

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
FALL 2010 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ENGL 501: HISTORY OF LITERARY AND CULTURAL THEORY

David Lloyd, Monday, 2:00-4:20 pm Course Number 32770D

This course will introduce students to some of the fundamental strains of critical theory—new criticism, feminist, post-colonial, deconstruction, new historicism, queer, Marxist, psychoanalytic, anti-theory. We will also inquire into the history of the discipline and explore the relation, past and present, between the study of literature and the study of culture. Students will be required to do a class presentation, two response papers to the reading, a final essay taking one short piece of literature and reading it using two or more of the critical modes that we will have discussed.

ENGL 510: MEDIEVAL ENGLISH LITERATURES AND

David Rollo, Tuesday, 2:00-4:20 pm Course Number 32778D

Following her meeting with Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe believed herself to be the privileged participant in a universal economy of remunerative suffering: the more she was slandered, threatened with rape, accused of Lollardy and had chamber pots emptied on her head, the greater the invested reward that awaited her in heaven. Though many critics have dismissed Margery's testimony as no more than the ravings of an addled mind, her preoccupation with investment, accumulation and ever-deferred joy reflects a widespread medieval concern with the deferral of pleasure (often accompanied by a willful pursuit of pain), and this, in turn, reflects a widespread literary strategy of the era whereby narrative closure and the pleasure it may bring are withheld (and, indeed, on occasion denied altogether).

The course will be on, precisely, the reader's implication in narratives of misery, obfuscation, torture and longing. The obvious medieval construct that brings all these themes together has, for better or worse, become known as "courtly love." This, the desire for pleasure that can only ever be pleasurable if its consummation is indefinitely foreclosed, will be the focus of the first third of the term. As background reading we will consider, in translation, a few troubadour lyrics, since, differences in language notwithstanding, the culture of pre-Albigensian Occitania came definitively to influence the next three hundred years of western European literary production. Central to the next couple of weeks will be that massive narrative of lyric desire, *Le Roman de la Rose* (again, not composed in English, but absolutely canonical). We will read all of Guillaume de Lorris' original (the first 4028 lines of the conjoined text), but will adopt a selective approach to the 17,500 lines of Jean de Meun's apparently — but only apparently — digressive continuation and consider only the discourses of Reason, Ami, La Vieille and Genius, as well as the allegory of coition that draws the poem to a close. Some attention will also be given to Jean's debts to Alain de Lille's treatise on written and sexual pleasures, the *De planctu Naturae*.

The middle of the term will be devoted to Chaucer's *The Legend of Good Women*, *The Clerk's Tale* and *The Man of Law's Tale*, all of them performative meditations on narrative poetry and the first also a parodic commentary on aspects of the *Rose*. Among the topics of analysis will be the themes of digression, deferral, and sadism, and the reader's position vis-à-vis the object of suffering. *The Man of Law's Tale* will also serve as a prelude to that other late-medieval story of ever-impending rape, *The Book of Margery Kempe*, which we will read as a secularized variation on the conventions of female hagiography and analyze alongside some of the more celebrated *Saint's Lives* (certainly Christine and Catherine, perhaps also Euphrosina). Torture and the pornography of ever-deferred martyrdom will be our primary concerns. Finally, all of the themes considered in the earlier part of the term will be reappraised in the light of late medieval Arthurianism, with a particular emphasis on the narrativity of Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur* and the anonymous *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
FALL 2010 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

The major requirements are straightforward and predictable: students will speak in seminars, give a formal presentation and write a fifteen to twenty page paper. There is also a minor requirement, though one that has been added by popular request: readings from Middle English literature will be accompanied by some in-class exercises on Middle English grammar (nothing difficult, just an outline of the differences between the language of Chaucer and the language we speak today). In addition to the texts mentioned above, the reading list will include: Simon Horobin and Jeremy Smith, *An Introduction to Middle English*; Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish, The History of Sexuality* (excerpts); Caroline Bynam, *Jesus as Mother*; Elaine Scarry, *The Body In Pain* (excerpts); Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*; Gérard Genette, trans. Jane Lewin, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*; Andreas Capellanus, trans. John Parry, *The Art of Courtly Love*.

ENGL 560: EARLY AMERICAN LITERATURES AND CULTURES
Anthony Kemp, Thursday, 4:30-6:50 p.m. Course Number 32784D



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
FALL 2010 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

A study of the declension/transformation of American colonial culture, particularly New England, into Enlightenment nation, and further into the counter-Enlightenment Transcendentalist myth of nature's nation. The course will focus on the national mythology embodied in histories, poetry, autobiographies, and will address particularly the question of how religious culture—trans-Atlantic Puritanism—transforms into romantic culture, and what hauntings show through in the palimpsest of American modernity. Therefore, the first half of the course will examine the forms of colonial culture; the second will follow the vectors of these into the American Renaissance and on into the present. Authors to be considered include William Bradford, John Winthrop, Roger Williams, Nathaniel Ward, Thomas Hooker, John Cotton, Increase Mather, Mary Rowlandson, Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz, Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor, Edward Johnson, Joshua Scottow, Franklin, Emerson, Melville, Henry James.

Instructor: Anthony Kemp
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Hours: TBA
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Schedule

August

26 Introduction: Theology and History

September

2 Foundation History: William Bradford, Of Plymouth Plantation, John Winthrop, Journal

9 Social Theory, Toleration: John Winthrop, "The Model of Christian Charity"; Roger Williams, "The Bloody Tenent of Persecution," "Letter to the Town of Providence"; Nathaniel Ward, "The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam"

16 Popular Theology: Thomas Hooker, "A True Sight of Sin"; John Cotton: "Swine and Goats," "Hypocrites and Saints"; Increase Mather, "Predestination and Human Exertions"

23 Ethnobiography: Mary Rowlandson, The Sovereignty and Goodness of God

30 Poetry: Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz

October

7 Poetry: Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor

14 Witchcraft: Salem Witch Trials Reader

21 Declension History: Edward Johnson, Wonder-Working Providence of Zion's Saviour in New England; Joshua Scottow, Old Men's Tears for Their Own Declension

28 Enlightenment Reaction: Franklin, Autobiography

November

4 Romantic Reconceptualization: Emerson, Essays

11 Romantic Quest: Melville, Moby-Dick

18 Romantic Declension: Melville, "The Piazza"

25 Thanksgiving

December

2 Romantic Apocalypse: James, The Beast in the Jungle, The Turn of the Screw

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
FALL 2010 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

ENGL 599: SPECIAL TOPICS: Writing Articles for Publication in Humanities Journals

Susan Green, Director of the Huntington Library Press and Editor of the *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Wednesday, 4:30-6:50 p.m. Course Number 32792D

What will your prospective article look like to the editor or staff member of a humanities journal who “opens” it?—now likely to be a file rather than an envelope. The self-addressed stamped envelope is gone, but what new conventions have evolved as electronic submission becomes the rule rather than the exception? Some of these conventions are announced as requirements on the websites of publications, and we will begin by researching these, reading between the lines and adding to them where appropriate. But our main focus will be inside of the electronic envelope: ways to develop strong seminar papers into article submissions, working on structure, documentation, and style.

Prospective students should submit a completed seminar paper to the instructor before the course begins, ideally by mid-August. A major project for the participants in the seminar will be developing a seminar paper into a publishable manuscript. Although the specializations of students will differ considerably, the seminar will cover procedures and strategies common to scholarly work in varying literary and historical fields. The course will have some attributes of a workshop: some material will be discussed in class (with the permission of the writer) and all will be discussed in individual sessions.

**ENGL 620: LITERATURE AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES: “War and Memory”
Viet Nguyen, Monday, 4:30-6:50 p.m. Course number 32796D**

This course surveys theories of memory and problems in the relation of memory to war. On memory in general, the course traces the arc of memory studies, which gained momentum after the 1960s and has culminated in what some critics call a “memory boom” and a “memory industry.” We begin with Chris Marker’s premise, that “the function of remembering is not the opposite of forgetting, but rather its lining,” and consider the ethical, political, and aesthetic challenges for remembering and forgetting, both of which are necessary to confront war and its related traumas. Along the way, we will read some of the most important and influential books and essays in memory studies. On memory and war, some of the case studies will come from the Holocaust and World War II, still the most generative sources for memory studies, while other case studies focus on conflicts in Korea, Vietnam, and Chile. I’m open to addressing cases and issues not mentioned in the texts but of importance to students; email me with your concerns.

Requirements: a seminar presentation and a 20 page paper.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
FALL 2010 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Texts, in whole or in part: Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*; Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*; Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* Grace Cho, *Haunting the Korean Diaspora: Shame, Secrecy and the Forgotten War*, Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, Macarena Gomez-Barris, *Where Memory Dwells: Culture and State Violence in Chile*; Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*; Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*; Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*; Daniel Schacter, *The Seven Sins of Memory*; Avishai Margalits, *The Ethics of Memory*; Jeffrey Olick, *The Politics of Regret: On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility*; Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*; Marita Sturken, *Tourists of History*; James Young, *The Texture of Memory*.

Selected essays from *The Invention of Tradition* (Hobsbawm), *The Country of Memory* (Ho Tai), *War and Remembrance in the 20th Century* (Winter and Sivan), *The History of Forgetting* (Klein), *Trauma: A Genealogy* (Leys), *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Lowenthal), *Between Memory and History* (Nora), *On the Natural History of Destruction* (Sebald), *Memory: History, Culture and the Mind* (Burke); *Trauma and Recovery* (Herman); *Present Pasts* (Huysen); *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Fussell); *Tangled Memories* (Sturken); Foucault on counter-memory; Freud on memory, repression and repetition; and other essays.

ENGL 630: STUDIES IN GENDER: Sentimentality and the Construction of Masculinity

Tania Modleski, Thursday, 2:00-4:20 p.m. Course number 32797D

In the seminar we will look at male film genres, focusing in particular on sentimentalism in certain popular genres (Westerns, action films, buddy films, "bromances," and some independent films) and in the work of auteurs like Clint Eastwood and Steven Spielberg. While sentimentalism and melodrama have long been linked to feminine sensibility (to 19th century sentimental and domestic novels and to the so-called "woman's film"), the role it has played in works by men—even, or perhaps especially, tough-guy films and comedies—has received far less attention, although at least one critic has traced it back to the frontier romance, paying specific attention to the interrelatedness of sentimentality and race in defining racial difference. In recent years some feminist critics have criticized the woman's film and the cultural production of popular (middle class and white) female novelists in the 19th and 20th centuries for appropriating the experiences of women of color and working class women. Ironically works by white men have by and large escaped this sort of criticism. Among other foci, the issue of white men's appropriation of the suffering of racial "others" will be examined. We will also focus on the homosocial elements not only of "bromances," in which homoeroticism might appear at last to have come out of the closeted world of the buddy film (*I Love You, Man*), but of other, less likely genres. While heterosexual white male cultural production will occupy us for much of the seminar, we will look at a couple of works by men of color and gay men, some of whom are openly embracing theories of melancholia as it relates to their

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
FALL 2010 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

culture and heritage. Theories of “melancholia”—a popular topic in cultural studies today—will help guide us in understanding the role of sentiment in the construction of masculinity, both white masculinity and masculinities of color.

Films (subject to additions and substitutions) include several by Clint Eastwood, from *Dirty Harry* to *Gran Torino* (with a nod to *Invictus*); a few by Steven Spielberg; bromances like *I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry*, *I Love You, Man*, *Hangover*, *Humpday*, etc.; sports films like the *Rocky* series and *Raging Bull* (with another nod to *Invictus*); a couple of war films (like *Saving Private Ryan*); *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*; *Smoke Signals*, *M. Butterfly*; *Looking for Langston* and others

Readings will include works by: Sigmund Freud, Juliana Schiesari, Eve Sedgwick, Ezra F. Tawil, Lauren Berlant, Jose Estaban Munoz, David Eng, Anne Anlin Cheng, Judith Butler, Paul Smith, Rey Chow, Teresa de Lauretis, Douglas Crimp and others. We will also read reviews and articles on individual films.

Requirements: One 10-15 minute oral presentation; a review of a current film, and a seminar paper at the end of term.

**ENGL 660: STUDIES IN GENRE: THEORY OF THE AVANT-GARDE
Marjorie Perloff, Wednesday, 2:00-4:20 p.m. Course number 32800D**

What does the term *avant-garde* mean? Is it still possible to have an avant-garde or was the “avant-garde” an historical formation of the early 20th century? This course will take up these questions, with special attention to poetics vis-à-vis the visual arts. We will begin with Baudelaire, who disliked the avant-garde and the whole notion of progress in the arts, then turn to the two Futurisms, Italian and Russian, to the French “avant-garde” in Apollinaire, Blaise Cendrars, in Dada and Duchamp, and then to the early Eliot, Pound and Gertrude Stein. The last two weeks of the course will examine our own poetic “avant-gardes” from the John Cage circle to Fluxus to the Language movement and Conceptualism today.

All readings will be in English but a reading knowledge of French and/or some work in twentieth-century art history is desirable for this interdisciplinary seminar.

Requirements: weekly response paper, class discussion leader, 1 fifteen-page term paper that should be bibliographical (e.g. cover the scholarship on the question) as well as critical.

Reading:

The reading list—primarily paperbacks of the individual poets, as well as *Futurist Manifestos*, ed. Apollonio, will be available shortly.

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
FALL 2010 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

ENGL 695: GRADUATE FICTION FORM AND THEORY
Marianne Wiggins, Tuesday, 4:30-6:50 p.m. Course number 32802D

Declined to submit course description.

ENGL 696: GRADUATE POETRY WRITING WORKSHOP: Lyric Aperture And The Poetics of Loss
David St. John, Thursday, 4:30-6:50 p.m. Course Number 32803D

This workshop will consider those poems that revolve around issues of loss -- loved ones, a country, love itself, the instability of memory -- as enacted by non-traditional aesthetics. If we have ever had it, the odds are we've also probably lost it at some point. How do other poets -- and how do we -- choose to write about these losses in a way that readers can experience the multiple dimensions of that loss? We lose time, we lose places, we lose people. Elegies are superb examples of poems of loss, of course, but think also of the complex issues of loss we find in Elizabeth Bishop's great poem, "One Art." Some poets write about places they have lost -- Donald Justice about Florida, Philip Levine about Detroit. Yet these are all poets of a previous generation or two, and their poetics are most likely not yours. So, how is loss made present in your own poetry? And what do I mean by lyric aperture anyway? You'll find out. Plan to look at poems by Carol Muske Dukes, Susan McCabe, Mark Irwin, Molly Bendall & Gail Wronsky, Brenda Hillman, Lynn Emanuel, Carl Phillips, D. A. Powell, Joanie Mackowski, Donald Revell, Katy Lederer, Anna Journey, Beth Bachman, Matthew Dickman, Michael Dickman, Amy Schroeder, and Katie Ford. You will be expected to write at least a poem a week for workshop and you will each be expected to give a seminar report on one of the poets named above.

ENGL 697: GRADUATE FICTION WRITING WORKSHOP
T.C. Boyle, Monday, 2:00-4:20 p.m. Course Number 32804D

This course provides a forum for writers to present their work for class interpretation and to assess the effects of their techniques on an audience of willing and engaged readers. Depending on the size of the class, each student will have the opportunity to present from two to three original works of fiction per semester—either short stories or chapters from a longer work—according to an agreed-upon schedule. All students will be required to read and comment in writing on the workshop pieces. During the class sessions, we will examine student work with the same interpretive rigor we will devote to the readings from professional writers; the hope is that the student writer will be able to learn something of the effects of his/her work on an audience, with an eye to improving it. Our readings will be in contemporary fiction, both the short story and novel.

Book list:

The Road, Cormac McCarthy
Fiskadoro, Denis Johnson
Doubletakes, ed. T.C. Boyle