

LIST OF ENGLISH GRADUATE COURSES FOR 2015 – 2016
[updated 2-2-16]

FALL 2015

200	Approaches to Literary Research	Prof. Sharpe
201C	Developments and Issues in Modern Critical Thought	Prof. Seltzer
248	Earlier 17th-Century Literature	Prof. Watson
250	Restoration and 18th-Century Literature	Prof. Nussbaum
254	American Literature to 1900	Prof. Looby
255	Contemporary American Literature	Prof. Carruth
259	Studies in Criticism	Prof. Fisher
260	Studies in Literature and Its Relationship to Arts and Sciences	Prof. Makdisi
M262	Studies in Afro-American Literature	Prof. Streeter

WINTER 2016

244	Old and Medieval English Literature	Prof. Chism
246	Renaissance Literature	Prof. Shuger
252	Victorian Literature	Prof. Bristow
254	American Literature to 1900	Prof. Colacurcio
259	Studies in Criticism	Prof. Kareem
M260A	Topics in Asian American Literature	Prof. Ling
M262	Studies in Afro-American Literature	Prof. Mullen
M270	Seminar: Literary Theory	Prof. Heise
	Seminar in Experimental Critical Theory*	Prof. Reinhard

* The first half of the Experimental Critical Theory (ECT) seminar will be offered as Comparative Literature 290 in the winter. The second half will be offered as English 259 in the spring. Enrollment by permission of instructor only.

SPRING 2016

246	Renaissance Literature	Prof. Fuchs
252	Victorian Literature	Prof. Grossman
254	American Literature to 1900	Prof. Hyde
257.1	Studies in Poetry	Prof. Stefans
257.2	Studies in Poetry	Prof. Minkova
258	Studies in the Novel	Prof. North
260	Studies in Literature and Its Relationship to Arts and Sciences	Prof. Hornby
M261	Studies in Chicana/Chicano Literature	Prof. Perez-Torres
265	Postcolonial Literatures	Prof. DeLoughrey

FALL 2015 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

English 200

**Graduate Proseminar:
Introduction to Theory and Critical Approaches**
Approaches to Literary Research

Prof. Sharpe

Mondays, 9-11:50am

The goal of this proseminar is to introduce entering Ph.D. students to basic approaches to the study of literature in English, as well as to some of the major areas of faculty research represented at UCLA. Through a series of conversations with guest faculty members, we will also pay special attention to the question of theory, how to do it, what it means, and how it relates to what we do as literary scholars.

English 201C

Aesthetics of Interdisciplinarity: The Case of Realism
Developments and Issues in Modern Critical Thought

Prof. Seltzer

Tuesdays, 12-2:50pm

Given that interdisciplinarity determines the situation of the humanities today, this situation merits a description. One way to take stock of it is to look at the staging of the interdisciplinary in art and literature. A prime staging area is the genre of realism, and its mutation toward the natural sciences in the form of naturalism, from the later nineteenth century to the present. The course will look at the cross-field character of these genres of reality and nature, realism and naturalism: from, for example, the experimental novels of Zola and Dreiser to the contemporary experiments of, say, Tom McCarthy, Karl Ove Knausgaard, and W. G. Sebald, among others. Realist/naturalist fiction responds to the call of the Great Outdoors—the Great Outside—and so to the call for the Great Report on it. Such practices respond in part to the splitting of knowledge, with the advent of “the scientific revolution,” into what C.P. Snow (in 1959) called the “two cultures.” The division of labor on socio-economic fronts has its counterpart in the differentiation of work on the intellectual-aesthetic fronts. So if aesthetics is the science of the a priori of perception and mood, what might an aesthetics of interdisciplinarity look like? How might realisms—literary or speculative, scientific or scientological—set that out? The congregation of these premises may tell us something worth knowing, and serve as an introduction of sorts to the discipline and practice of literary studies today. In short, a consideration of forms of interdisciplinarity by way of some prescient novels and films, along with a range of social and science studies, systems theory, and media-technical studies. Course requirements will include either a term paper (15-20 pages) or two shorter papers, or field reports.

English 248

**English Poetry and Religious, Sexual, and
Environmental Politics, 1588-1688**
Earlier 17th-Century Literature

Prof. Watson

Tuesdays, 9-11:50am

Understanding the poetry of this socially turbulent, intellectually generative century – from the Spanish Armada to the Glorious Revolution – requires exploring how political, philosophical, theological, sexual, economic, and scientific practices were evolving. We will therefore study a range of brief poems in conjunction with a glimpses into subjects from Alchemy to Zoology, with emphasis on religious schisms, the English Civil War, and contested areas of gender and eroticism. We will also focus on changing attitudes toward nature provoked by forces such as early colonialism, empirical science, and a changing economy. Instead of reducing literature to a series of instances of a theme, this course will allow literature to open windows onto a multi-faceted Early Modern world.

(continued)

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Through careful reading and open, energetic discussion, we will attempt to comprehend not only what these poems say -- often no small task -- but also their place in the configurations of a rapidly transforming society. What tensions and changes in that culture, as well as in the lives of the authors, might these works have helped to negotiate? How and why did the Metaphysical and Cavalier modes emerge in a period of intense struggle, and what is the interplay of form, content, and meaning within those modes? What evidence do these poems offer about (for example) the personal psychology, gender politics, and status competitions of the period and its poets -- especially Donne, Herbert, Jonson, Carew, and Marvell? What kind of work were the poems doing? How, and how well, were they doing it? And, what kinds of work should we do on them now?

English 250

***The Literature of Race and Slavery
in the Global Eighteenth Century***
Restoration and 18th-Century Literature

Prof. Nussbaum

Thursdays, 9-11:50am

This course will examine fictions of race and slavery on both sides of the Atlantic, India, North Africa, and elsewhere in the eighteenth-century world. How are race and slavery conceptualized in this early period? The course will likely begin with Aphra Behn's play *Abdelazer* (1676) and novella *Oroonoko* (1688); and it will conclude with the anonymous tale, *The Woman of Colour* (1808). Additional readings may include Thomas Southerne's dramatic revision of *Oroonoko* (1696); selections from *The Arabian Nights*; Daniel Defoe's *Captain Singleton* (1720); Sarah Scott's ameliorist *The History of Sir George Ellison* (1766); Unca Eliza Winkfield, *The Female American* (1767); and William Earle, *Obi* (1800). Readings will include critical and theoretical approaches to the topics. A presentation or two and a final seminar paper will be required. Students are welcome to consult with me regarding the class and to make further suggestions for reading.

English 254

Literature and the U.S. Civil War
American Literature to 1900

Prof. Looby

Wednesdays, 9-11:50am

"The real war will never get in the books," Walt Whitman famously wrote. "Its interior history will not only never be written ... perhaps must not and should not be." The "seething hell" of the Civil War, as Whitman called it, may indeed exceed the possibility of literary representation; he was certainly not the only writer to deploy the trope of inexpressibility. But many others—Louisa May Alcott, Mary Chesnut, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Herman Melville, Silas Weir Mitchell, and Whitman among them—attempted to capture at least some aspects of its "interior history." What difference did the Civil War (1861-65) make for American literary expression? This course will examine the effect of the war on American literature—and the effect of literature on the war and on its memory. Among the readings: Whitman's *Memoranda During the War* (1862-65), Louisa May Alcott's *Hospital Sketches* (1863), Sarah Emma Edmond's cross-dressing narrative *Memoirs of a Soldier, Nurse and Spy* (1865), John W. De Forest's great novel *Miss Ravenel's Conversion from Secession to Loyalty* (1867), Elizabeth Keckley's scandalous *Behind the Scenes; or, Thirty Years a Slave, and Four Years in the White House* (1868), and Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895), along with a selection of short stories and poems.

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English 255

Environmental Narratives in Digital Times
Contemporary American Literature

Prof. Carruth

Thursdays, 3-5:50pm

How do contemporary American writers and artists tell stories of local ecosystems and global environmental crises in the era of cyberspace, new media and big data? How do environmental narratives of the late 20th and early 21st centuries negotiate between the rhetoric of innovation that Silicon Valley (among other high-tech centers) has advanced and the perceived risks of technological interventions—from transgenic seeds to fracking—that are themselves underwritten by the infrastructure and logic of "digital times"? This seminar pursues these questions by examining postmodern, realist and speculative fiction along with memoir, documentary and new media art. Literary texts include works by Octavia Butler, Don DeLillo, Jennifer Egan, Elizabeth Kolbert, Ruth Ozeki, Thomas Pynchon, Nathaniel Rich, and Karen Tei Yamashita. Films and new media projects will include *Chasing Ice*, *Cape Farewell*, and bioart works such as Natalie Jeremijenko's *Cross-Species Adventure Club*. Secondary readings will be drawn from the fields of narrative theory, science and technology studies (STS) and ecocriticism.

English 259

***From the Archive to the Edition in the Digital Age:
21st-Century Textual Criticism***
Studies in Criticism

Prof. Fisher

Tuesdays, 3-5:50pm

This seminar sets out to explore the tensions between textual criticism, the recent so-called "material turn," and the digital transformations of both archives and editions. The last few generations of literary scholars have sometimes seen editing as a low-prestige activity, yet recent trends in scholarship have made the archival skills that are the foundation of editing newly necessary. The economic and cultural pressures on the humanities have challenged the printed critical edition's de facto superiority over the digital. The tools used to render the objects of literary study visible and legible are changing rapidly. Nonetheless, the specific challenges of doing archival research remain, as do the transformative decisions that are necessary to produce transcriptions and editions, whether physical or digital. Rather than answer Stanley Fish's "Is there a text in this class?" we will ask the question that should come first: "what is this text, and how did it get here?" The seminar will be both theoretical and practical. In addition to reading widely in textual criticism and editorial theory, each student will also edit something from UCLA's Special Collections. We will address strategies for identifying and locating inedited materials in the archive. The class will also consider common digital tools and standards for editing, curating, and presenting text. Requirements: oral presentation, weekly discussion posts, and a final paper and edition of original materials.

English 260

London from Modern to Postmodern
Studies in Literature and Its Relationship to Arts and Sciences

Prof. Makdisi

Wednesdays, 12-2:50

This seminar will explore literary and cultural representations of London from the nineteenth century to the present—from the age of empire to the age of post-imperial and post-industrial decline and redevelopment, in which different metropolitan spaces and territories have been claimed, reclaimed, emptied, reinvented and resettled. We will draw on a wide range of materials, including poetry, fiction, ethnography, memoirs and graphic novels, including the work of Mary Robinson, Charles Lamb, Henry Mayhew, Joseph Conrad, JG Ballard, Iain Sinclair, Alan Moore and Laura Oldfield Ford.

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English M262

Toni Morrison's Literary Trilogy
Studies in Afro-American Literature

Prof. Streeter

Mondays, 3-5:50

This seminar focuses on Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison's novels *Beloved* (1987) *Jazz* (1992) and *Paradise* (1998.) These works, while identified by Morrison as a trilogy, are rarely studied as such. We consider how Morrison recasts American culture through a Black female subjective lens, one distinguished by three critical moments in the African American experience: the transition from slavery to freedom (*Beloved*) the Great Migration and the Jazz Age (*Jazz*) and the post-Civil Rights era (*Paradise*). We shall also examine the larger arc of Morrison's fiction by reading her first novel *The Bluest Eye* (1970) and her most recent, *God Bless the Child* (2015.) The syllabus includes critical theory and adaptations of Morrison's work in film and theater.

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English 244

Gender, Genre and Miscegenation in Medieval Literature
Old and Medieval English Literature

Prof. Chism

This class studies miscegenating texts – which means both texts that are generically mixed, and texts that stage miscegenations between ethnicities, reliogiosities, languages, literary forms, and regional affiliations. Textual miscegenation puts into overdrive the insight that competing literary genres carry conflicting ideological baggage, as they determine the agencies of characters by configuring the world in interested ways. This class explores the workings of ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in three central medieval literary genres that mix particularly productively: history, romance, and hagiography. Beginning with a pair of texts that contrast the rise and fall of British history against the shaping of an individual life, the class will explore how mixed texts test the ideological affiliations of their genres, and pursue new opportunities and determinants both for the characters and for literary production itself. Texts may include: Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* and *Vita Merlini*, Chretien de Troyes' *Yvain, Amis and Amiloun*, *Aucassin and Nicolette*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, several of the cycle drama plays and the Digby *Mary Magdalene*, and a good chunk of Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*.

Requirements: Seminar paper or two conference length papers (50%), Weekly response papers (30%), a class presentation (20%), and lively class discussion.

English 246

Varieties of English Renaissance Drama
Renaissance Literature

Prof. Shuger

The aim of this course is three-fold. 1)To get some sense of the diversity of English Renaissance drama: university plays, humanist school plays, plays for the boys' companies, court masques, history plays, city comedies, pastorals, tragi-comedy, revenge tragedy, Turk plays, Protestant saints plays, closet drama, humors comedies, and Chapman. 2)To explore outside the box: we're not going to read much (if any) Shakespeare; for Jonson, we'll probably do *Every Man Out of His Humor* and *The New Inn*, but not *Volpone*, etc. Even for those who intend to work in Shakespeare (and perhaps especially for them), some greater familiarity with the range of contemporary drama than much Shakespeare scholarship evinces would be "perhaps/ a thing not undesirable." 3)Since some of these plays have no modern edition, we're going to have to create one, which means learning something about editing Tudor-Stuart drama.

For the first week, it would be helpful to have read Nicholas Udall's *Ralph Roister Doister* (1553) [online edition with notes by Clarence Griffin Child (https://archive.org/stream/ralphroisterdois00udaluoft/ralphroisterdois00udaluoft_djvu.txt)] and Gascoigne's *Supposes* (1566) [online edition with notes by John Cunliffe (<https://archive.org/details/supposesjocasta00gasc>)].

English 252

Victorian Sexual Scandals
Victorian Literature

Prof. Bristow

This class focuses on the investigation and reporting of several of the best-known Victorian sexual scandals. The course begins with the much-publicized case of cross-dressers and theatrical performers Ernest Boulton and Frederick Park, who—in their roles as Stella and Fanny—were arrested in 1870 for intending to commit unnatural offenses. The class proceeds to the "New Journalism" of Evangelical editor W.T. Stead, who exposed the extent of child prostitution in his series of articles titled "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" (*Pall Mall Gazette*, July 1885). The readings proceed to the Whitechapel murders (later known as the "Jack the Ripper" killings) in the East End of London in 1888. The next controversy we will analyze is the Cleveland Street affair, which in 1889-1890 involved the discovery of several telegraph messenger boys providing sexual services to wealthy men, including an equerry to the Prince of Wales. The class concludes with a detailed discussion of the connections between the uproar that greeted Oscar Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890, revised 1891) and the series of trials that resulted in Wilde's imprisonment in 1895 for committing acts of "gross indecency." Most of the readings, which will include the development of London's queer literary subculture, will be available through an online archive of original sources. The course covers aspects of theatre history, popular journalism, legal procedure, aestheticism and decadence, and sex work.

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English 254

Melville
American Literature to 1900

Prof. Colacurcio

Realizing that it's hard to know what an "author" is, but aware of the fact that writers have careers, we'll follow Melville's dramatic thinking from the troubled anthropology of the South Sea narratives, through the Manichean blasphemies of *Moby-Dick*, to the unsolved epistemic riddle of *The Confidence Man*. How much of Melville's relentless critique is "politics"?—problems we can and ought to fix—and how much is some ambiguous "mystery if iniquity"? We may not get to *Billy Budd*—way off in the 1880's—but we will take a long, hard look at the radically under-appreciated *Battle Pieces*, which dares to wonder if War is not almost as bad as Slavery. What are Melville's politics? And are they ruined or redeemed by the sense of "something somehow like original sin"? Answer: yes.

English 259

The Wake of Critique
Studies in Criticism

Prof. Kareem

What is literary "critique"? Or what was it? Is it dead? And if so, what happened next? This class will introduce students to key texts associated with literary critique, and also to the various conversations that have emerged in recent years analyzing, mourning, or challenging the notion of critique's demise. Readings will include works by Fredric Jameson, Eve Sedgwick, Marjorie Levinson, John Guillory, Franco Moretti, Bruno Latour, Rita Felski, Steven Best and Sharon Marcus, Mitchum Huehls, and many others. We will also read selected works of fiction in order to think about how, in practice, critical and post-critical theory asks us to read literary texts.

English M260A

Asian American Fiction and the Question of Referent
Topics in Asian American Literature

Prof. Ling

Location: Humanities A56
Time: 12:00 – 2:50, Thursday
Office Hours: 10:00-11:00, Thursday; Humanities 216
Email: jliling@humnet.ucla.edu

Course Description:

This seminar reads several Asian American works of fiction on the basis of a critical survey of how the theory and practice of literary representation evolve over time, and in recognition of the epistemological challenges posed by post-humanist perspectives on conceptualizing literature's social function in contemporary criticism. Issues to be explored include the realism debate of the 1930s and its residual problematic in postmodern/poststructuralist conceptions of the real, as well as the tendency in cultural studies to revive old-fashioned historicism through its penchant to textualize the social as a basic strategy for re-historicizing art. We will devote the first half of the seminar to grasping relevant theoretical positions and the second half to making sense of selected Asian American literary texts in light of our theoretical explorations. Grades will be based on the following: 1) an in-class oral presentation (10%); 2) an annotated bibliography on the assigned theoretical work (30%); and 3) a 16- to 18-page course paper that analyzes an Asian American fictional text by paying particular attention to its mediated relationship to history or experience (60%). A fully developed course syllabus will be available in mid-November.

Required Texts (on order at the UCLA Bookstore):

Bulosan, Carlos. *America Is in the Heart*. Seattle: U of Washington Press, 1946/1973.
Cha, Theresa Hak Kyung. *Dictee*. Berkeley: Third Woman Press, 1982.
Ozeki, Ruth L. *My Year of Meats*. New York: Penguin, 1999.
Yamashita, Karen Tei. *Tropic of Orange*. Minneapolis: Coffee House, 1996.

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English M262

***Freedom Time: Innovative Poetry and Poetics in
Contemporary African American Literature***
Studies in Afro-American Literature

Prof. Mullen

In this graduate seminar we will read three required texts: an anthology of poetry compiled by Aldon Nielsen and Lauri Ramey, and two collections of critical essays by Carther Mathes and Anthony Reed. Together, these texts represent important trends in African American poetry following the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s-70s, such as a shift from defining a prescriptive "Black Aesthetic" to a more expansive exploration of aesthetics, poetics, and identity (including "blackness" among other "identity markers"), along with a continuing interest in experimental, innovative, or avant-garde writing. We will ask how poets and critics define and practice innovative and idiosyncratic poetry and poetics in order to expand possibilities for reading and writing poetry by African Americans.

Three required texts:

Carter Mathes, *Imagine the Sound: Experimental African American Literature after Civil Rights*

Aldon L. Nielsen and Lauri Ramey, editors, *What I Say: Innovative Poetry by Black Writers in America*

Anthony Reed, *Freedom Time: The Poetics and Politics of Black Experimental Writing*

Recommended texts, available in campus libraries:

Aldon L. Nielsen and Lauri Ramey, editors, *Every Goodbye Ain't Gone: An Anthology of Innovative Poetry by African Americans*

Aldon L. Nielsen, *Integral Music: Languages of African-American Innovation*

Evie Shockley, *Renegade Poetics: Black Aesthetics and Formal Innovation in African American Poetry*

Gordon E. Thompson, *Black Music, Black Poetry: Blues and Jazz's Impact on African American Versification*

English M270

BioCities: Urban Ecology and the Cultural Imagination
Seminar: Literary Theory

Prof. Heise

In 2008, humanity crossed a historical boundary: more than 50% of the global population now lives in cities, and future population growth will occur or end up in urban areas, with important ecological as well as social and cultural consequences. This course aims to introduce students to the study of nature in the modern city with the help of materials from environmental history, ecocriticism, cultural geography, urban studies (including urban planning), and architecture.

The BioCities seminar aims to explore the realities and the cultural imagination of the BioCity over time and around the globe through stories, maps, models, blueprints, and a variety of images. It aims to revisit key modernist and postmodernist texts whose ecological dimensions have not to date been explored, and to reinterpret them in the context of urban planning and design. Conversely, the insights of cultural geography, media theory, and historical investigation on recent ideas about urban architecture, design, and planning. The seminar will aim to provide students with a global horizon in terms of how the city is imagined and represented in literature, film, and other media over the course of the twentieth century, and it will also seek to develop a particular focus on Los Angeles.

We will explore topics such as urban political ecology; urban biodiversity and cultural diversity; green, blue, and grey spaces; the city and the imagination of disaster; climate urbanism; and urban utopias and dystopias. Readings each week will include a literary work; a nonfictional text; a planning, architectural, or geographical document; and a work in another medium (photography, film, map, website, database).

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Com Lit 290

Seminar in Experimental Critical Theory

Prof. Reinhard

This 2-quarter seminar (comprised of Comparative Literature 290 in winter quarter and English 259 in spring quarter) is offered by the UCLA Program in Experimental Critical Theory. For more information, please visit:

<http://ect.humnet.ucla.edu/>

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English 246

England/Beyond England
Renaissance Literature

Prof. Fuchs

How is the early modern English canon constructed in relation to other languages and other literatures? How does the sense of England's distinctiveness then and now determine the boundaries of English literature? What is the connection between literary *imitatio* and broader forms of cultural imitation or imperial emulation? Focusing on problems of vernacularity, translation, and empire, this course examines early modern English texts in a series of overlapping contexts, and considers how models for literary study beyond the nation (oceanic, archipelagic, transnational) serve the early modern period. Readings in More, Spenser, Shakespeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Crashaw and others.

English 252

Introduction to the Nineteenth-Century Novel
Victorian Literature

Prof. Grossman

This course surveys what we mean when we say that the realist novel became the ascendant literary form of the Victorian period. We will begin early with one of Walter Scott's breakthrough historical bestsellers, then read carefully a serialized Dickens tale, one of Elizabeth Gaskell's industrial fictions, and a masterpiece of plotting by Wilkie Collins. Along the way we will pay particular attention to the material conditions of the novel's publication, questions of temporality and narrative form, race and gender, and the international context in which these novels laid claim to instituting English culture. We will pay special attention to the novel's formal properties, including free indirect discourse, multiplots, fictionality, and omniscient narration. Our secondary readings will likely include Georg Lukacs, Raymond Williams, Benedict Anderson, and Catherine Gallagher. I am also open to configuring this class's reading around students' wishes; please contact me by email (jhg@ucla.edu) to express your thoughts. In this class, we may have occasion to discuss issues of professionalization and writing both generally and in relation to working on the nineteenth century. Course requirements include participation in a final class conference and a 17-page final paper.

English 254

The Art of Politics
American Literature to 1900

Prof. Hyde

This seminar explores the politics of fiction and the art of politics. It asks how the alternate worlds envisioned in fiction change the way readers relate to the political realities around them. What is the relationship between readerly identification and political allegiance? How do novelistic feelings—sympathy, pity, disregard, etc.—influence reform? What does it mean to say that language is political? And, to what degree can laws be understood as governmental “fictions”? Drawing on the fiction, political philosophy, and criticism written in and about the Americas in the long-nineteenth century, this seminar will examine how narrative perspective, character development, and historical counterfactuals suspend and transform cultural assumptions about who is part of a community and what it means to belong. We will read literature—by Robert Montgomery Bird, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Frederick Douglass, Henry David Thoreau, Herman Melville, Harriet Beecher Stowe, William Wells Brown, Edward Everett Hale, and Henry James—alongside works of political philosophy, legal history, and literary criticism.

English 257.1

Three American Avant-Gardes:
The New York School, The Black Arts Movement and Language Poetry
Studies in Poetry

Prof. Stefans

This class traces the progression of formal experimentation in American poetry in relation to aesthetic, social and political concerns from the immediate postwar period to the 1990s. The primary representatives of the first generation of New York School poets, John Ashbery and Frank O'Hara, were immersed in the art world of New York which included several members of the European avant-gardes

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(Breton and Duchamp among them), transforming and, in some views, sublimating the radical and utopian aspirations that motivated these movements in favor of a Whitman-inspired idea of liberal “democracy” that came define the New York School in later years. The Black Arts movement, whose most prominent poet was Amiri Baraka, adopted many of the techniques of the New York School (as well as of their contemporaries, the Beat and Projective poets) while emphasizing the relationship of the individual, subjective artist to a collective will, that of the African diaspora, much like their French-language contemporaries the Negritude poets (Aimé Césaire from Martinique and Léopold Senghor from Senegal among others) and Anglophone Caribbean poets such as Edward Kamau Brathwaite, not to mention radical political figures such as Malcom X. Language Poets who emerged in the 1970s such as Charles Bernstein, Bruce Andrews and Lyn Hejinian can be seen as an attempt to realign the formal experimentation of the New York School poets — with their interest in indeterminacy, collage, camp, surrealism, “estranged” language and an attempt to unify the arts in a synaesthetic union (a “poetry of all the senses” in Rimbaud’s phrase) — with radical political thinking that critiqued cultural hegemony and sought to transform social relations. This, of course, is the neat, cartoon version of this progression, if, indeed, there is one; loose ends and aporias abound. Many topics will be considered, such as: can formal experimentation of the sorts investigated by these poets really have transformative effects on society; how is race accounted for in “experimental” poetry that seeks to critique the idea of the “subject,” created by a bourgeois elite and inherited from Romanticism, while many citizens are being denied their right to this very same subjectivity; what new forms of poetry were introduced during this period (in the way that the sonnet was introduced to English by Sir Thomas Wyatt) and are they reproducible on the level of techne; and how have these various formal/political gestures played out, given recent controversies in the poetry world around race and formal practices, in contemporary times?

English 257.2

Early English Verse
Language and Literature

Prof. Minkova

The seminar will survey the changing modes and principles of poetic composition in English examined in relation to linguistic history and structure. We will start with a survey of the phonological structure of English. After covering the main differences between the stress patterns of Modern English and Old and Middle English, we will move on to the universal features of verse, addressing the properties of verse compared to ordinary spoken language and literary prose. We will try to understand (1) the metrical structure of *Beowulf* and other Old English alliterative compositions, including Ælfric’s “rhythmical prose”, (2) the alliterative innovations and constraints in Middle English, (3) the emergence and the evolution of rhyme and syllable-counting in English prior to Chaucer, and (4) the iambic pentameter: metrical rules and violations in Chaucer, Wyatt, Milton, Shakespeare. Interest in the general principles of verse composition, speech rhythm, the semiotics of verse structure, and the inherent pedagogical value of the material for teaching undergraduates about versification, should make this class a worthwhile experience.

English 258

Anatomy of the Novel
Studies in the Novel

Prof. North

This will be a practical course in formal analysis of the novel. Thus we will read some of the important authorities on the topic: Genette, Barthes, Bal, etc. and a number of novels. The selection of these will be slanted somewhat toward the modern period, but there will also be examples from the 18th and 19th centuries. Our purpose will be to acquire a command of the basic categories in the analysis of the novel, but also to subject these to some critical pressure. For example, why is the apparently basic distinction between story and discourse so hard to describe and why are the names given to these two so variable? Is it appropriate to divide novelistic narration along the linguistic line between first and third person? What are the limitations to omniscient narration and how does the acknowledgement of limitations undermine the very concept? Is the term “psychological realism” an oxymoron? Requirements include a short oral report and either a) two scholarly book reviews, or b) a seminar paper.

SPRING 2016 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

English 260

Modernism, Film, and Photography
Studies in Literature and Its Relationship to Arts and Sciences

Prof. Hornby

In 1934, Gertrude Stein claimed that in her writing she was “doing what the cinema was doing,” taking as a given the historical coincidence of her particular stripe of experimental writing and the invention of film. But her claim speaks more to her desire for absolute currency than it does to the givenness of the link between modernist writing and its contemporary visual technologies. This course will explore the visual culture of modernism by thinking through the various relationships between literature, film, and photography in the early part of the 20th century. In addition to screening a number of early films, we will read works by Joyce, Woolf, and Proust, and engage with a diverse corpus of critical writing on photography, literary criticism, and film theory. Of particular interest will be how visual technologies and literature participate in a modernist understanding of time and perspective. In addition, we will address questions of interdisciplinary methodology, the relationship between photography and film, and theories of word and image.

English M261

Movements in Chicana/o Literature
Studies in Chicana/Chicano Literature

Prof. Perez-Torres

Our class will trace an arc that captures different significant moments in the unfolding of Chicana/o literature. Our focus will be on mostly well-known authors and texts: mainly prose but also some poetry. The readings will mainly be clustered around major literary, critical and theoretical movements (floricanto poetry, Quinto Sol prized novels, feminista consciousness, borderlands consciousness, hemispheric indigenismo, transnacional cultural production) in order to establish a familiarity with the field. More centrally, we will consider the points of contact between earlier iterations of Chicanismo and more recent articulations of Chicana/o or Latina/o or Hispana/o or Hispanic identity. Most centrally, our analysis will seek out lines of continuity as well as important points of rupture between earlier and more recent theorizations of the Chicana/o.

English 265

***Postcolonial Studies and the Anthropocene:
Figuring Climate Change***
Postcolonial Literatures

Prof. DeLoughrey

The increasing recognition of global climate change has catalyzed a new body of work in the visual arts, literature, and film which engage and critique what is increasingly being called “carbon colonialism.” This course offers a global and comparative study of places at the frontline of climate change such as tropical islands and the poles which are more visibly confronting sea level rise and glacial melt and places these discourses in relation to the history of empire. We will read current debates about the new geological epoch termed the Anthropocene (and those about the Capitalocene) and raise questions as to how an era of environmental change may produce new narrative and artistic forms, such as the genre of “Cli-Fi,” defined as both “Climate Fiction” as well as “Climate Film.” We’ll examine how various narrative and visual modes—the novel, short story, documentary film, and art installations—engage different modes of storytelling about global environmental change such as apocalypse, slow violence, utopia, and dystopia.