DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
FALL 2012 (2013)

Welcome to the Department of English. For fall semester 2012 we offer a rich selection of introductory and upper-division courses in English and American literature and culture, as well as Creative Writing workshops. Please feel free to talk to Lawrence Green (director of undergraduate studies), Rebecca Woods (departmental staff adviser), or other English faculty to help you select the menu of courses that is right for you.

All Department of English courses are “R” courses, except for the following “D” courses: ENGL 303, 304, 407, & 490. A Department stamp is not required for “R” course registration prior to the beginning of the semester, but is required for “D” course registration. On the first day of classes all courses will be closed—admission is granted only by the instructor’s signature and the Department stamp (available in Taper 404). You must then register in person at the Registration office.

Departmental clearance is required for all “D” class courses.

Be sure to check class numbers (e.g., 32734R) and class hours against the official Fall 2012 Schedule of Classes at www.usc.edu/academics/classes.

All students who want to major, double-major, or minor in English must take three lower-division courses in the 200 range, of which AT LEAST TWO must be from the 261, 262, 263 sequence. The third course may be from that sequence, OR from 290, 298, or 299.

105 (Creative Writing for Non-Majors) 32820R 2-4:20 M TBA
Introductory workshop in writing poetry, short fiction and nonfiction for love of the written and spoken word. Not for English major or English (Creative Writing) major credit.

105 (Creative Writing for Non-Majors) 32821R 2-4:20 T Bendall
In this introductory course we will practice writing and examine trends in three genres: non-fiction, poetry, and fiction. Students will complete written work in all of these genres. The work will be discussed in a workshop environment in which lively and constructive participation is expected. We will also read and discuss a variety of work by writers from the required texts. Revisions, reading assignments, written critiques, and a final portfolio are required.

105 (Creative Writing for Non-Majors) 32822R 2-4:20 F TBA
Introductory workshop in writing poetry, short fiction and nonfiction for love of the written and spoken word. Not for English major or English (Creative Writing) major credit.

Visit our website and contact us:
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Rebecca Woods, Staff Adviser, rwoods@usc.edu
http://www.usc.edu/english
Taper Hall of Humanities (THH) Room 404
213-740-2808
The course will cover a selection of English authors from medieval to the 18th century. We will include selections from all genres (narrative, lyric, drama), and all levels of seriousness. Readings will include selections from Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, Shakespeare’s *King Lear*, Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Pope’s “Rape of the Lock”, and a healthy dose of lyric poetry by Shakespeare and John Donne. Basic requirements: three short papers, two major quizzes, participation in class discussion.

English 261 is an introductory course that will familiarize students with medieval and renaissance literature. The course will follow the development of English poetry, drama and prose, and it will also examine the translation of the Bible into English during the Reformation. In addition to the study of aesthetic, the course will employ an examination of the various social, cultural, and political movements that influenced literature during the key centuries between the Norman Conquest and the English Civil War. Authors will include Marie De France, Chaucer, Spenser, More, Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Milton. Texts will include the *Norton Anthology of English Literature* vol. A (edition to be announced), plus handouts. There will be five papers, all 5-7 pages in length.

English 261 is a survey of English Literature. It is an introduction. It promises to build on and extend the nodding acquaintance that most readers have with English writers of the past. As an introductory course, English 261 is wedded to breadth of study not depth. The course intends to move from the Anglo-Saxons to the Romantics, introducing students to a variety of texts and authors, periods and genres, and the many questions writers and texts raise about literature and its place in the world. We will even look at some of the answers they gave. The course’s goals are many. For instance, there is the sheer pleasure of the texts; secondly, there is the desire to prepare a foundation for further studies in literature and art; and finally there is the simple celebration of literature’s challenge to doxa and all the uninformed opinions that rule and regulate our everyday.

The title for this course comes from the Romantic poet John Keats and his notion of “negative capability”—how we live with uncertainty, how we move forward from it. That problem—or reality—is something that will come up for us throughout the term in various ways.

Can we cover two hundred years of British culture in fifteen weeks? Yes, especially if students take an active role in researching and presenting ideas and topics that help contextualize what we’re reading and thinking and talking about. This course traces various literary movements and historical and social contexts for British literature since 1800. That means we’ll be reading Romantic poetry and talking about the role of the poet in society; Victorian poetry and fiction and thinking about the rise of the middle class, anxieties about gender, family, and modern science and technology; turn of the century texts dealing with the transition into a more urban and internationalized world and the demise of the British empire; poetry, fiction, and film about the devastation of World War I and II and the rise of modernism, feminism, and postmodernism, and closing with texts of the last twenty-five or so years, including music, film, and other aspects of British popular and literary culture.

The material in this class helps provide a solid foundation for further exploration of literature and culture, and it will definitely give students a real understanding of the development of British culture and society in the modern era. We will read novels by Dickens, Conrad, Woolf, and others, and a reasonable amount of prose, poetry, and drama to give us a strong sense of the literature and culture of this era.

Students will do one research project/presentation and will write two critical essays.

"Being in Uncertainties": Revolution/Reaction/Resistance in English Literature since 1800

See description above for ENGL 262, Freeman

263 (American Literature) 32630R 10-11:50 MW Gordon

Designed for majors, this class introduces students to key figures, periods, texts, and issues in American literature, history, and culture. Students will engage a range of genres (including poetry, short story, the novel, film, political essay, and autobiography) to develop a critical understanding of some of the aesthetic, cultural, social, and political concerns taken up by many American writers. While developing a working knowledge of important literary forms, strategies, and movements, we will explore the politics and processes of canon formation and literary criticism. As a group, we also will investigate important elements and strategies of academic writing and literary analysis, including argumentation, close reading, organization, and of course, revision. Some central themes and questions will help us explore literary approaches to the conflicts and contradictions embodied in the so-called “American Experience.” Key themes and categories of analysis will include, but are not limited to: democracy and freedom, violence and self-expression, dissent and repression, home and (im)migration, dreams and creativity, labor and power, justice and the ethics of Americanization. Authors will range from Frederick Douglass to Margaret Fuller, Kurt Vonnegut, and Gloria Anzaldúa.

263 (American Literature) 32637R 12:30-1:45 TTH Gustafson

This course seeks to help students read with insight and appreciation significant works of American literature, including short stories, novels, poems and essays by Fitzgerald, Hawthorne, Melville, Douglass, Whitman, Hemingway, Twain, Hurston, Hughes, Baldwin and Cisneros. Since these writers, like so many American authors, were preoccupied with the fate of America itself—or since their works can be read in part as commentaries upon the success or the failure of the country to fulfill its ideals as articulated in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution—this course emphasizes the relationship of literary works to their political and cultural contexts. The United States is a country governed by the words of the founding fathers, but American writers have constituted another republic of words—a literary tradition—that will be studied for its perspective on American ideas and their contradiction.

U.S. Literature and Multiculturalism

Although the term multiculturalism is relatively recent, dating to the debates in the 1980s and early 1990s, there is a long history of multicultural writing in the United States that constitutes one important national literary tradition. We will use multiculturalism, then, as our organizing principle, in order to understand cultural definitions of the United States in different historical periods as well as to gain a better understanding of the heritage of the recent concept of multiculturalism. Not all of the writers we will read are advocates of multicultural politics; some defend contrary views and in doing so give us a better understanding of the conflicts that culminated in the culture wars of the 1980s. Figuring out the cultural politics of the writers we are studying, both in their own times and for ours, will be one of our projects. We will read: Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Huntly; Ralph Waldo Emerson, selections from his poetry and prose; Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter; Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, Written by Himself; Henry James, Daisy Miller; Gertrude Stein, Three Lives; John Neihardt and Nick Black Elk, Black Elk Speaks; Muriel Rukeyser, The Book of the Dead; Langston Hughes, Montage of a Dream Deferred; Maxine Hong Kingston, China Men. Requirements: midterm, final, proposal for term paper (1-2 pp.), and term paper (10-15 pp.).

303 (Intro to Fiction Writing) 32645D 2-4:20 M Segal

How do you take the vision of the perfect story that you carry around in your head and get it out—incl—onto the page? This course begins to answer that question by introducing the novice writer to the craft of fiction writing, with an emphasis on the literary short story. We will also try to answer the "how do they do it?" question that plagues us when we read wonderful work. By studying a combination of student-generated stories and many published works, we will examine and learn to integrate the elements of fiction into our own work. We will also wrestle with the eternal question of how to show rather than tell what we want to say. Everyone is expected to read, write comments on, and discuss in depth each story that passes through the workshop.

303 (Intro to Fiction Writing) 32647D 2-4:20 T Wiggins

Fiction 303 is an entry level creative writing workshop with an emphasis on character-driven short stories and peer assessment. Students will be expected to complete 3 polished stories in the semester; the reading requirement averages 50 pages a week.
**Intro to Fiction Writing** 32649D 2-4:20 W Forman-Kamida

**Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Writing Short Fiction but were Afraid to Ask**

Introduction to writing fiction teaches the beginning creative writer those critical elements that are part of inventive, effective short story writing (i.e., characterization, dramatization, point of view, etc.) The class is taught in a workshop format, with students submitting stories on a weekly basis for peer review. Outside reading in a short story anthology complements the workshop process, as do weekly assignments and exercises in matters of technique. There will be additional readings from a textbook that address issues relevant to narrative craft.

**Intro to Poetry Writing** 32655D 2-4:20 M Bendall

**Blow, Break, Burn: Misbehaving with Words**

In this course we will read and study a wide range of contemporary poetry in order to become acquainted with many styles, trends, forms, and other elements of poetry. Students will write poems exploring some particular strategies. The class is run as a workshop so lively and constructive participation is necessary. Hopefully, each person will discover ways to perfect and revise his or her own work. There will always be lots of room for misbehaving in poems and other adventures in pursuit. Written critiques are required. Poets include Frank O’Hara, Elizabeth Bishop, Alberto Rios, Laura Kasischke, Pablo Neruda, Matthew Dickman, Harryette Mullen, and others.

**Intro to Poetry Writing** 32657D 2-4:20 T Irwin

**Rag and Boneshop of the Heart**: Intro to Poetry Writing

Using the classic text, *Western Wind*, as a model, we will examine the craft of poetry writing from inspiration through final revision. Form, content, metaphor, and image will be discussed, and we will carefully examine diction, syntax, rhythm, meter, and the line in the work of many modern and contemporary poets. Writers in this class will complete a number of formal exercises and will provide numerous revisions of their own work, which will become part of the final portfolio required for this course.

**Intro to Poetry Writing** 32659D 2-4:20 W Bendall

**Blow, Break, Burn: Misbehaving with Words**

See description above for ENGL 304, Bendall

**Intro to Nonfiction Writing** 32830R 2-4:20 F Dalton

**The Sly Little Prefix: Investigating the Non- in Nonfiction**

Nonfiction in its very word construction, built with that "sly little prefix"[1] *non-*, is an umbrella term that begs investigation. What exactly is nonfiction—prose that is not fiction, prose that seeks veracity? As a genre, nonfiction is engaging in part for its mutability and hybridization; some nonfiction writing styles, especially that "fourth genre" creative nonfiction, transgress boundaries between truth and invention. Yet at its core, nonfiction examines its subject with precision, analysis, aims to record or document, and aims towards persuasive discourse. This is a generative nonfiction-writing workshop in which students develop personal nonfiction writing styles while exploring historical nonfiction sub-genres such as: the lyric essay, memoir/personal essay, science/nature writing, and journalistic forms including profiles and critical reviews. Learn to identify the key components and compositional strategies of various nonfiction styles through close reading and practicing craft techniques inherent to the abovementioned forms. Fact-gather through interview and research, hone figurative language skills, and study standard literary and narrative techniques. Students will write and submit drafts of two essays (personal and reflective), a critical review, and a journalistic article of their choosing for verbal comment and written peer critiques. Students will be graded on a final portfolio of their collected prose and their workshop participation. Textbooks: Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary Creative Nonfiction, edited by Williford and Martone, and The Art of the Personal Essay, edited by Phillip Lopate.

Mary Shelley’s 1818 novel, Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus, is often considered a novel that inaugurates the genre of science fiction. How have women writers articulated or transformed the conventions of science fiction? Students in this course will read a wide range of texts by women writers, from Mary E. Bradley Lane’s Mizar: A World of Women (1881), all the way to Margaret Atwood’s Oryx and Crake (2003). We will consider the history and development of the genre of science fiction as well as forms of women’s writing. Some of the movements and modes we will investigate will include feminist utopianism, dystopianism, pulp, and New Wave in science fiction. Themes and concerns in the fiction include reproductive technologies, technologies of sex and gender, transsexuality, ecology, nationalism, race, and globalization. This course will appeal to students who are interested in the literary study and history of science fiction and fantasy, gender studies, and queer studies. We will read the texts carefully and in detail and sharpen our appreciation for and skills in analyzing literary texts as we proceed. We will read Lane, Perkins Gilman, James Tiptree Jr. (the pen name of Alice Sheldon), Angela Carter and Pamela Zoline, Ursula K. LeGuin, Octavia Butler, and Margaret Atwood.

Goals of the course:
• To understand genre and its literary effects
• To articulate the workings of genre in an individual text with persuasive reference to textual detail
• To articulate issues of authorship and identity (gender, race, sexuality, nationalism, class) in relation to particular literary texts
• To situate texts within their historical, social and cultural contexts
• To account for the relation between “popular” and “high” forms
• To become familiar with some key texts in the science fiction canon
• To become familiar with key terms in the study of science fiction, both as a literary form (“the conte philosophique,” for example, or the different movements within science fiction) and as a popular genre (“space opera,” for example)
• To articulate the workings of individual texts with persuasive reference to textual detail (such as imagery, syntax, rhetorical figures and devices)
• To deepen, refine, and sharpen skills of reading analysis
• To demonstrate your understanding in clear, well-organized, persuasively supported writing, whether in one of the essays, exams or exercises

Required Texts:

*This text is out of print, so it will not be available at the USC Bookstore. I am expecting that you will order it yourself and have it by the time we read it—you can get very cheap copies from Amazon marketplace, as well as from alibris.com and abebooks.com.

**Will be available as PDF on Blackboard.

For good or ill, popular culture saturates our society. It comes to us through the air onto our computers, our television screens, and our cell phones. We are its targets. Its products are ubiquitous, encountered everywhere and all the time. Popular culture fills our leisure time with its ‘innocent’ entertainment and consumes our expendable income. We revel in its visual pleasures and take joy in the tunes that stay in our heads. Etc., Etc. Pop cult also shapes, confirms and validates what we know, what we believe and what we wish and desire. Too often we confuse all this wealth of images with all there is. Too often we confuse these produce images with the real. Since popular culture is all this, it calls out to be ‘looked at’. This course will do just that: Look at it. English 392 proposes to examine popular culture in its many incarnations (or at least as many as a semester can handle). Students will be introduced to some theories of popular culture in order to see how it functions as a conveyer of knowledge, a site of cultural imagination, a place of entertainment, a marketed commodity, and finally as a space of contesta-
tion. In order to do this successfully we will also need to look at works of popular culture, e.g., films, television and radio shows, comic books, etc. In this case, we will mostly confine our attention to works that represent indigenous peoples, e.g., Native Americans, First Nations, and Pacific Islanders. Drawing on various theories, we will look at mainstream texts that have (re)presented indigenous peoples, then we will turn to those texts of popular culture, which contest these ‘innocent’ works of entertainment.

405 (Fiction Writing) 32676R 2-4:20 T Treuer

Effective fiction writing requires several things: inspiration, creativity, a sense of craft, and knowledge of the world of literature into which you write. Only the last two can be learned. Therefore, this class will focus on making you better readers, critical readers, and on sharpening the skills you have been acquiring in other creative writing classes. In this course we will do four things. We will read and we will write and we will edit and we will discuss. Most of the work we will discuss will be your own, though there are some outside readings (some craft-based, some creative) that we will use as ways into various issues of the “writing process.” We will workshop our with an eye toward perfecting them. At times we will focus on specific elements of the craft (pace, structure, characterization). Ideally, our work here will lead us not to the perfection of a piece of pieces of writing (which is one thing) but to the development of a certain skill-set that will help you as grow as a writer.

406 (Fiction Writing) 32678R 2-4:20 W Segal

An intermediate workshop for fiction writers who have completed English 303. This course will focus on revision as the cornerstone of good writing. How does one become a good editor of one’s own work? How does one resist the urge to put away a story that has been workshopped and never look at it again? To that end, we will focus on developing the skills to differentiate and select the most useful criticism received in the workshop in order to improve our own fiction. The goal, of course, is to best make use of workshop feedback in order to realize our creative vision. We will be concentrating on exploration of literary fiction both in our own work and in close readings of published short stories. Students will be expected to read, write comments on, and discuss in depth each story that passes through the workshop.

405 (Fiction Writing) 32680R 2-4:20 TH Bender

Continuation of workshop. In this class, students will: bring in two stories for workshop, read stories from an anthology, comment on peer work, discuss the art of fiction, write a mid-term on a short story collection, do a series of writing exercises, and write a final story. Students will be encouraged to take leaps and risks as they continue to develop their work.

406 (Fiction Writing) 32688R 2-4:20 W Muske-Dukes

"Sherlock Holmes-ing" the Poem

This is an intermediate workshop in poetry writing, with the goal of discovering exactly what a poem is - of what it is made. In our "laboratory" writing exercises and reading, we will be testing genre limits and checking out different ways of thinking about and writing poetry, including poetry as detective work and other exploration. Each workshop student will put together a presentation of a poet of choice and each student will be responsible for assembling a portfolio of work over the course of the semester - including all writing exercises, assignments and all revisions. Each student will also learn a poem by heart to share with the workshop - or to recite "privately". Reading list will include poets Nicholas Christopher, Lynn Emanuel, Gertrude Stein and others.

407 (Advanced Fiction Writing) 32697D 2-4:20 TH Johnson

In this advanced workshop, we’re going to be noisy, observant, and compulsive. Everybody cares about something, and cares about it deeply. But we’re going to take our obsessions and organize them on the page, using all the tools in the literary toolbox, so that we can articulate what drives us, scares us, and exhilarates us, and turn them into stories. Each student will be required to write three original stories and a revision of one of these stories. Each of these stories will be discussed in workshop, where we will try to get to the heart of what each writer is trying to say, how they’re saying it, and what could be done to say it even better. Not only will you write your own stories, but you will also write comments about your colleagues’ work, comments that are intended to discuss in the most useful and helpful manner all the things the writers are doing well and all the things the writers could explore to polish their fiction. And there’s so much good fiction out in the world; we’re going to read some of it, various writers, for inspiration and instruction.
Learn a language in a semester? How difficult can that be? In this class, we’ll give it a try, going over basic grammar and vocabulary of Old English, and working through as many of the earliest texts in the original as we can: “The Wanderer,” “The Seafarer,” as well as passages from Beowulf. No foreign language or linguistic experience or ability required; the Anglo-Saxons could speak this language, and we’re surely as smart as they were. Course requirements: class attendance and quizzes.

Selected studies in major writers, including Blake, Austen, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Mary Shelly, P.B. Shelley, and Keat. Prerequisite ENGL 262.

This course will focus on Shakespeare’s histories and tragedies. In our discussion of these plays we will pay special attention to the ideals of kingship and nobility, and of dynastic politics during the middle ages and/or Roman imperial era (when the plays take place) and the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras (when the plays were performed). Plays will include King John, Richard II, Henry IV, Parts I and II, Henry V, Richard III, Macbeth, Hamlet, Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra, Titus Andronicus, and King Lear. In addition, we will discuss the legacy of Shakespeare in English and American culture from the 17th century to the present. Text: Greenblatt, et al., eds. The Norton Shakespeare, 2nd edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2008. Comparable editions to Shakespeare’s plays are also acceptable. Handouts: TBA. There will be three papers, 8-10 pps each.

This study of American literature from the Colonial era through the Civil War will focus on the interrelationship between politics and literature with a special attention given to issues of freedom, justice and civil rights. After studying the hopes, fears, and ideology of the Puritans and Revolutionaries, the course will consider how novelists and essayists such as Hawthorne, Melville, Emerson, Thoreau, Douglass and Stowe confronted problems arising from the contradictions of American democracy such as the place of slavery in the land of freedom and the betrayal of visions of America as a “model of Christian charity” and “asylum for all mankind.” Throughout the course, we will cross-examine how political leaders and writers sought to justify or critique Indian removal, revolution, slavery and secession, and we will judge the verdicts rendered against such figures as Nat Turner, Hester Prynne, Dred Scott, and John Brown in famous trials of fact and fiction.

Introduction to African-American, Chicano, Asian American, and Native-American literatures and to the literary diversity of American Cultures.

This course examines what’s referred to as “the Golden Age of Broadway,” a period in American history when theatre was at the heart of the national culture. We will study key figures from the 1930s through the 1950s, including major playwrights such as Eugene O’Neill, Tennessee Williams, and Arthur Miller. We will also study major musicals from these decades including such classics as South Pacific, West Side Story, and Gypsy. We will consider how American theatre emerged as one of the most significant literary achievements of the mid century and address its critical role in the popular culture and national imaginary. Finally, we will consider the current revivals of these seminal works in our contemporary period.

Course Texts:
Thornton Wilder, Our Town
Tennessee Williams. The Glass Menagerie
Tennessee Williams, A Streetcar Named Desire
Eugene O’Neill, Long Day’s Journey into Night
Arthur Miller, All My Sons
Arthur Miller, Death of A Salesman
Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun
Clifford Odets, Waiting for Lefty
Clifford Odets, Golden Boy
Rodgers and Hammerstein, South Pacific
Arthur Laurents, West Side Story
Arthur Laurents, Gypsy

456  (Contemporary Poetry)  32734R  11-12:15  TTH  McCabe

***"21st Century Poetry, the first decade: making it new, again"

This class focuses upon the poetic methods at work in poetry written after World War II, with a focus on poets writing in the first decade of the 21st Century. I will spend the first four or five weeks laying the groundwork for exploring the myriad "present." Included in this reading will be the collagist work of William Carlos Williams, the "Beat" poetics of Ginsberg in the 1950s as well as the so-called confessional writings of Sylvia Plath and Robert Lowell. For the remainder, we turn to a close investigation of experimental writing now, engaging what the critic/poet Kenneth Goldsmith calls "uncreative writing"—poetry that uses materials from the information age and extends the techniques of appropriation, collage and intertextuality already in play during the earlier part of the 20th century. We will read a polycultural group, including Susan Howe (The Midnight), Harryette Mullen (Sleeping with the Dictionary), Brenda Hillman (Cascadia), M. Philips Nourbese (Zong!), Srikanth Reddy (Voyager), who each, to some extent, challenge the notion of Romantic "inspiration." They "time-travel" and engage in a dialogue with the poets of the past (Howe); traverse, appropriate and transform war testimonies (Reddy), trial and legal materials directly linked to race (Nourbese), the discipline of geology (Hillman); draw upon hip-hop and other linguistic inventions (Mullen) for remaking the lyric. We will address poets who seek to question: what is a lyric poem of the 21st century? What makes a poem a poem? How do we separate one discourse from another? How does the digital age shape the work of art? I will require conscientious attendance, active participation, and three to four short papers and a final; some (un)creative responses will also be elicited.

461  (English Drama to 1800)  32736R  12:30-1:45  TTH  Berg

Shakespeare? No. This is a course on the drama that came before, the drama that came after, and the plays that were current and contemporary with Shakespeare's. One could see the course as a preparation for Shakespeare. But that would not do it or the texts we will read and the theater we will examine justice. The early drama of England, the theater before 1800, is rich, vital and alive. Shakespeare did not tower over it, it nurtured him. It was a drama of morality even as it was awash with sex and violence. It was a political drama even though it was censored. It was a drama and a theater caught up in times of radical change that gave expression to that change. It was a drama that drove Puritans to distraction, lampooned King and Country, and scuffled, brawled and contended with the existential questions of the times. It was profoundly commercial and a hell of a night out. These plays entertained then and still entertain. They challenged then and they still challenge readers and actors, directors and audiences. They are old, strange, and profoundly contemporary. This course will examine some of these plays and this early theater. We will read a few dramas from the Tudor and Elizabethan periods then move on to Jacobean tragedy and Restoration comedy. We will read works by Webster, Ford, Middleton, Congreve and others.

463  (Contemporary Drama)  32738R  9:30-10:45  TTH  Berg

What is contemporary drama? When did it start? Where is it found? And what does it look like? Is it different from the drama that preceded it? Is it just Modern Drama with a 'new' twist? Is it all only a post-modern commercial parody of all that came before? Is it global and transnational? Rhetorical questions all, but nonetheless with some import. This course will not attempt to answer any of them, but these questions set the stage for the course. They remind us that contemporary drama draws from the past even as it speaks about our present moment. They remind us contemporary drama and theater are caught up with the commercial as well as the historical and political. Finally, they tell us that contemporary drama in English is not exactly the same as English drama. In order to investigate contemporary drama, the course will work the intellectual space these questions open up. The course will focus on theatrical texts that are political, engaged and confront the historical. We will be concerned not only with the ways that dramatic performance shapes contemporary and current issues, but we will also the ways the political and historical reshape drama and theater.
This course will examine the many and varied roles that women have played in the development of English literature. We will read many works produced by women writers, including \textit{Showings} by Julian of Norwich, \textit{The Book of Margery Kempe}, and the \textit{Lais} of Marie de France. The many female poets and prose writers of the Renaissance will follow. The text for that material will be \textit{The Longman Anthology of Women Writers in Renaissance England}. We will also read \textit{Oroonoko} by Aphra Behn. Students can expect a surprising assortment of material, ranging from chivalric romances to sonnets, from arguments about rhetoric and politics, to pieces of mystic religious devotion. We will read pieces by nuns, queens, prophets, wives, and anchoresses. In addition, we will take a critical, but necessary look at pieces written by men for and about women. We will read excerpts from various treatises, and we will read Shakespeare's \textit{The Taming of the Shrew}. These pieces will provide opportunities for students to understand the atmosphere in which women writers tried to establish their voices. We will also discuss the book culture of the Early Modern period and examine women's roles in book collecting, education, and the development of important private libraries in England. Students will write three papers of 8-10 pages in length.

This diversity course will concentrate on six modern novels written in English in various countries, novels centered on different relations of people of different national and ethnic origins. Two are set in India, one occurring during British colonial rule and one centering on a German, Jewish immigrant in Bombay.

Two are set in New York, one centered on a Caribbean girl who has come to work as a nanny and another on an old Jewish intellectual, concentration camp survivor. Another is set in South Africa and a small, desert Muslim country. The sixth is set mainly on an American Indian reservation and centers on a white woman serving there incognito as a priest.

This will not be a sociology course in disguise; attention will focus on the literary qualities of these interesting novels. The class will be conducted mainly through discussion. There will be papers, but no exams.

This course aims to provide students with an intensive introduction to issues surrounding the notions of "literature" and "criticism" in English since the end of the nineteenth-century, in other words, the period that coincides with the modern. We will begin by reading two of Oscar Wilde's provocative presentations of the relationships between truth and falsehood in art in his collection, Intentions, from the late 19th century. Then we will consider Anglo-American "modernist" literary criticism and read essays by the poet and editor T.S. Eliot along with CLEANTH BROOKS' influential work of "practical" New Criticism, \textit{The Well-Wrought Urn}. We will next consider the impact of socially based, rather than formal, criticism, via Raymond Williams' work, Keywords. We will examine the rise of other kinds of social criticisms of notions of representation and literature, notably KATE MILLER'S early feminist work, Sexual Politics, followed by Toril MOI'S later re-evaluation of MILLER'S work in MOI'S Sexual/Textual Politics. We will read consider the intersection of race, nationality, and gender in TONI MORRISON'S collection of essays, Playing in the Dark, and then reconsider that intersection via SAMUEL R. DELANY'S queer work in his collection \textit{Shorter Views: Queer Thoughts & the Politics of the Paraliterary}; we shall also read EVE SEDGWICK'S highly influential essay, "The Epistemology of the closet." In conclusion, we will examine a contemporary work, PEGGY KAMUF'S \textit{The Book of Addresses}, to consider the impact of contemporary philosophy on current literary critical practice. Throughout, we will be engaged with questions of literature as it changes, representation and mimesis, and the role of identity in reading. We will also be concerned with the essay as form and genre and its development in the 20th- and 21st centuries. This course should appeal to students who are interested in critical as well as creative writing.

\textbf{Required Texts:}


Essays by Eliot and Sedgwick will be available on Blackboard.

Requirements:
Students must keep up with all reading and written work.
Students will write three 4-page essays (15% each) and one final 10-page paper (20%). There will also be a mid-term (15%) and a final (20%) exam.

491 (Senior Seminar in Literary Studies) 32758D 2-4:20 M Gordon

***Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts Movement

This course is designed to help honors students cultivate their primary and secondary research skills while developing a working knowledge of various aspects of two major African American literary movements of the 20th century: the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts Movement. We will use our investigations of these two movements to explore various research methodologies, questions, and challenges that will prepare students to conduct their own research for writing senior honors theses next semester. We therefore will engage an array of literary styles and forms, theory, and research practices. Another primary goal is to foster a learning community while developing each student's critical research, writing, and reading skills. Successful completion of this class is required to write an honors thesis in the spring. Authors will include Langston Hughes, Nella Larsen, Claude McKay, Amiri Baraka, Sonia Sanchez, and Larry Neal.

491 (Senior Seminar in Literary Studies) 32760D 2-4:20 TH Russet

***Gothic: Gender and Genre

“Gothic” novels—tales of fear and suspense, featuring a trembling, sensitive heroine, and set in the remote or exotic past—have been around since the eighteenth century, and are as popular as ever today. Whether as high art or as pulp fiction, gothic novels have long been associated with women readers and writers. However far-fetched their plots, these stories have offered a means of expression for real women’s needs, desires and struggles. This course focuses on the relationship between the gothic novel, as a literary form, and the women who read, write, and feature in such stories. Beginning with the eighteenth-century “mother of all gothic,” The Mysteries of Udolpho, we will read a selection of novels, short stories and poems which, though written over a span of two hundred years and differing markedly from one another, nevertheless belong recognizably to the same literary “family.” Secondary readings and class discussions will pursue two interrelated threads: 1) what do we mean when we speak of a literary “genre,” and what purchase does this concept give us in understanding works written in very different times and circumstances? Is there such a thing as an “ur” gothic plot, and if so, how has it been adapted and reimagined? 2) How are literary genres related to gender? For example, what accounts for the enduring popularity of the gothic form with female writers and readers? Why have women’s fears and wishes so often adopted this form rather than another? Requirements: short weekly blog posts; two 4-5 page papers circulated to the class; 10-15 page research paper due at the end of term. Disclaimer: this class involves a lot of reading. Be prepared for several hundred pages a week of sheer fun.

Major Texts:
Horace Walpole, The Castle of Otranto (1765)
Ann Radcliffe, The Romance of the Forest (1794)
Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey (1818)
Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre (1847)
Wilkie Collins, The Woman in White (1859)
Daphne Du Maurier, Rebecca (1938)
Jean Rhys, Wide Sargasso Sea (1966)
Toni Morrison, Beloved (1987)
"The Cult of Pre-Raphaelite Beauty"

The mid-nineteenth-century group of artists, writers and social activists who called themselves "The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood" are now mostly remembered for creating images of sloe-eyed, full-lipped vixens with manes of wildly waving hair. What could all those beautiful dreamers have to do with social activism? And yet despite their name, which intentionally evoked the artistic values of the Middle Ages, the Pre-Raphaelites were the revolutionaries and avant-gardists of their time. Dominated by poet-painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti and his sister, poet Christina Rossetti, the Pre-Raphaelites gave a female face to the torpor and injustices of industrialized capital society. Their peculiar way of "making it new"—by reinventing the past—influenced both the aesthetic and the political agendas of the later 19th and 20th centuries, including the social criticism of John Ruskin and the socialism of his disciple, the poet-designer-businessman-activist William Morris. In this interdisciplinary seminar, we will study the poetry and prose of the Pre-Raphaelites and their circle in tandem with the paintings, architecture, and designs associated with the movement. Emphasizing themes of love, languor, and seduction, we will examine how the aesthetic program of the Pre-Raphaelites translated into visual and verbal media, and how it paved the way for both the Gothic Revival and the radical Arts and Crafts movement of the later nineteenth century. Requirements will include several 1-2 page "response" papers and a term paper of approximately 5-7 pages; there will be no final exam.

"Epic and Empire"

This course is devoted to careful readings and lively discussions of epic poetry, with a particular focus on its longstanding relationship to empire and its political and religious mission of global expansion. Our readings begin with Vergil in ancient Rome and continue through the English Renaissance. We will pay close attention to the ways in which the Renaissance poets responded to the differing perspectives on empire presented in Vergil's poem. From classical Rome we turn to the two great epic poems of the English tradition, Spenser's The Faerie Queene and Milton's Paradise Lost.

Throughout the course, we will ask how epic narrative helped ancient and early modern writers assess the advantages and costs of political "union without end" over "variety without end," as Milton puts it. This question applies to social relations, global connections, and the domestic union of marriage.

Texts:
Vergil, Aeneid, trans. Robert Fitzgerald (Vintage)
Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene III, ed. Dorothy Stephens (Hackett)
John Milton, Paradise Lost (Penguin)