

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
FALL 2016 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**ENGL 501: Introduction to Literary and Cultural Criticism and Theory
Anthony Kemp, Friday, 2:00-4:20 pm Course Number 32770D**

The purpose of literary and cultural theories is not primarily to generate interpretations of art; it is to generate art itself, and, beyond this, to generate worlds: new understandings, meanings, feelings, even new cultural and physical realities. As Rimbaud demanded, art that is vital and original must be visionary: it seeks to know the unknown, to speak the unspoken, to see the unseen. And such an art must be theoretical: it needs a consciously-articulated statement of its own aims and principles, and these aims and principles constitute the major content of the work of art.

As class time is very limited and we can't do everything, we will begin with Romanticism, the doctrine of the value of the human soul, and look at the cascades of theories generated by Romanticism's contradictions: Transcendentalism, Idealism, Aestheticism, Existentialism, Decadence, Symbolism, Modernism, Situationism, Punk, Riot Grrl. Major figures to be considered: Rousseau, Hegel, Emerson, Marx, Baudelaire, Nietzsche, Huysmans, Rimbaud, Freud, Hulme, Eliot, Barnes, Debord, Patti Smith. This list is preliminary and negotiable; if there's something not here that you're particularly interested in, bring it to the first class. Yes it's a lot of "isms" because thought, like matter, tends to be clumpy, tends to run in schools and constellations. This will be a wild, surprising, rewarding, comprehensible intellectual journey.

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ENGL 504: CLASS AND GENDER

Claudia Rankine, Monday, 4:30 – 7:20 pm Course number 32789D

This course will consider the construction of whiteness in contemporary America.

Historical Overview

1. The History of White People, by Nell Irvin Painter (W. W. Norton)
2. Look, A White!: Philosophical Essays on Whiteness, by (Temple University Press)
3. The Invention of the White Race, Volume 1: Racial Oppression and Social Control, by Theodore W. Allen and Jeffrey B. Perry
4. The Invention of the White Race, Volume 2: The Origin of Racial Oppression in Anglo-America
5. Dear White America, by Tim Wise (City Lights Open Media)
6. Working Towards Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs
7. Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States, by Kenneth T. Jackson (Oxford University Press)

Entertainment & Media

1. White: Essays on Race and Culture Essays by Richard Dyer (Oxford)
2. White Girls, by Hilton Als (McSweeney's)
3. The Devil Finds Work, by James Baldwin (Vintage)

White Activism (And Failures)

1. Good White People: The Problem with Middle-Class White Anti-Racism, by Shannon Sullivan (State University of New York Press)
2. Revealing Whiteness: The Unconscious Habits of Racial Privilege, by Shannon Sullivan (Indiana University Press)
3. Between Barack and a Hard Place, by Tim Wise (Soft Skull Press)

Confronting Whiteness: Systemic Racism, Economic Inequality, Prison Complex, Housing Discrimination

1. The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit, by Thomas J. Sugrue (Princeton University Press)
2. The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, by Michelle Alexander (The New Press)
3. Race Matters, by Cornell West (Vintage)
4. "The Condition of Black Life is One of Mourning," by Claudia Rankine, (New York Times Op-Ed)

Literary Criticism

1. Reading Race: White American Poets and the Racial Discourse in the Twentieth Century, by Aldon Lynn Nielsen (University of Georgia Press)
2. Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination, by Toni Morrison (Vintage)

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Memoirs & Personal Narratives

1. *White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son*, by Tim Wise
2. *Detroit: An American Autopsy*, by Charlie LeDuff (Penguin)
3. *Between the World and Me*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates (Spiegel & Grau)
4. *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*, by Samuel R. Delany (New York University Press)

Poetry

1. *Delusions of Whiteness in the Avant-Garde*, by Cathy Park Hong (Lana Turner online)
2. *White Papers*, by Martha Collins (Pitt Poetry Series)
3. *The Forage House*, by Tess Taylor (Red Hen Press)
4. *The Cloud Corporation*, by Timothy Donnelly (Wave Books)
5. *Metropole*, by Geoffrey G. O'Brien (University of California Press)

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ENGL-520: RENAISSANCE ENGLISH LITERATURES AND CULTURES: The Poetry of Exile: Ovid in Early Modern England (and Beyond)
Heather James, Thursday, 2:00-4:20 pm Course number 32788D

For the writers and readers of early modern England, the poetry of exile was inextricably tied to Ovid, the greatest love poet of imperial Rome, who was known for both a monumental success and a massive failure. The success: he changed the course of literary history with his bold innovations in poetic form, a redefinition of the project of poetry in a world of empire. Ovid's ambition to infuse himself into the poetic imperative to "make it new"—in contrast with the poets of the previous generation, who acceded to the idea of Empire—has influenced writers from Christopher Marlowe to Ezra Pound, Edmund Spenser to Zbigniew Herbert, Wyatt and Donne to Rilke and Spicer. The failure: he was exiled by Augustus Caesar to Tomis on the Black Sea in 8 A.D., and nothing that he wrote in his exile changed the minds of Rome's emperors. If anything, the exile and Ovid's unhappy invention of a poetics of exile sealed the case for his cultural significance in the geographical and temporal worlds affected by the Empire. Invention became the necessary and ethical response to the effort of empire to control the meaning of a given poem.

We will read Ovid in connection with early modern responses to his erotic elegies, verse epistles, calendar poem, counter-epic *Metamorphoses*, and poetry of exile. We will attend to the ways in which writers at the origins of the English canon were using Ovid to think about how poetry does, and doesn't, conform (or lend form) to the projects of empire and Crown. Above all, we will read literature in terms of its efforts to find a cultural place for fiction that is not defined by censorship. If the poetry of early modern England has extended to the present day, it is partly because it is pervasively concerned with the voices of subalterns—such as the Irish, Old Irish, Africans, barbarians, women, and servants — and political and religious exiles. In short, it is both the style and content of Ovid's poetry that has led outsiders of all descriptions to take his words and "make them new" in later centuries.

The lion's share of the class will focus on readings of poetry, poems, and plays by Ovid, Spenser, Whitney, Wyatt, Surrey, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Jonson, Wroth, Sandys, Milton, and Wharton. Early modern periods under consideration run from the Tudors and Stuarts to the Civil War and Restoration.

Yet this course description has deliberately emphasized the responses to Ovid and the poetry of exile that continue well beyond the early modern period. The final portion of the course will be devoted to readings and discussions of both the poet and the poetry of exile chosen by students in the class. Medievalists may wish to bring Chaucer or *The Romance of the Rose* to the table, while 18th-C students may bring in, for example, Aphra Behn or Lady Mary Wortley Montagu or Samuel Richardson (Lovelace thinks he's Ovid). Comparatists may focus on Mandelstam or Brodsky. The English and American literature of the 20th century is wide open.

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ENGL-535: LITERATURES AND CULTURES OF THE ROMANTIC PERIOD: The 1790s: Revolution, Rebellion, Reaction
Margaret Russett, Tuesday, 4:30 – 6:50 pm, Course number 32877D

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times; it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness; it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity; it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness; it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair. Dickens's evocation of the 1790s is still one of the best, and *A Tale of Two Cities* will be our introduction to a class focused on that momentous decade, considered as the origin of political and literary modernity. Our guiding thread will be the relationships among socio-political ideals, historical rupture, and the articulation of the literary avant-garde. This is not, in other words, a class about "Romanticism" per se, although one of its aims will be to understand how Romanticism emerged as one aesthetic answer to a historical problem. Texts will be drawn primarily from the 1790s themselves, and will not all be "literary" in the strict sense, but will also include works of political philosophy, prose pamphlets, and historiography. Likely suspects include William Godwin, *Political Justice* and *Caleb Williams*; texts drawn from the "pamphlet wars" of 1790-92—Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*; Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men, A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Maria; and Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man*; Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative*; Mary Hays, *The Memoirs of Emma Courtney*; William Blake, *America, Visions of the Daughters of Albion, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*; Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Watchman*, "conversation" and "mystery" poems; William Wordsworth, *Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff*, "Salisbury Plain," *The Borderers, Lyrical Ballads*; Matthew Lewis, *The Monk*. We will also read selectively in the continental philosophy of the period (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Benjamin Constant, Immanuel Kant) which laid the groundwork for the French Revolution and set the terms for its historical interpretation. Probably last, but not necessarily least, we will read some later literary-historical interpretations of the 1790s, including Carlyle's *The French Revolution* and Thomas De Quincey's *The English Mail-Coach*. Requirements will be standard: one oral presentation with annotated bibliography; one short interpretive midterm paper; a longer research paper due at the end of the semester.

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**ENGL 580: 19TH CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURES AND CULTURES:
“Indians”: Indigeneity and North American Nationalisms
John Carlos Rowe, Wed., 5:00-7:20 pm Course Number 32786D
Wednesday, 5-7:20 PM, THH 411 (English conference room)**

The seminar will provide a dialectical survey of U.S. literary nationalism and Native American cultural representation. Although the focus will be on U.S. nationalism, we will consider Canadian and Mexican representations of indigenous peoples. We will also study the extent to which native people in the Americas repudiate national institutions and rhetoric. The seminar will serve the double purpose of providing a reasonably good survey of nineteenth-century U.S. literature and Native American cultural expression in the same period. Although the emphasis of the seminar will be on literature, we will also view at least one film and consider monuments and cultural performances, such as dance. A special feature of this seminar will be central consideration of the Mormons in cultural relations with indigenous peoples. **Readings/ screenings:** Colin Calloway, *First Peoples: A Documentary Survey of American Indian History*; Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian*; Charles Brockden Brown, *Edgar Huntly* (1799); William Apess, “A Eulogy on King Philip” (1836); James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826); Black Hawk, *The Life of Black Hawk* (1833); Anonymous, *Xicoténcatl* (1826); Herman Melville, *Typee, or a Peep at Polynesian Life* (1846); William Elkanah, *Waters, Life among the Mormons, and a March to Their Zion* (1868); George Armstrong Custer, *My Life on the Plains* (1874); Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876); Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, *Life among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims* (1883); James Mooney, *The Ghost Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890* (1896); Edward Sharif Curtis, *In the Land of the Head-Hunters* (1915) and documentary film of the same title (1911; 66 minutes). **Requirements:** lead a seminar discussion; proposal for seminar essay; seminar essay (20-25 pages).

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ENGL 620: Literature and Interdisciplinary Studies: The Scholarly Interface: theory & practice of multimedia scholarship

Alice Gambrell, Tuesday, 4:30-6:50 pm Course Number 32796D

<http://www.writingiswork.org> | gambrell@usc.edu

A small number of print-based formulae for scholarly publication – the single-author book, the refereed article, the edition, the review – are firmly established in contemporary academic practice, providing scholars with vehicles through which knowledge is disseminated, expertise is affirmed, and credentials are acquired. During the last two decades, however, an array of new formal and technological possibilities has arisen alongside the increasing accessibility of digital authorship tools, and scholars are currently in the process of assessing the impact of these forms – which are still in their infancy – upon the knowledge professions. In this course, we will look at expressive technologies through which scholarly knowledge has been and has yet to be contained and communicated. Along the way, we will also perform some scholarly experiments of our own.

How does the complicated, raucous history of learned publication inform contemporary experiments in the art and craft of the scholarly interface? To what extent can we (or should we) draw clear, clean distinctions between scholarly and creative modes of expression? What mechanisms determine whether particular forms of knowledge will be included within (or excluded from) the category of the “scholarly”? To what extent do the forms that scholarship assumes, and the processes through which those forms are consolidated, either enable or disable intellectual innovation? These are some of the questions we will be asking and beginning to answer in “The Scholarly Interface.”

This course will provide students with an introduction to theories and practices that are taking shape beneath the conceptual umbrella of the “digital humanities.” In it, we will combine more-or-less traditional discussion of literary and theoretical texts with hands-on interactive design practice. (We will actually make things.) We will also have a chance to meet with LA-based innovators in the field of scholarly multimedia, and to view a wide range of recent digital-scholarly work. Term projects will consist of works of scholarship (roughly equivalent to a 20-page essay) presented in a multimedia format chosen by the student. No prior experience in digital authorship is expected, and there are no technical prerequisites for the course: we will start from scratch, work (and play) hard, and produce examples of scholarly expression that are as informative and critically engaged as they are beautiful, affecting, and surprising. Please feel free to e-mail me or to stop by office hours (Th 2-4) if you have any questions.

Although I haven’t finalized the Fall 2016 syllabus, the following readings are likely to be assigned:

Fiction:

Alejandro Zambra, *My Documents*

Jennifer Egan, *A Visit from the Goon Squad*

Drama:

Annie Baker, *The Flick*

Digital Artworks (including games and tools):

Peter Brinson and Kurosh ValaNejad, *The Cat and the Coup*

Tracy Fullerton and Bill Viola, *Night Journey*

George LeGrady, *Making Visible the Invisible*

Golan Levin, *The Dumpster*

John Maeda, *Reactive Books*

Casey Reas and Ben Fry, writings on the *processing* language

Criticism and Theory by Wendy Chun, Mary Flanagan, Katherine Hayles, Henry Jenkins, Friedrich Kittler, Alan Liu, Jerome McGann, Franco Moretti, Lisa Nakamura, Rita Raley

Writings on Design Practice by Ian Bogost, Johanna Drucker, Ellen Lupton, Donald Norman, Edward Tufte, Eric Zimmerman and Katie Salen

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ENGL 695: GRADUATE FICTION FORM AND THEORY
Percival Everett, Thursday, 4:30-6:50 p.m. Course Number 32802D

Not available.

ENGL 697: GRADUATE FICTION WRITING WORKSHOP
David Treuer, Monday, 4:30 – 6:50 p.m. Course Number 32804D

Not available

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ENGL 698: GRADUATE POETRY FORM AND THEORY: "How Poets Grow"
Carol Muske-Dukes, Thursday, 4:30-6:50 p.m. Course Number 32805D

The title of this course is "How Poets Grow". Inspired by earlier (Johns Hopkins) pedagogical experiments, this course seeks to combine both critical and creative aspects of generating stylistic change in poems.

The format involves "interrogating" first books by canonical poets - then observing & discussing later books by the same poet. We will address early work by Keats & others, then move to more contemporary poets - Terrance Hayes, James Merrill, Louise Gluck, etc. (A book of translations may appear.)

This course is also workshop-oriented - thus our address of both critical & creative will allow a "coming-together" of aesthetic vision & practical application (i.e. order, etc.) which will open the course up to ongoing discussion of original student work.