- CF3. Bribes (pp 41-46)
- CF4. Being distinctively British (p 50)
- CF5. Agoraphobia (p 51-53)
- CF6. Answers to life's mysteries (pp 62-63)
- CF7. Nature of academic persons (pp 73-74)
- CF8. Nature of children (pp 95-96)
- CF9. Growing old (pp 33-34, 37, 96)
- CF10. Accept what you can't change (p 115)
- CF11. Reliability of witnesses (pp 151-152)
- CF12. Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee (pp 158-160)
- CF13. Cleaning polluted rivers (ch 27)
- CF14. "Where we live helps set the level of our happiness and comfort" (p 215)
- CF15. "Good people who are used to listening" (p 221)
- CF16. London's Fleet River (p 221)
- CF17. Survival (such as a death in the family) (p 232)
- CF18. Modern habits (pp 251-252)