

FALL 2019

GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ENGL-501

History of Literary and Cultural Theory:

Russett, Margaret | St. John, David

T | 2:00-4:20P.M.

SECTION: 32770

TBD



ENGL-520

Renaissance English Literatures and Cultures

Smith, Bruce

TH | 2:00-4:20P.M.

SECTION: 32793

Since Newton's experiment with prisms in 1666, color has been considered a matter of physics (light rays at frequencies between 700 and 420 nanometers) and physiology (stimulation of rods and cones in the retina). During the two centuries preceding Newton, however, such assumptions were challenged by chromaticism in musical lines, coloratura singing, and the deployment of rhetorical colors in verbal texts. This seminar will study cross-media examples of color in verbal fictions, paintings, dramatic performances, and music. Theoretical reference points will be provided by readings from Gilles Deleuze *Difference and Repetition*; John Gage, *Color and Meaning*; and Jens Schröter, "Four Models of Intermediality" from the anthology *Travels in Intermedia[lity]*. Topics for seminar meetings will include excerpts from Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso* (1516), trans. John Harington (1591); paintings and music inspired by *Orlando Furioso*; Pierre de Ronsard, *Preface to Music* (1560) and lyric poetry (circulated and published 1550s to 1580s), trans. John Southern (1584) and others:

music inspired by Ronsard's verse; *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* (written 1560-1580, printed 1587), trans. anon. (likely 1588); Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* (c. 1590); Miguel de Cervantes, *The Ingenious Nobleman Mister Quixote of La Mancha* (1605, 1616), trans. Thomas Shelton (1612, 1621), Book One; *Don Quixote* across media; William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (1610-11); Shakespeare, *The Tempest* in music, painting, and opera. Participants will be asked to contribute one 1000-word response paper, accompanied by five questions for class discussion, and a final 3500-word paper pursuing one theme or concern across at least two media.

19th Century British Literatures and Cultures

Griffiths, Devin

TH | 2:00-4:20P.M.

SECTION: 32773

What powers literature? And how does literature gauge the nature of that power? What can nineteenth-century genres tell us about the Anthropocene, the energetic systems that have produced global warming, and the energy cultures that support them? These questions will be central to our seminar, which will study the genres and modalities of modern energy literature. There continues to be substantial disagreement over the question of when the Anthropocene began: whether it should be associated with the testing of atomic weapons in 1945, the carbon-based technologies of British industrialization, or the dramatic impact that earlier indigenous, and subsequently, settler populations had on world atmosphere (Ruddiman et al.). Yet the “great acceleration” of twentieth-century industrial economies might more accurately be seen as a great leveling, the internationalization of an industrial revolution that had previously, especially in Great Britain, motivated an unprecedented acceleration in both the adoption of energetic technologies and the volume of carbon-based resource extraction. Cast in this light, the

great acceleration marks the globalization of the modern energy regime and the closure of the “great divergence” that, in Kenneth Pomerantz’s analysis, defined Britain’s early acceleration into modern capitalism. Consequently, the ubiquity of nineteenth-century cultural forms today, from the social novel, to the melodramas of stage and screen, indicates that we are still riding the wave of that earlier acceleration in our use of energy, even as we are only beginning to register its impact on the environment and our climate.

But this long afterlife suggests also that the study of the literary forms which emerged at the birth of the modern energy regime can help us grasp how we got here and where we are going. Our seminar will study the genres and cultural forms that were powered by carbon acceleration with an eye to understanding how they reflect upon energetic modernity and what they might offer today as we try to imagine how to get out of the mess we are in.

Our seminar will use studies by Amitav Ghosh, Imre Szeman, Stephanie Lemenager, and Andreas Malm to frame the poetry, fiction,

and theater of the long nineteenth century, including works by Mary Wollstonecraft, George Eliot, Charles Dickens, Hannah Craft, Louisa May Alcott, Dion Boucicault, Richard Jeffries, and Upton Sinclair; but also more recent treatments of energy culture by Patrick Chamoiseau, Ella Hickson, and Taylor Sheridan. Our study of these works will also draw on a range of secondary readings, including studies by critics and theorists including Patricia Jager, Kyle Powys Whyte, Christina Sharpe, Brit Rusert, Fred Moten, Jesse Oak Taylor, Pablo Mukherjee, Emily Waples, Frederick Buell, Heidi Scott, Elizabeth Carolyn Miller, Rob Nixon, and Jennifer Wenzel.

As part of the course, seminar participants will contribute to weekly discussions, lead at least one seminar discussion, and produce a 15-page critical research paper with bibliography. In addition, they may be asked to attend screenings or performances (no more than three) of relevant films or stage productions.



19th Century American Literatures and Cultures

Handley, William

W | 5:00-7:20P.M.

SECTION: 32786

"Each age writes the history of the past anew with reference to the conditions uppermost in its own time," argued the first academic historian of the West, Frederick Jackson Turner. The western historian and novelist Wallace Stegner wrote about the "Doppler effect" of western American history: from the vantage point of the present, the sound of the past alters as it comes near, then recedes, like a passing train. The New Western History and settler colonialist studies have significantly revised Turner's and Stegner's ethnocentric work, foregrounding tragedy and indigenous resistance in the "geography of hope." Yet the imbrication of past and present that Turner and Stegner understood inescapably still operates in cultural representations of the West.

This seminar will look back at 19th-century cultural and historiographical representations of the West through the lens of late-20th and early-21st century literary and visual art and criticism. We will explore how writers and artists queer and revise real and imaginary pasts and in doing so alter temporal and historiographical paradigms of

futurity, from Transcendentalism and Manifest Destiny to Postcolonial, Queer, and Anthropocene studies. Like the racialized and gendered subjectivities and bodies that make them matter, temporal and spatial imaginaries in the West are haunted fictions with real consequences.

To hear and critique the Doppler effect of western U.S. history in the literary imagination, we will put into dialogue chronologically disparate but culturally overlapping texts, reading Lewis and Clark's journals with Brian Hall's 2003 novel of the expedition two centuries later; Mark Twain, Bret Harte, and Louise Clappe with Sebastian Barry's 2016 novel *Days Without End*; John Rollin Ridge's 1854 *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta*—the first novel published in California, the first novel published by a Native American, and the first American novel with a Mexican protagonist—with Emma Perez's 2009 *Forgetting the Alamo*, a story of a Tejana lesbian cowgirl; Wallace Stegner's *Angle of Repose* with the writing of Mary Hallock Foote that inspired it; James Welch's 2000 *The Heart Song of Charging Elk*, about an Oglala Sioux member of Buffalo Bill's

touring Wild West show who leaves it behind in France, with Turner's writing about the "end of the frontier"; the most popular anti-polygamy novel with Judith Freeman's 2002 *Red Water*, about the 1857 Mountain Meadows massacre, narrated by polygamous wives; and Claire Vaye Watkins' 2015 *Gold Fame Citrus*, a speculative novel about a desiccated, ruined southern California, with Mary Austin's 1903 great work of environmentalist writing, *The Land of Little Rain*. We will also explore late-twentieth century "rephotography" projects that revisit sites of western survey landscape photography in the 19th. What is lost and gained by re-imagining the ghosts of settler colonialism's depredations and its temporal ideologies—and by "filling in" the lost subjectivities of historical experience? Why is historical fiction about the 19th-century West on the rise in the 21st and what is at stake in these re-imaginings?

Secondary readings by Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Kerwin Lee Klein, Neil Campbell, Alex Trimble Young, Krista Comer, Hsuan L. Hsu, and others.



ENGL-593

Practicum in Teaching English and Narrative Studies

Freeman, Chris

W | 5:00-6:20P.M.

SECTION: 32794

English 593 is a course designed to help advanced PhD candidates with their teaching and with their shift from graduate school to first job. We will do some reading and discussions around those issues, but we will spend more time talking about your teaching and your work as a scholar. You'll observe members of the English department, watching them teach from your point of view as a TEACHER, rather than as a student. The course will be a workshop on the profession; we will have guest speakers who will also share their wisdom. The class will meet approximately a dozen times during the semester. You will submit a teaching portfolio by week twelve. Credit/No Credit.

ENGL-595

Literary Studies Across Cultures

Cohen, Ashley

M | 4:30-6:50P.M.

SECTION: 32882

Decades after the postcolonial turn in literary studies, Eurocentrism continues to saturate all aspects of knowledge production in our discipline and the academy more generally. In this course we will seek to understand how Eurocentrism shapes our theoretical frameworks, methods, protocols, histories, and objects of study. The goal of this course is to survey important critiques of Eurocentrism, and to explore how we all might "provincialize Europe" in our own scholarship. In order to make this course valuable for all students, no matter what their area of specialization, we will read in a variety of subspecialties and field formations. Key topics may include: nationalism, race/caste, the disciplines and disciplinarity, Marxism, indigeneity and settle colonialism, gender and sexuality, theory of the novel, and psychoanalysis. Although this is primarily a theory/method course, each unit will include literary texts that will serve to ground our discussion in specific test cases and introduce you to key texts in colonial/postcolonial literary history (with a particular albeit not exclusive focus on South Asia). Primary

and secondary source readings on the syllabus may include texts by the following authors and critics: Chinua Achebe, Aijaz Ahmad, Samir Amin, Mulk Raj Anand, Benedict Anderson, Srinivas Aravamudan, Anjali Arondekar, Daniel Defoe, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Partha Chatterjee, Debi-prasad Chattopadhyaya, J.M. Coetzee, Johannes Fabian, Frantz Fanon, E.M. Forster, Amitav Ghosh, Babytai Kamble, Ranjana Khanna, Fred-eric Jameson, Ning Ma, Karl Marx, Munshi Premchand, Arundhati Roy, Edward Said, Tayeb Salih, Gayatri Spivak, Rabindranath Tagore, and Yashpal.





ENGL-693

Graduate Nonfiction Form & Theory

Nelson, Maggie

T | 4:30-6:50P.M.

SECTION: 32800

In this class we will be examining a wide range of nonfiction forms, from memoir to journalism to criticism to scholarship. Our focus will be on recent and contemporary examples; we will be discussing questions of style, structure, ethics, and audience. We will also host guests at work in the field over the course of our semester, to discuss their experiences in the worlds of thinking, researching, writing, and publishing. This is primarily a reading and discussion seminar, but we will also try our hand at several nonfiction experiments and take time to discuss them.

ENGL-697

Graduate Fiction Writing Workshop

Bender, Aimee

W | 6:00-8:20P.M.

SECTION: 32802

This course will be run primarily as a workshop. Writers will bring in 2 to 3 stories or novel excerpts, and workshop itself will emphasize attention to language as a guide toward naturally developing story and character. Additional readings of fiction and essays on craft by writers such as Sigrid Nunez, Zadie Smith, Donald Barthelme and more will be included, and this reading list will also adjust a bit depending on discussions. We will also possibly consider how what is *not* said informs narrative momentum, looking to writers like Tobias Wolff and Haruki Murakami and Laura van den Berg and Yiyun Li. And Dreyer's English will be in the mix, too. Play, mistakes, risk, exploration, failure, and curiosity all encouraged.

ENGL-698

Graduate Poetry Form and Theory:

Thinking Like a Tree

Muske-Dukes, Carol

W | 2:00-4:20P.M.

SECTION: 32805

The renowned poet and essayist C.D. Wright's posthumous book, *Casting Deep Shade: an Amble Inscribed to Beech Trees & Co.* is unclassifiable as to genre, displaying Wright's signature elliptical genre-bending style, approximating a field guide on one hand and an eco-poetic memoir on the other. This course will include deep reading of Wright's book, addressing the broader question of individual work on poetic prose (or prosometric) memoir, book of poems or essay collections. In an upcoming NYTimes Book Review discussion of Wright's book, I note that "*Casting Deep Shade* is less a conventional text than a facsimile of a tree's growth outward, a cumulative chronology in rings of thought". We will discuss the "rings of thought" in Wright's work, touching on "rings" in Blaise Pascal's *Pensees*, *Women of Color: Subversion through Cross-Genre Writing and Sapphic Primitivism*. Besides touching on a few critical texts, we'll also read David Baker's *SWIFT* & Peter Wohlleben's, *THE HIDDEN LIFE OF TREES*. The ultimate focus on essays like "Why Eco-poetry?" by John Shoptaw will cast some good light

and shade on seminar members' original writing (memoir, poetry and translation) – our hands-on workshop re the evolving question of the individual writing style in an age of genre fluidity. Vistors will include Forrest Gander, poet, essayist & translator (& CD Wright's widower) who will discuss *CASTING*, as well as his own work, including *REDSTART*, essays on eco-poetics, as well as David Baker (author of *SWIFT*, *New & Selected poems*) and Molly Bendall (author of *WATCHFUL*, "Under the Quick" & other acclaimed poetry collections).

Professor Muske-Dukes' NYTBR review of C.D. Wright's posthumous volume, *CASTING DEEP SHADE*:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/05/books/review/cd-wright-casting-deep-shade.html>

ENGL-701

Theories and Practices of Professional Development II

Griffiths, Devin

MWF | 8:00-8:50A.M.

SECTION: 32783

Where do you want to go, and how are you supposed to get there?

This 2-credit seminar is a practical workshop for the genres, codes, and strategies that will help advance your career as a researcher and writer after finishing your Ph.D.

Topics: application materials including the job letter and c.v., genres of the interview and presentation and how to prepare for them, sample teaching documents, writing samples, letters of support, job market analysis, the difference between liberal arts and R1 institutions, the difference between postdoc and job applications, and above all: how to cope with the stress of the market and to support each other.

The seminar will meet on a bi-weekly basis, and in addition, will be expected to participate in periodic mock interviews and job talks. The placement director will also meet with each of you individually to review materials and discuss your strategy on the market.