



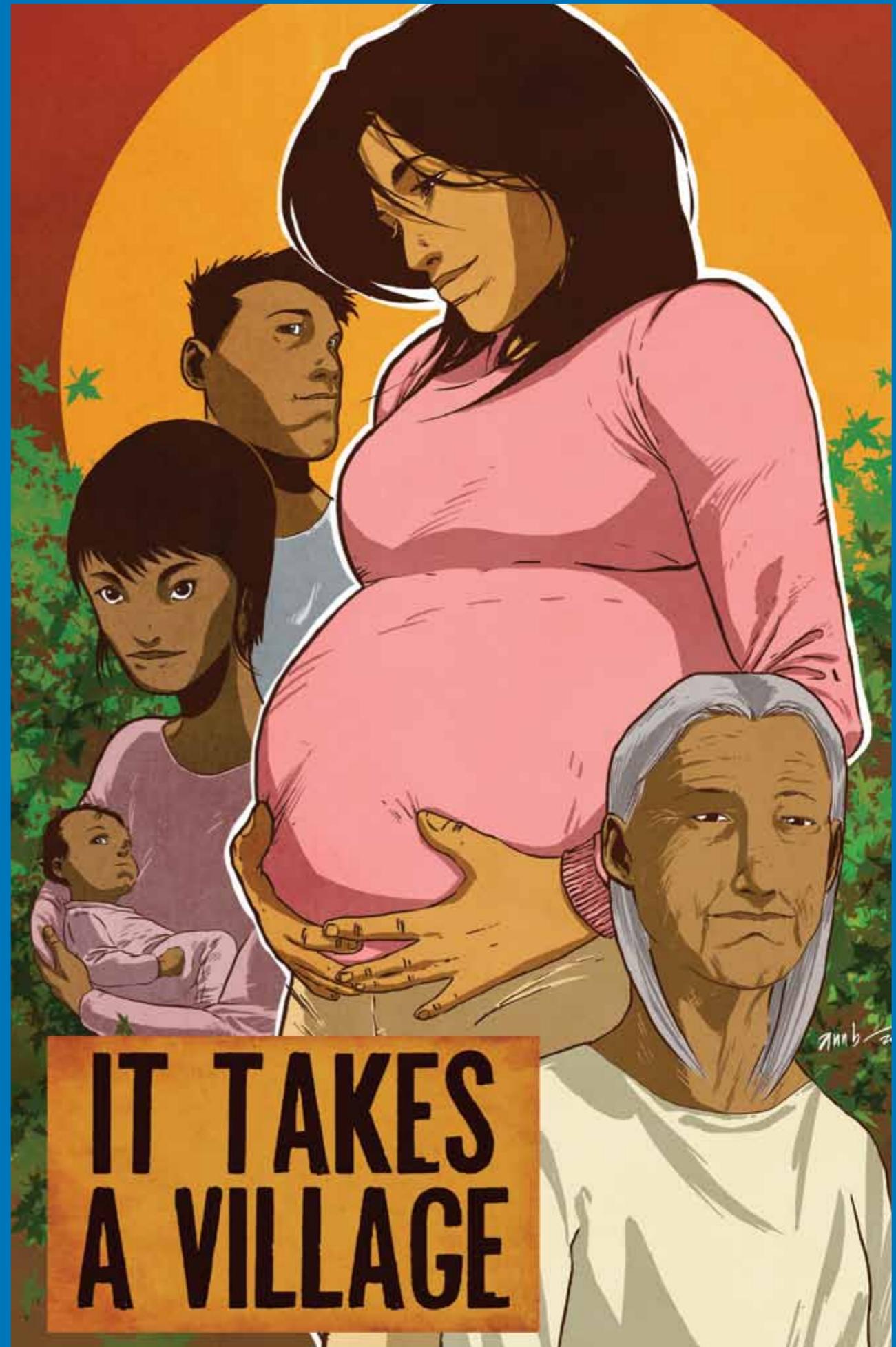
Prof. Jon McKenzie

ENGL 1168 First-Year Seminar Spring 2025

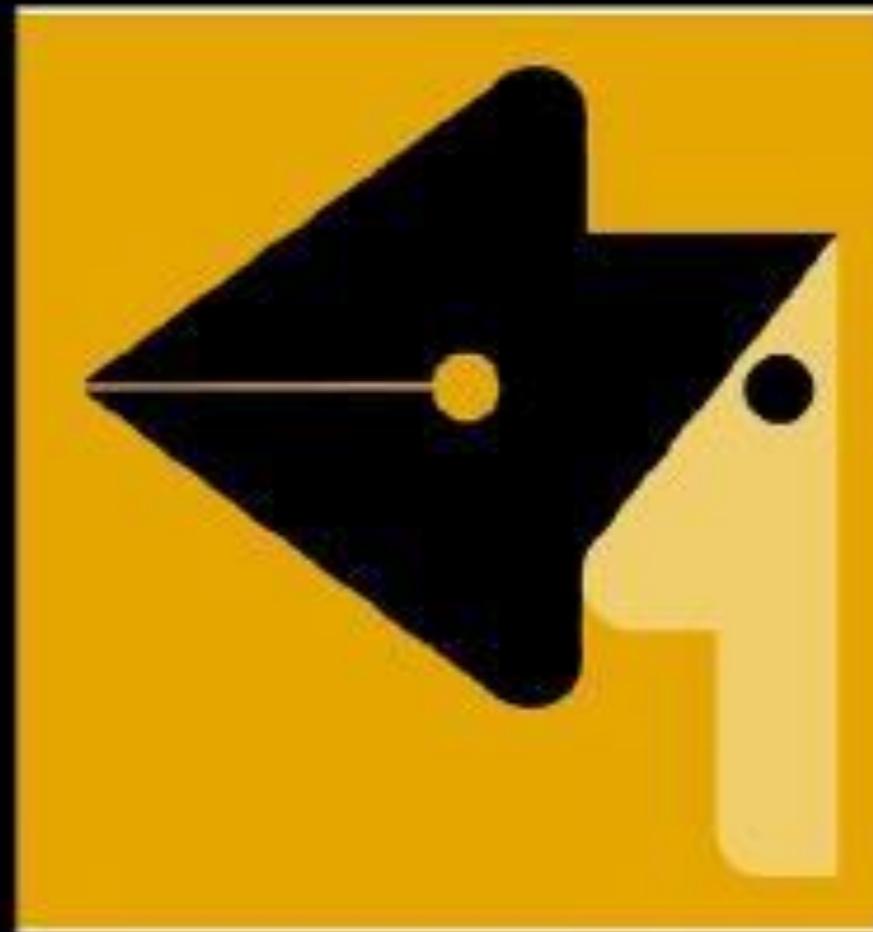
Section 110 • TuTh 1:25-2:40 • 110 Google folders

Section 111 • TuTh 2:55-4:10 • 111 Google folders

Comics, Posters, PAR&D Exhibition



Thinking Through Writing



Susan R. Horton

What is an essay? ONE LIST OF TRAITS

1. Addresses reader in matter of fact, **straight-forward tone and style**
2. Carefully **builds an analysis**, pt by pt.: using propositions, qualifiers, assertions re: relationship, exemplifications, and demonstrations of truth
3. **Fierce commitment to being clear and simple** and avoid ambiguous **language** (unlike creative writing's rich ambiguity)
4. Essayist is **creative: uses imagination** to find just right word, metaphor, order, etc. to convey ideas/thinking clearly
5. Mead **assumes audience doesn't know** or share specialized lang and leads them with transitions, summaries, clarifications, etc
6. Essays **create problems and solutions where none were before**: shuttle between facts and speculations, and old and new ways of seeing: dis-course is the way the mind struggles with what's around it: midway btw desire to know and full comprehension
7. Skill of moving back and forth **earns you right to be heard**: writing as ticket to world

What is an essay? ANOTHER LIST OF TRAITS

1. **Makes new connection and identifies source, nature, and function** of Donald Duck's appeal
2. **Makes us see old in new way: reevaluates:** DD not just another cartoon figure,
Bruner: essay like **"thought experiment"** or **"possible world"**:
rearrange familiar-->novelty
3. Bruner: good essay produces **"effective surprise"** : once recognized, seem obvious!
4. Focus on small thing to **go deep and discover new way of seeing** it
5. **Diff kinds of surprise and value:** **predicative value** (devise formula), **formal value** (order facts to reveal relationship), **metaphoric value** (connect diff experiences thru image or symbol)
6. Koestler: artists treat facts as stimuli for imagination; sci uses imagination to coordinate facts : **Essayist combines both fact and imagination:** uses facts, uses imagination to both coordinate facts and venture metaphors clarifying rel of facts

What is an essay?

Engl 1168 Project 1

Descriptive essay

Imagine you have been asked to help write a new edition of *Thinking Through Writing* that includes information comics and other forms of transmedia knowledge. Write a 500-word (2-page) descriptive analysis of *It Takes a Village* modeled on Horton's description of sample texts found in Chapter 2 of *Thinking Through Writing*. This means you'll need to reread both texts, using each to "read the other" in order to compose your text. Take 1-4pg notes of key concepts: not comprehensive but most useful. Photograph and uploaded to Proj 1 notebook folde.

Broadly speaking, the content of your text will be *It Takes a Village*, while the form comes from *Thinking Through Writing*. Thus your essay should have an *opening paragraph*, *numbered paragraphs*, and a *concluding paragraph*, all of which describe the info comic and evaluate it in terms of the essay. Focus on Horton's paragraph structure, sentences, and writing style and try to emulate them.

Note the *thinking* that Horton does, as you must do something similar: she argues that each text is a different genre of writing and proceeds to break her analysis up by describing different features or attributes. What else does she do?

While you will be focusing on the "what" of *It Takes a Village*, also consider its "why" or "so what" and, more generally, the function and importance of the info comics genre. Why should anyone care about the genre and this particular example? Decide how this discussion will inform and structure your text.

Title all texts: we will focus on this important writing function.

TITLE ALL PDF FILES: <First Last Name>-<Project #>.pdf eg: Jan Gris-Project 1.pdf

Draft due in Google folder Thurs, 1/29 in class

Final due in Google folder Tues, 2/3 in class

Homework

- **Read and discuss Hopkins, et al.**

It Takes a Village, Part 2 and Part 3.

- **Start outlining Proj 1.**

What is an essay?