

Summer Semester 1998

**EDUC 341 - 3**  
**Literacy, Education and Culture****D01.00**

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ibanezc@sfu.ca**PREREQUISITE**

60 credit hours

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course provides an introduction to the study of literacy and illiteracy from an interdisciplinary perspective (i.e. education, history, sociology, psychology, anthropology, communication and cultural studies). We will be looking at the origins of western literacy, its implications and consequences (i.e. the preservation and transmission of memory), the types of institutions formed around it, its functions and uses. This course, then, is intended to engage you in thinking critically about what people mean by literacy, why it is thought to be important, and what is supposed to be accomplished by promoting it. It is also intended to challenge widely held assumptions: that literacy is a simple concept, that its possession is an unquestionably good thing, that people need higher levels of literacy to succeed in society, that illiteracy may be cause for poverty, criminality, immorality, accidents and disease and, correlatively, that literacy makes for a more democratic, prosperous and virtuous society.

**OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course, you should have an interdisciplinary overview and understanding of literacy, its beginnings and its development, the conditions of its use, and its impacts upon us. You will have developed an awareness of the varied functions and uses of literacy for individuals, institutions and social groups as well as awareness of the constellation of definitions traditionally and currently given to literacy.

**REQUIREMENTS**

- Course logbook (20%)
- Participation, attendance and e-mail (20%)
- Three 5 page essays (10% each).
- A final literacy project (30%).

**REQUIRED TEXT**

Kintgen, Eugene, Barry M. Kroll. & Mike Rose (Eds.) (1988) Perspectives on Literacy Southern Illinois University Press.

Selected essays will be placed in a course box in the Centre for Educational Technology (CET).

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

Freire, Paulo & Donaldo Macedo. (1987) Literacy: Reading the word and the world. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc.

Olson, David R., Nancy Torrance & Angela Hildyard (1985) Literacy, language, and learning: The nature and consequences of reading and writing. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

de Castell, Suzanne, Allan Luke & Kieran Egan. (1986) Literacy, society, and schooling. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Manguel, Alberto. (1996) The History of Reading. Toronto: A.A. Knopf.