

Tick Tock—What's the Plot?

Lois Harrod

Course Information

Wednesdays from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. for eight weeks beginning September 24 through November 19 (no meeting 10/1).

In-Person - Discussion - Max 18

Course Description

"Tick-tock" is Frank Kermode's famous "model of what we call plot, an organization that humanizes time by giving it form." Tick—it begins. Tock—it ends. In this literature-discussion course on steroids, we will read four books which plot and humanize time as we move into our 70's, 80's and 90's: 1. Gabriel Garcia Marquez's **Love in a Time of Cholera** in which lovers are reunited after 50 years, 9 months and 4 days; 2. Leonora Carrington's surreal **The Hearing Trumpet** in which the hard-of-hearing nonagenarian Marian Leatherby restores the Holy Grail; 3. Joseph Heller's **Portrait of an Artist as an Old Man** in which Eugene Pota tries to write a novel that will restore his fame; and 4. Margaret Atwood's **Old Babes in the Wood**, a collection of short stories about wise and wily widows.

TENTATIVE SYLLBUS

Date	Assignment	Themes
October 1	Old Babes in the Woods, pages 3-125 with emphasis on the Tig & Nell stories	Time and Form: Time and memory, attempts to forestall time, aging and death, relationships of aging partners, mothers, writers, folk tales, aging.
October 8	Portrait of an Artist as an Old Man	Time and what we leave behind—art and aging; the desire for permanence; the failure of literature; the use and the re-use of old stories and tropes.
October 15	Portrait of an Artist as an Old Man	Time and what we leave behind—art and aging; the desire for permanence; the failure of literature; the use and the re-use of old stories and tropes.
October 22	Love in the Time of Cholera	Time and its effects on love, sex, marriage—the journey
October 29	Love in the Time of Cholera	Time and its effects on love, sex, marriage—the journey
November 5	The Hearing Trumpet	Time and its effects on the mind; finding the Holy Grail in the Strangeness of the Universe
November 12	The Hearing Trumpet	Time and its effects on the mind; finding the Holy Grail in the Strangeness of the Universe
November 19	Old Babes in the Woods, pages 127-with emphasis on the Nell & Tig stories	Time. Love and Death after a long marriage. Solitude and Loneliness. Fragments of the past. Attempts to give time and death meaning.