

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY**

**EDUCATION 341-3**

**LITERACY, EDUCATION AND CULTURE**

Regular Summer Semester, 1991  
(May 6 - August 2)  
Mondays, 5:30 - 8:20 p.m.  
Location: MPX 7600F

Instructor: Michael Hoechsmann  
Office: MPX 9501a

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**PREREQUISITE:** 60 credit hours.

**OVERVIEW**

In the wake of the International Year of Literacy (1990), it might be useful to consider what literacy is, how it is practised and to what ends. Like the air we breathe, literacy seems to be so obviously a social 'good,' that it appears conceptually invisible. For the individual, literacy is seen as a requisite to social advancement and personal enlightenment; for the society at large, literacy is said to be necessary for economic take-off, social management, and the intergenerational transmission of 'culture'.

This course provides an introduction to the study of literacy from an interdisciplinary perspective. We shall explore the history of literacy in order to identify, analyze, and justify or criticize the aesthetic, communicative, cognitive and socially-transformative consequences commonly attributed to literacy. In addition, we will spend a small portion of each class focussing on our own (critical, scholastic) literacy.

**PURPOSE**

To provide the background and the context to ask some serious questions of current literacy 'crises'.

**EVALUATION**

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| Presentation and written summary of one article | 20% |
| In-class writing assignments                    | 10% |
| Mid-term take-home exam                         | 20% |
| Final paper                                     | 40% |
| Preparation & Participation                     | 10% |

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Broken Words. (1987). Southam News.

Perspectives on Literacy. Eds. E. Kintgen, B. Kroll, M. Rose. (1988). Southern Illinois University Press.

**RECOMMENDED TEXT**

Barthes, R. (1972). Mythologies (trans. Annette Lavers). Hill & Wang.

Additional material available from instructor.