

The following is an archive of English graduate courses offered at Georgetown from 2004–2008. For more details, see the Registrar's webpage at <http://courses.georgetown.edu/>.

ENGL–504–01 Medieval Sexualities

[Wickham-Crowley, Kelley](#)

This course aims to better understand the variety of medieval sexualities from a comparative sampling of varied textual types and social institutions. Those interested in material culture may extend their work to include depictions in manuscripts or the plastic arts, including archaeological evidence. We will study depictions of sexualities and gender issues in European literatures, classical and medieval biological and medical texts, religious thought and law, and the cultural variation present across regions and periods from c. 500-1500. Students might expect, for example, to learn more of Anglo-Saxon attitudes from penitentials, to think about the implications of Irish laws on divorce for reading women in myth, to read courtly literature through the lens of contemporary medical knowledge, to weigh the impact of clashing cultural attitudes on sexual mores, or to consider the connection between prosecution of heresies and accusations of deviance.

ENGL–508–01 Critical Approaches to Chaucer

[McNamer, Sarah](#)

In this course, we will assess various critical approaches to Chaucer (especially those informed by feminism, the new historicism, the old historicism, marxism, material philology, cultural studies, post-colonial theory, and psychoanalysis) even as we employ them to read selections from his masterpiece, *The Canterbury Tales*, and his finest single poem -- the complex, comic, and gorgeous love story, *Troilus and Criseyde*. We will read Chaucer in the original Middle English, which is really quite easy; plenty of coaching and language exercises will be provided early in the semester. Our largest goal is to assess the value and the limitations of contemporary theories and methods as tools for reading literature from a distinctly distant past. The course may thus prove useful for the study of other pre-twentieth-century literatures and cultures.

No previous exposure to Middle English or to critical theory is required. Written work will consist of short (5-7 p) papers during the term rather than

one long paper at the end. Oral work will consist of giving a class presentation and learning to pronounce Middle English beautifully. Please address any questions about the course to Professor McNamer: mcnamers@georgetown.edu.

ENGL-512-01 Medieval Performance

[McNamer, Sarah](#)

In this course we will explore various modes of performance in late medieval England in light of both medieval and contemporary theories of performance, ritual, and theater. Drama itself will be a significant focus; in particular, we will seek to gain an in-depth understanding of the great Corpus Christi cycles, examining their origins, the theories of “play” that motivate them, their robust humor and its relation to their theological aims, their function in both supporting and contesting ideals of civic unity, the ways they seek to construct and channel emotional response, and their tendency to collapse distinctions between spectator and spectacle, elite and popular, sacred and profane. But an equally important aim of the course is to investigate the performative aspects of late-medieval English culture more generally. Thus we will consider topics such as the oral performance of lyrics, romances, and sermons; the performativity of legal language and the language of Christian ritual; participatory affective piety, including the use of holy dolls, meditative writings, and devotional objects; civic processions and public executions; dance, gesture, and body language in both sacred and secular contexts; gender performance, including cross-dressing; and conduct books and other scripts written for the performance of everyday life. Prerequisite: a genuine willingness to learn Middle English. Since all primary texts will be in the original, an initial introduction to Middle English will be followed by weekly language exercises -- both written and oral. Students can expect to emerge as adept readers and performers of this rich and musical ancestor of our common tongue.

ENGL-516-01 Medieval Cultural Studies: The Lyric

[McNamer, Sarah](#)

This course provides an introduction to the methods of medieval cultural studies, the loosely-affiliated set of practices inspired in part by contemporary cultural studies and postmodern theory. It will do so not by presenting these approaches in isolation, but by bringing them to bear on a single, polymorphic genre: the medieval lyric. We will take a pan-European

view of the genre, reading not only lyrics from medieval England, Ireland, Provence, Portugal, Germany, and Italy, but from the rich Arabic and Hebrew traditions of Andalusia. Most of these lyrics are gorgeous, even at first glance; many also come across as powerful expressions of personal emotion that transcend culture, politics, and history. But our object in this course will be to recall that, however beautiful they may be, “texts are worldly” – and thus to embed the poems in the historical, cultural and theoretical matrices that can illuminate their ideological operations as well as (and in conjunction with) their aesthetic complexities. Theorists such as Althusser, Jauss, Bourdieu, Butler, Foucault, Said, Zizek and Schechner will guide us we investigate, among other things, the function of the lyric in the production of subjectivity (including gender and sexuality), social relations, religious identities and cultural allegiances. Given the lyric’s preoccupation with emotion – from the intense grief voiced in Marian laments to the erotic yearnings of troubadour song – our discussions will often center on the historicity of feeling: on how emotion is constructed and performed via the lyric, and to what social and political ends. Cultural transmission will be another focus, as we move from considering the interactions between “high” and “low” cultures in the production and performance of the lyric to an extended investigation of the *convivencia* among Muslims, Jews and Christians in medieval Spain – a “culture of tolerance” created and sustained in part through the vehicle of lyric poetry.

All readings will be in modern English translation, except for the Middle English lyrics. No prior exposure to Middle English is necessary.

ENGL-521-01 Literatures of Medieval Women

[Wickham-Crowley, Kelley](#)

A critical examination of the issues raised by women writers and by memorable female characters in the literature of Europe and the British Isles between 800 and 1500. We will look at topics such as: the interpenetration of pre-Christian and Christian traditions; models of motherhood; marriage, chastity and martyrdom; misogyny and the virgin/whore dichotomy; the appropriation and revision of history by both men and women; voice and silencing; and transgressing gender boundaries. Literatures represented will include Celtic, Old and Middle English, French and Provençal, supplemented by material on historical backgrounds and literary criticism. Selections from women writers will include the dramas of *Hrotsvit of Gandersheim*, the letters of *Heloise*, *Dhuoda's* manual for her son, poems of the *trobairitz* (female troubadours), the visions of *Julian of Norwich*, the *lais* of *Marie de France*, *Hildegard von*

Bingen's accomplishments in word, illustration, and music, and Christine de Pisan's work. Biweekly short response papers, a class presentation, a substantial final paper, a critical notebook (articles and notes), active class discussion. No exams.

ENGL-522-01 Medieval Emotion

In this seminar we will enter into an old world -- medieval England -- in order to investigate a new academic field: the history of emotion. Literary texts will be our primary sources, and one of our chief tasks will be to learn to read these historically as we explore fundamental questions: Do emotions such as grief, love, anger or compassion change over time, or from culture to culture? If so, how -- and how can we know? What social and political functions did the cultivation and expression of certain emotions serve in specific medieval contexts? How does literature produce emotions? Both medieval and modern theories of emotion, including recent concepts developed in anthropology, linguistics, and neuroscience, will guide us in this quest. Questions? Feel free to contact Prof. McNamer in advance of the seminar: 425 New North; 7-7601; mcnamer@georgetown.

ENGL-531-01 Representing Renaissance London

[Orlin, Lena](#)

This historicist seminar will consider the place of London in the early modern English imagination. London was the home of the royal court and of Parliament, hub of international export and import, center for law courts and law training, and provider of urban entertainments and pleasures. These sites and activities drew England's country gentry to the city and are heavily documented in state papers, diplomatic reports, legal transcripts, and private correspondence. But London belonged also to its middling-sort traders, its labouring poor, and its homeless, and these London lives, too, were objects of textualization in the records of parish churches, livery companies, and disciplinary institutions, as well as on the public stage. Shakespeare played a minor role in theatricalizing the city; in addition to sampling the records mentioned above and such chorographical projects as John Stow's Survey of London, we will study plays by Thomas Dekker, Ben Jonson, Thomas Middleton, and Thomas Heywood: *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, *The Alchemist*, *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*, and others. Seminar members will lead discussions and write research papers; there is no final exam.

ENGL-533-01 Race, Religion and Gender in Early Modern English Culture

[Kaplan, M. Lindsay](#)

This course engages and builds upon recent scholarship which has argued for understanding race in terms of gender, and demonstrated that religion is an important element in the construction of race in the early modern period. Many scholars have considered the conceptualization of race as an early modern phenomenon, but an examination of medieval texts and scholarship reveals that a racial discourse is already being articulated in the thirteenth century. We will therefore consider the scholarship of this earlier period to see how the intersections of race, gender and religion are represented, before turning to the early modern engagement with and development upon these ideas. Our focus will be on Islam and Judaism as the primary sites of the intersection of religious and racial alterity, noting gender differences in the representations of these faith groups. Our readings will cover a range of texts: theoretical essays on intersectionality and historicism, literary criticism, historical essays, and early modern dramatic and non-literary texts.

ENGL-535-01 Shakespeare's Exotic Romances

[Yiu, Mimi](#)

From puckish sprites to island savages, from man-eating bears to speaking statues, Shakespeare's plays are populated with otherworldly or extraordinary elements that we might term exotic. Interestingly, most of these examples of exoticism occur within the context of romance, understood in two primary senses: as a genre encompassing Shakespeare's late plays, and as a gendered narrative trajectory of the knight-wins-damsel variety. This course will ask how Shakespeare defamiliarizes and makes exotic the conventions of romance, experimenting with the known world of five-act plays and imagining bold new narrative possibilities. Text may include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Othello*, *A Winter's Tale*, *Pericles*, and *The Tempest*. Graduate students will be expected to produce a 15-20 page research paper in addition to presentations and short assignments.

ENGL-538 Narrative Poetry

[Sitterson, Joseph](#)

We will read major English narrative poems (in part or whole) from the medieval period to the twentieth century, paying particular attention to their concerns and strategies, and along with the poems read some modern criticism of them to gain some sense of its characteristic interests. Poems will include Beowulf, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales (selections), Spenser's The Faerie Queene (selections), Milton's Paradise Lost (selections), Pope's The Rape of the Lock, Wordsworth's The Prelude (selections), Coleridge's The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, Keats's Lamia, and Eliot's The Waste Land.

ENGL-540-01 Milton

[Rosenblatt, Jason](#)

By starting with the early literary productions in poetry and prose and concluding with /Samson Agonistes/, written in old age, when Milton, like his champion, was blind and disillusioned, we will give attention to the development of his literary powers. But we will spend most of our time on /Paradise Lost./ With all due reverence for Chaucer's /Canterbury Tales/ and Shakespeare's /Hamlet/ and /King Lear/, Milton's epic is the greatest single work ever written in English. We will try to understand it mostly on our own but also with help from some of the best contemporary essays. Besides a longer final paper, everyone will turn in a short paper (500-750 words, no more than two to three double-spaced typed pages) every two weeks. Since the class will be split in two, and the assignments staggered, one half of the class will be turning in an assignment every time we meet. Papers should concentrate on interpretive problems or questions raised by the work to be discussed in class that week.

ENGL-541-01 Literature of Everyday Life in the Renaissance

[Orlin, Lena](#)

In a panoramic history of western private life, Philippe Ariès called Renaissance England the "birthplace of privacy." What set England apart from much of Europe was the Protestant Reformation, with its emphases on immediate engagement with scripture (an impetus to literacy) and on personal responsibility for the spiritual state (the "growth of individualism"). For Ariès, it was symptomatic that so many English men and women

textualized their everyday lives in diaries and family memoirs. This seminar will look at journals, autobiographies, biographies, letters, personal advice, and legal depositions from Shakespeare's time. Were these new genres instruments of reflection, self-expression, self-fashioning, misrepresentation—or some combination? Which conventions of literary form, religious and political thought, and economic concern shaped them? What were the uses of fiction, fantasy, and humor in personal history? How was it that accounts of spiritual self-examination and social regulation documented so much gossip, scandal, and controversy?

ENGL-543-01 Representing Renaissance London

[Orlin, Lena](#)

This historicist seminar will consider the place of London in the early modern English imagination. London was the home of the royal court and of Parliament, hub of international export and import, center for law courts and law training, and provider of urban entertainments and pleasures. These sites and activities drew England's country gentry to the city and are heavily documented in state papers, diplomatic reports, legal transcripts, and private correspondence. But London belonged also to its middling-sort traders, its labouring poor, and its homeless, and these London lives, too, were objects of textualization in the records of parish churches, livery companies, and disciplinary institutions, as well as on the public stage. Shakespeare played a minor role in theatricalizing the city; in addition to sampling the records mentioned above and such chorographical projects as John Stow's Survey of London, we will study plays by Thomas Dekker, Ben Jonson, Thomas Middleton, and Thomas Heywood: *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, *The Alchemist*, *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*, and others. Seminar members will lead discussions and write research papers; there is no final exam.

ENGL-545-01 Race, Religion and Gender in Early Modern English Culture

[Kaplan, M. Lindsay](#)

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the thirteenth century. We will therefore consider the scholarship of this earlier period to see how the intersections of race, gender and religion are represented, before turning to the early modern engagement with and development upon these ideas. Our focus will be on Islam and Judaism as the primary sites of the intersection of religious and racial alterity, noting gender differences in the representations of these faith groups. Our readings will cover a range of texts: theoretical essays on intersectionality and historicism, literary criticism, historical essays, and early modern dramatic and non-literary texts.

ENGL-550-01 Historicizing Eighteenth-Century Studies: The Old, the New, and the Now

[Temple, Kathryn](#)

British eighteenth-century studies has been marked by claims of novelty, most notably by Felicity Nussbaum's somewhat inflammatory essay collection, *The New Eighteenth Century* published in 1987. This course examines various eighteenth-century primary texts in light of the "old" criticism, "new" theory as represented by a wave of work published in the wake of Nussbaum's collection, and current work in the field. We will take as our primary texts *Robinson Crusoe*, *Windsor Forest* and *The Rape of the Lock*, sections of *Pamela* and *Tom Jones*, selections from Samuel Johnson's works, *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, and *The Romance of the Forest*. Critical texts will be drawn from Martin Batestin, Walter Jackson Bates, Laura Brown, Susan Stewart, Laura Rosenthal, Helen Deutsch and others. The course will include a number of quizzes on content and require a presentation, eight shorter response papers, and a longer, final essay.

ENGL-552-01 Literature of the Atlantic Empire

[Todd, Dennis](#)

In this course, we will examine some British, Native American, Anglo-American, African-British, and American literature that grew out of the collision of cultures in the Americas in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly, though not exclusively, in the Chesapeake and the Caribbean. In these fictional and non-fictional narratives and poems, we will be interested in several related concerns: the ideas of civilization and savagery; the dynamics of slavery and freedom (historically, economically, and politically, and also as figures for psychological and spiritual processes); and the articulation of selfhood in a colonial context. We will

pay attention to whether there are significant and growing differences between Old and New World identities, and we will chart some of the anxieties of dealing with a new American identity in the literature of the early Republic.

We will study the following authors and works: Behn, Oroonoko; Defoe, Robinson Crusoe; the captivity narrative of Mary Rowlandson; narratives of indentured servitude by Moraley and Ashbridge; Sarah Knight's Journal; Cooke's Sot-Weed Factor; Byrd's Secret History of the Dividing Line; Olaudah Equiano's Interesting Narrative; Franklin's Autobiography; Foster's The Coquette; Irving's "Legend of Sleepy Hollow"; Brown's Wieland; and Cooper's The Prairie.

ENGL-559-01 Age of Johnson

[Ribeiro, Alvaro](#)

Beginning with a study of the major writings of Samuel Johnson and his circle of literary friends, this course traces the formation of the canon of late eighteenth-century British literature and the ways in which that canon has recently been revised. In addition to Johnson, attention will be given to the poetry, novels, biographies, letters, criticism, and moral, philosophical, and historical texts of writers such as James Boswell, Edmund Burke, Frances Burney, Edward Gibbon, Oliver Goldsmith, Hester Thrale-Piozzi, Horace Walpole, and Mary Wollstonecraft.

ENGL-577-01 Wordsworth and Coleridge

[Wu, Duncan](#)

This course will explore one of the greatest partnerships in English literary history. It was to produce the most accomplished work of either of the two poets, including 'The Ruined Cottage', 'The Pedlar', 'The Ancient Mariner', 'Christabel' and 'Kubla Khan', as well as a book that was to prove nothing less than revolutionary in its impact – Lyrical Ballads. The course will also explore some of the ways in which this remarkable collaboration shaped Wordsworth's greatest poetry, including 'The Prelude' and The Excursion. Students will be expected to adopt a scholarly approach, examining the letters, notebooks, journals and other manuscript materials of these writers, and overall the course will emphasize the importance of a sensitive, close reading of their work. Those who participate will be expected to deliver at least one class presentation relating to a literary work, the subject to be decided in discussion with Professor Wu.

Throughout the emphasis will be on close analysis of the text and class discussion in which all students will be expected to participate. Each week students will be expected to complete writing assignments which will contribute to their overall assessment, as will their performance in class.

ENGL-583-01 Dickens

[Fisher, Leona](#)

This seminar will examine five of Charles Dickens's major novels in great detail. Students will be expected to do extensive research for each novel and to present sections of the books as well as to include a range of critical approaches, historical and biographical contexts, and problematic themes and issues to discuss as a group (one hour of the two-hour class). Each small-group presentation will be followed by individual short papers (3-4 pages) to be written by individual members of the group and turned in one week subsequent to the presentation.

All students will write one-page response/critical reading papers each week (8 in all), designed to raise questions about the text and to isolate particular passages for discussion. These papers will be distributed via email to all members of the class at least 24 hours before it meets.

A long research paper (15-20 pages) with an original thesis will also be required. Students are responsible for developing their own topics for these essays, submitting a formal prospectus and annotated bibliography, and presenting a draft of the essay two weeks before the end of term, with other students designated to read and critique their work.

Required texts: *Oliver Twist*, *Hard Times*, *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations*, and *Our Mutual Friend*, as well as Edgar Johnson's biography, other (short) works by Dickens and his contemporaries, selected literary theory, and criticism of individual books.

ENGL-591-01 National Identity and the 19th-Century Novel

[Ragussis, Michael](#)

This course focuses on 19th-century novels that use ethnicity, religion, and gender to define and to contrast different national identities. We will especially focus on the ways in which Irish, Scottish, Catholic, and Jewish identities are imagined in relationship to Protestant England. We will explore important formal developments in the novel (such as the rise of the historical novel and the national tale), and analyze the ways in which the Other is typically theatricalized and feminized, especially in a paradigmatic plot that brings the English hero into contact with a beautiful, foreign

“performing heroine.” Primary texts will include Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda* (1801) and *Harrington* (1817), Sydney Owenson’s *Wild Irish Girl* (1806), Germaine de Stael’s *Corinne, or Italy* (1807), Walter Scott’s *Waverley* (1814), and finally George Eliot’s *Daniel Deronda* (1876). Critical and theoretical texts will inform our reading of these primary texts. Frequent class presentations, several short papers, and one long final essay will be required.

ENGL-592-01 Victorian Sexualities

[O'Malley, Patrick](#)

Recent criticism of the literature and culture of the middle and late nineteenth century has pointed out that the famous Victorian prudery meant not so much that people stopped talking and writing about sex and sexuality but that people talked and wrote about it more—if only to describe precisely what it was that people weren’t supposed to be thinking about. In this course, we will examine the different ways that Victorian fiction and non-fiction prose addressed the many questions of sexual transgression that arose in the period, including divorce, adultery, bigamy, homosexuality, and prostitution. It will focus on the Victorian novel, exploring how central sexual and erotic cross-currents are to the development of the canonical novel itself, but alongside the novels we will also be reading from a wide selection of other prose genres, from the short story to the newspaper exposé to the diary to the case study. Throughout the entire course, we will devote particular attention to the ways that the prose of the period relates sexual transgression to such other questions as gender roles, national identity, the class structure, religion, and literary history. Authors will include Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Oscar Wilde, Walter Pater, Henry James, Christina Rossetti, Sheridan Le Fanu, Bram Stoker, Michael Field, Sarah Grand, Havelock Ellis, and Sigmund Freud; theoretical and historical accounts may include works by Foucault, Sedgwick, Sinfield, Halperin, Dowling, Kincaid, Kendrick, Walkowitz, and Showalter.

ENGL-593 The Gothic Novel and Its Aftermath

[O'Malley, Patrick](#)

The late eighteenth-century Gothic novel in England was both wildly popular and potentially shocking to contemporary sensibilities, dealing as it did with topics such as abduction, rape, supernatural forces, and secret sacrilegious rituals. But alongside the sensationalistic aspects of the

Gothic novel is also frequently a sustained, though distorted, examination of the social and cultural anxieties of the age that produced it, anxieties frequently of sexual, religious, or national transgression. This course will move from the traditional Gothic novel to some of its later manifestation in the nineteenth century, analyzing the ways in which shifting moral, scientific, and social contexts shaped the dystopic world of the Gothic. At the same time, it will explore the relationship of certain formal conventions of the Gothic novel (including structure and narrative technique) to this broader cultural work. Texts will include *The Castle of Otranto*, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, *The Monk*, *Zofloya*, *Melmoth the Wanderer*, *Carmilla*, and *Dracula* as well as a series of horror and suspense films and theoretical accounts of the Gothic.

ENGL-594-01 Staging Anti-Slavery

[Cima, Gay](#)

What are the rewards and dangers of activism? Through an investigation of the activist strategies used by nineteenth-century black and white female abolitionists, we'll try to gain a better understanding of the ongoing relationship between suffering and citizenship, spectatorship and the self. We'll study the "performative" nature of the identity categories through which we traditionally understand the self—categories such as race, gender, and American-ness—analyzing the way in which these categories depend upon repeated behaviors that, paradoxically, are never duplicated. In an effort to understand abolitionist women's activist performances, we'll consider the shifting historical circumstances of the transatlantic world that they tried to reform. We'll pay particular attention to those women who staged their resistance to slavery and racism from 1825 through 1865, analyzing the women's various avenues toward publication as well as their actual anti-slavery essays, speeches, letters, poems, short stories, slave narratives, tell-all books, and autobiographical novels. How did these women perform their abolitionist activism, in print and onstage, and what can we learn from their practices? Our theoretical readings and archival adventures will help us illuminate these women's performances and their legacies in a world that still sustains global slavery and fosters what many call the "new abolitionism."

Our readings will include works by Lydia Maria Child, Angelina and Sarah Grimké, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, and a host of lesser-known anti-slavery lecturers and essayists.

ENGL-598-01 American Literature and the American Dream

[Merish, Lori](#)

This course takes as its focus how class as social identification is signified in a diverse array of 19th-C (and selected 20th-C) American literary texts. Starting with the premise that a historically-specific psychoanalytic approach can illuminate the complexity of class subjectivity and “experience” in the 19th-C (and in the present), we will begin by sampling contemporary theoretical discussions of identification, with an eye toward explicating how such accounts can help illuminate what Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb describe as the “hidden injuries of class.” Overall in the course, through a discussion of a variety of theoretical, historical, and literary texts, we will explore the American Dream of unencumbered class mobility as a particular formation of what critic Lauren Berlant terms “national fantasy,” a utopian national ideal at once deemed universally accessible and inscribed by differences of race, gender, sexuality, region, and nationality. We will examine the way 19th- and 20th-C American literary texts both reproduce, and expose the limits of and/or contradictions within, this governing ideology of “Americanness”: we will consider the ways in which literary texts both envision the distance between utopian ideal and historical “reality,” and register the invisible psychic and social costs of subscription to this national ideal. Course readings will likely include: theoretical, historical, and critical essays by Stuart Hall, Wendy Brown, Lauren Berlant, Judith Butler, Hortense Spillers, Kaja Silverman, Anne Cheng, Carolyn Kay Steedman, Michael Rogin, Hazel Carby, Eric Lott, Claudia Tate; and literary texts by Horatio Alger, Frederick Douglass, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Maria Cummins, Harriet Wilson, Herman Melville, Frank Webb, Horatio Alger, Stephen Crane, Edith Wharton, Nella Larsen, Anzia Yezierska, and Toni Morrison.

ENGL-624-01 American Indian Literature

[Maddox, Lucy](#)

This course is designed as an introduction to the work of (North) American Indian writers, with a strong focus on recent and contemporary writers. We will pay considerable attention to the historical contexts of the writing and to the relationship between cultural traditions and literary forms. Writers will include James Welch, Leslie Marmon Silko, Sherman Alexie, Louise Erdrich, Simon Ortiz. We will also read critical essays, especially by Native critics, that will introduce the major issues, debates, and initiatives currently animating critical discussions in the field. Writing assignments

will include frequent reading responses, two critical essays, and a research project.

ENGL-630-01 African American Cultural Studies

[Mitchell, Angelyn](#)

What is African American Cultural Studies? To answer this question, students will examine twentieth-century cultural productions by and about African Americans. The texts will represent a variety of cultural spheres, including literature, music, film, religion, and the visual and performing arts. Drawing upon the theories of a number of critical schools of thought--cultural studies, African American literary criticism, feminist and gender studies, critical race studies, and visual studies--students will construct critical paradigms that are useful in interpreting the production and consumption of African American culture. In addition to participating vigorously in class discussions, students will read a range of primary and secondary texts and will write several short papers as well as a theoretical researched paper.

ENGL-631-01 20th Century Black Women Writers

[Mitchell, Angelyn](#)

In her 1993 Nobel Lecture, Toni Morrison stated: "Narrative has never been merely entertainment for me. It is, I believe, one of the principal ways in which we absorb knowledge." In this course, we will focus primarily but not exclusively on novels by Black women writers. In the twentieth-century, Black women writers have used their narratives to transmit social, cultural, and political knowledge. Additionally, many Black women writers use narratives to present and represent Black female identity. By documenting and revealing African American culture and history in their writings, Black women writers also serve as cultural and historical conservators. Beginning with Larsen's modernist novel, we will examine representative texts by contemporary African American women from a variety of critical approaches, employing especially the lens of cultural criticism, critical race theories, Anglo-American feminist and Black feminist criticism. Our readings will be informed by critical essays, literary as well as historical analyses. Students may expect oral presentations, several response papers, an annotated bibliography, and a final seminar paper/project.

ENGL-645-01 Joyce

O'Brien, George

This course's approach to Joyce's linguistic, formal and cultural innovations will be made through the lens of genre. Conceptions of the generic permeate Joyce's work, from the "epiphanies" of *Dubliners* to the "epic" of *Ulysses*. What role these conceptions play in Joyce's writing, how he adapts different genres of writing, and how his work as a whole may be considered a critique of genre, will constitute our principal lines of inquiry. All of Joyce's major works will be studied, with the main emphasis falling on *Ulysses*. Readings in contemporary theoretical approaches to Joyce will also be required.

* Required reading before first class meeting: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

ENGL-645-01 Reading Joyce and Woolf

Maloney, Edward

In "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," Virginia Woolf wrote, "if you read Mr. Joyce and Mr. Eliot you will be struck by the indecency of one, and the obscurity of the other. Mr. Joyce's indecency in *Ulysses* seems to me the conscious and calculated indecency of a desperate man who feels that in order to breathe he must break the windows. At moments, when the window is broken, he is magnificent. But what a waste of energy!" In this course, we will discuss the similarities and differences between two of the most well known writers of the Modernism, a period that broke ground (and windows) with the Victorian traditions that came before. We will look at what Woolf means by this wasted energy of Joyce's, and how both Joyce and Woolf define new literary boundaries that had a profound influence on their contemporaries and the subsequent generations of writers. While we will discuss the historical and cultural contexts in which they were writing and to which they were responding, our primary focus will be on understanding their development of new literary techniques that came to define modernist writing. Texts for the course will include *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *The Waves*, *Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Ulysses*, with additional selections from their other writings as well as from critical and theoretical works relevant to our discussion.

ENGL-659-01 Modern & Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

[Gewanter, David](#)

This course will provide a close study of significant Modern and contemporary poems, and of the prose arguments by poets that (seemingly) advocate for such poems. Some changes in aesthetic theory have been triggered by groundbreaking poems, and by the essays and letters of poets. But groundbreaking poems may also undermine the aesthetic theory proposed by their makers, and others. This course will test theory against practice, that is, against our own, developed readings of poems. We will begin by taking a brief tour of 'pre-historical' arts movements such as Romanticism, then look closely at the major Modern poets, and at some of the outwardly spiraling clusters of significant poets producing notable work since then. The course assumes that you have a developed literary background; it does not assume that you are very experienced in reading poems; and it may even recognize that you find poems difficult, murky, or bewildering. We will read from Ramazani & Ellmann's Norton Anthology of Modern & Contemporary Poetry, and several single volumes. We'll write short papers; give presentations; produce a longer research essay on an area of your interest; meet poets; and try our hand at writing some poems (ungraded).

ENGL-660-01 Poetry and Poetics of the Postcolonial Diaspora

[McMorris, Mark](#)

This course will concentrate on Anglophone poetry of the Caribbean, with special attention to the work of Derek Walcott & Kamau Brathwaite, and including poetry produced in North America & England by poets of Caribbean origin. We will be concerned broadly with the meaning for this poetry of British colonization, the Atlantic slave trade and the plantation system; and more specifically with various problems pertaining to language, culture, tradition, race & gender as articulated by the poets themselves and in recent literary criticism and cultural theory. Readings will include texts in translation, notably from the work of Aimé Césaire, other poets of Negritude, and their allies such as Claude McKay and Langston Hughes, to provide a context and a point of reference for our study of the creative and varied explosion of postcolonial works after 1960.

ENGL-670-01 Post-War Cinema

The course explores the interdependent histories of film movements and film theories across the world, in the post-war period. New cinemas demand new theories and these years were no different with film critics and theorists scrambling to find the theoretical language to discuss films emerging from France, Italy, and Japan after 1945. We begin with how cinema ushered new ways of conceptualizing narrative time and space for a world ravaged by war and colonialism yet enamored by nationalisms. By the seventies, decolonization movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America offered a radically different language of cinema that also informed writings on cinema. In a final move, we will examine the new cinemas emerging from Iran and China offer yet another challenge to redefine narrative time and space.

Requirements for the course include mandatory weekly screening and regular writing assignments.

ENGL-675-01 Class Fictions in Contemporary US

[Fox, Pamela](#)

This interdisciplinary course examines U.S. literary and popular cultural representations of “low” classes/cultures (working class/poor/underclass’) from the 1990s to the present. With the aid of recent theory and cultural criticism, we will focus on ways in which categories such as race, gender, and sexuality help to construct our contemporary notions of what “class” means in America. We will be studying a wide variety of texts, forms, and genres—fiction, autobiography, film, music—and taking up a broad spectrum of issues, including theories of working class identity, social/cultural resistance, and the notion of “representation” itself. Course work will include 1 short paper (5-7 pp.); 1 class presentation; 1 seminar paper (15-20 pp.). Likely texts include: Fiction: Allison’s *Bastard Out of Carolina*, Viramontes’ *Under the Feet of Jesus*, and several short stories by male writers; Autobiography/Memoir: hooks’ *Bone Black* and Mar’s *Paper Daughter*; Film: *Hustle and Flow*, *SherryBaby*, *American Movie*; Music: country and hip hop.

ENGL-679-01 Slavery & the American Literary Imagination

[Mitchell, Angelyn](#)

In this seminar--Slavery and the American Literary Imagination--we will examine contemporary discourses about slavery. In the twentieth century, a number of American writers, both Black and White, have written novels that engage the institution of slavery. What types of cultural work do these revisions of slavery perform? How do memory and history function in the American literary imagination? Our readings and discussions will focus on two emancipatory (commonly known as slave) narratives and several novels about slavery by African American writers. Additionally, we will read a number of novels by Anglo-American writers. Writers may include Frederick Douglass, Toni Morrison, Willa Cather and Valerie Martin.

Students will also read a number of critical essays that engage the concepts of memory, history, and trauma. We will consider the following questions: what are some of the reasons for revisiting slavery in literature; how does the imagination augment our understanding of the past; why does slavery continue to haunt contemporary society; and what function does the contemporary narrative serve for its readers? In addition to the readings, students may expect a seminar paper, an annotated bibliography, several short response papers, and a presentation.

ENGL-681-01 Postmodernism

[Tinkcom, Matthew](#)

What is postmodernism? Is it a historical moment that emerges from modernity? Is it a different notion of history itself from that of modernist intellectual work? Is it a set of texts and objects, or a significant change in the ways we discuss such things? Does postmodernism describe a renewed critique of the political economy of capitalism, and its related cultural production? This course is an examination of the meanings of the postmodern in its various approaches. The course emerges from the practices of critical theory and cultural studies, and asks questions about who are the subjects of postmodernism's discourses: for whom is the postmodern a theory of what has happened in the moment of late capitalism? How do theories of the postmodern define the social practices of power and language which define (but do not entirely delimit) us in this historical moment? Do contemporary media reflect the shifts in zeitgeist that critics of the postmodern claim, or perhaps do we simply live in the full realization of modernism's projects?

The course begins with questions of what defines modernism, as it emerges in 19th century European philosophy, politics and aesthetics, and then becomes the full-scaled critical and artistic blossoming of the industrial west in the 20th century. The syllabus then moves to those projects that attempt to historicize postmodernism in distinction to modernism, whereupon we take up critical projects which have emerged more recently in relation to current global political events and the phenomenon of globalization itself.

ENGL-690 Literature and Commodity Culture

[Merish, Lori](#)

This course will examine the meaning and representation of “things” in a diverse group of U. S. cultural texts from the late-nineteenth and into the early-twentieth century, a period widely identified as critical in the consolidation of mass consumerism and an era of U. S. external imperialism and economic expansion. We will also read selected works from the mid-nineteenth century, when an urban consumer culture was first being established and represented. Surveying a variety of cultural forms--including literary and film texts, advertising manuals, newspaper and magazine advertisements, and promotional and documentary materials about the display of “things” in the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair--as well as a range of critical and theoretical essays on the subject, we will focus on the interrelations of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class and nation in U. S. commodity culture. In particular, we will examine the diverse desires and identifications articulated through commodities in U. S. cultural texts, and the complex ways that individuals use commodities to construct (or deconstruct) individual and communal identities.

Issues addressed will include: the "feminization" of consumption, and the complex relationship between feminism and consumerism, during this period; the ideological import of representations of acculturation or "Americanization" through consumption that were especially widespread in immigrant fiction during this era; the international, imperialist significance of tropes of American "overcivilization," "abundance" and "conspicuous consumption" in advertisements and fictional narratives; interrelations between depictions of commodity culture and the politics of "passing" in African American fiction; the saturation of commodity culture (especially advertising) with racial signifiers and imagery, and the racial fantasies activated in and by mass consumption; and the historically and theoretically complex relationship between cinema and commodity

spectacle. Selected literary authors will likely include: Willa Cather, Kate Chopin, Stephen Crane, Maria Cummins, Theodore Dreiser, Pauline Hopkins, Henry James, Nella Larsen, Frank Norris, Edith Wharton, Anzia Yezierska, We will also watch at least one film: John Stahl's *Imitation of Life* (1934).

ENGL-710 Introduction to Literary Theory

Fisher, Leona

This course will introduce some of the most important issues in literary theory by studying the history of critical discourse and recent movements in critical thought. The focus will be on understanding various kinds of theory as models for reading and interpreting literary texts. Students will be introduced to influential statements of literary theory from Plato to the present and will investigate problems in the reception and interpretation of key literary works that have been the focus of recent theoretical debate. We will be concerned with issues like the formation of literary canons, the ideological context of theory, the past and recent institutionalization of theory, and the theory of gender.

ENGL-712-01 Introduction to Critical Theory

[Ortiz, Ricardo](#)

While the phrase "critical theory" was initially coined in the mid-20th century to name the work done by mostly Marxist intellectuals to make more practical sense of how both high- and mass-cultural production participated in either the legitimization or subversion of the operations of industrialized capital, it has since that moment come to mean more generally the history (initially Western, more recently post-colonial, and even global) of intellectual attempts to make sense of, and even to intervene into, the operations of culture in all its most salient contexts (political, economic, social, historical, technological). This course will survey the most influential figures and statements in that latter construction of "critical theory," but with a keen interest in how, and why, that latter construction came to subsume the former. While no one problem, question, or theme will govern the selection of topics or readings, or even guide most discussions, the course will devote significant attention to the fate of critical theory, and of intellectual labor more generally, in what many have been calling our post-historical, post-cultural and certainly post-theoretical moment. Course readings will consist primarily of essay-length selections collected in at least one anthology (most likely Rivkin

and Ryan's Literary Theory: an Anthology) and across a short list of representative monographs of fairly recent vintage (candidates include Fredric Jameson's *The Cultural Turn*, Judith Butler's *Excitable Speech*, and George Yúdice's *The Expediency of Culture*). Course assignments will include one oral presentation, a short paper related to the presentation, and a longer end-of-term paper/project.

ENGL-712-01 Literary Theory

Schwarz, Henry

This is an advanced introduction to methods of approaching and interpreting literary texts. We will engage a number of contemporary critical methods, such as Marxism, Feminism, structuralism, poststructuralism and cultural studies, and will use these to analyze seminal texts from the canon of world literature. While attending to older debates about aesthetics and criticism, our attention will be fixed on the present state of the field. Two short papers; oral presentation; longer collaborative research paper.

ENGL-713 Critical Border Line(ages): One Hundred Years of U.S. Latino/a Criticism

Ortiz, Ricardo

This course traces a number of critical discursive genealogies, from the work of some major Latin American cultural critics of the late 19th and earlier 20th centuries through the emergence and development of Latino/a critical discourses in the U.S. from the middle of the 20th century to the present. Beginning with pieces by some major intellectual figures like the Cuban José Martí and the Mexican José Vasconcelos, both of whom spent some time in the United States as political exiles, the course will consider the manner and degree of their influence on subsequent Latino/a intellectuals and critics in the U.S., from the groundbreaking work of Américo Paredes in the mid-century to the explosion of Latino/a critical discourses in the past three decades, work represented by such writers as Juan Bruce-Novoa, Juan Flores, Norma Alarcón and Richard Rodríguez. Alongside this central line of critical texts, the course will also feature readings of "primary" U.S. Latino/a texts as test-cases for the deployment of various critical strategies, and the course will also consider more general questions of the value and function of critical and intellectual work in the larger social, political and historical contexts of particular relevance to U.S. Latino/a cultural life in the last hundred years.

ENGL-714-01 Ecocriticism: Green Literary Studies

Tilden, Norma

An introduction to the growing field of ecological criticism. The course is literary and theoretical in its focus, ecocritical in its methods, and activist in its underlying assumption that close attention to literary and cultural representations of the natural world advances ecocentric thinking. We will examine a variety of critical approaches to nature writing, employing these practices to read a small group of (mostly) contemporary, (mostly) American essays and nonfiction narratives. Assigned readings will challenge easy definitions of “nature writing,” ranging from the canonical and rural (Thoreau’s *Walden*) to the genre-busting and urban (Colson Whitehead’s *The Colossus of New York*). In their own research, seminar members will be encouraged to extend the intellectual compass of the course by developing green readings of texts from literatures, cultures, historical periods, and genres (including science writing) outside the immediate focus of the class.

By definition, the graduate seminar offers a forum for intellectual exchange. Students will be expected to take an active role in the course as evidenced by close, critical attention to the readings; contributions to in-class colloquia led by seminar members; and organized presentations of their research proposals and bibliographies in a workshop format.

ENGL-718 Narratives of Violence

O'Connor, Patricia

“Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me.” In this seminar we interrogate that adage as we look at the intersections between violent acts and violent words by practicing narratological and discourse analytical approaches to accounts of violence and violation. As well as looking at the presentations of acts of violence by perpetrators, by survivors, by documentarists, and by fiction writers, we will examine the positionings of participants as victims, survivors, aggressors, agents, etc. Examining both spoken and written narratives, we will explore disclosures and erasures of violation and violence and the role words may play in healing as well as explicating violence.

Texts include: *Lucky* by Alice Sebold; Dorothy Allison’s novel *Bastard Out of Carolina* and her autobiography *Two or Three Things I Know for Sure*;

Breece Pancake's *Stories of Breece Pancake*; Arthur Dong's interviews with murderers of homosexuals *Licensed to Kill*; Patricia E. O'Connor's *Speaking of Crime: Narratives of Prisoners*; Ishmael Beah's *A Long Way Gone: Memoir of a Boy Soldier*; narrative poems; and critical pieces by narrative theorists and discourse analysts (Prince, Iser, Bal, Labov, van Dijk, O'Connor, Adams, Overlein & Hyden, Schiffrin).

In consultation with the professor and in preparation for the final research paper, each student will examine a group of narratives of her/his own choosing and periodically report on these during the course. Students will write several short response papers on the literature we read in common. Students are invited to connect this course to community service outreach projects that might include, for example, refugee assistance, battered women's shelters, homeless shelters, group homes for youth, prisons, programs for adjudicated youth, stop violence programs, etc.

ENGL-718 Politics of Literary Form

Ragussis, Michael

An attempt to extend, supplement, and revise the formal interpretation of texts through an analysis, at once theoretical and practical, of the political dimension of literary form. We will examine a variety of "literary" forms, such as the Platonic dialogue, Greek tragedy, Elizabethan comedy, historical romance, and realist fiction.

ENGL-721 Critical Theory and Contemporary Media

[Tinkcom, Matthew](#)

This course serves as an introduction to the central questions of critical theory as they help to understand the technologies of mass culture. While many of the concerns of critical theory can be understood in relation to other forms of cultural production, such as literature and high art, for the purposes of this seminar we will be examining the readings with an eye to considering the impact of such phenomena as cinema, television, photography, the internet, recorded sound, etc.

We will address questions of production, value, ideology, semiotics, postmodernism, simulacrum and the unconscious. Readings include the work of Marx, Benjamin, Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, Althusser, Benveniste, Baudrillard, Lacan, Enzensburger, Comolli, MacCabe, Debord, Sontag, Jameson and Callinicos. Students will be responsible for short

papers to be presented in class, a take-home midterm and a final research paper.

ENGL-722-01 Approaches to Teaching Writing

[Bass, Randall](#)

This course will explore the nature and function of "schooling" (formal and informal) with particular attention to issues of cultural and critical literacy, especially as these concepts inform our teaching of writing and reading in both print and digital contexts. Written assignments and class discussion will focus on teaching and curriculum development, with particular attention to the integration of reading and writing.

ENGL-722-01 Approaches to Teaching Writing

[Tilden, Norma](#)

This course offers a practical introduction to the history, theories, and issues that shape the field of Writing Studies. The systematic study of the production of texts – rhetoric and composition -- began as a “school” discipline, and these origins are preserved in the title of our course. Written assignments and class discussion will focus on writing pedagogy and course development, paying particular attention to the integration of writing and reading. Weekly readings will assist you to theorize your own practice in the assignments you compose and the courses you design. But the teachable parts of writing cannot be reduced to techniques, whether of close reading or mechanisms of process, skill, and craft. In the words of theorist Walter Ong, “Writing is a technology that restructures thought.” We will explore issues of cultural and critical literacy as these concepts inform the teaching of writing.

By definition, a graduate seminar offers the opportunity to enter an ongoing conversation among scholars in a particular field as well as a forum for intellectual exchange among peers. Students will be expected to take an active role in the course as evidenced by close, critical attention to the readings; contributions to discussion; organized seminar presentations of their research; and engaged, informed writing.

ENGL-722 Chaucer

Szitty, Penn

Critical study of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and its poetics of subversion. There will be occasional excursions into medieval lore, including Gothic art, iconography, medieval astrology and other occult sciences, Boethian philosophy, courtly love, antifeminism, and social symbolism. Emphasis in the study of the *Tales* themselves will be on narratology, with particular attention to the multiplication of narrators and perspectives, the varieties of irony, and the subversion of authors, authorities, and texts. There will be some examination of the *Tales* from the perspective of modern critical theory. Weekly short writing assignments; one major paper; a research project. Every student will be asked to lead a discussion twice (or more, depending on class enrollment) with a colleague.

ENGL-723-01 The Problem of Learning & the Digital Humanities

[Bass, Randall](#)

This course will look at new media representations of culture through the lens of learning. On the one hand, we will explore how certain core ideas in the study of literature and culture—such as those related to reading, textuality, narrative, and encoded meaning—can be understood in the context of digital representations; at the same time we will focus our inquiry into these questions through practical and conceptual frameworks for understanding how people learn, in formal and informal environments. In looking at the intersection of these two fields—digital humanities and research on learning—our focus will be both on imagining the future of pedagogy in the humanities and understanding how a scholarship of teaching and learning could inform ongoing inquiry into the impact of innovation. As such, this course is primarily a design course with a studio emphasis: We will understand the history, theory and practice of new media through our study and creation of new media designs. From the beginning we will engage in the creation of digital materials as expressions of disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge, focusing both on linear narratives (digital storytelling) and non-linear applications (gaming and hypermedia environments).

This course welcomes students with all levels of technical abilities. Our work will be taught and led by a small team of experts and guides who will support student work in a variety of ways. Students will be able to select projects in platforms that suit their technical interest and experience, from

low threshold relatively simple applications to more sophisticated interactive multimedia tools. Analyzing the nature of designs and their impact of learning across this variety of platforms will be an important feature of the course.

ENGL-727 Writing and Revolt in Late Medieval England

Szitty, Penn

This course focuses on the politics of the vernacular in the late Middle Ages, and on the origins of an "English" literature in dissent, discord, and subversion. The end of the fourteenth century was a critical moment in the development of writing that was self-consciously "English," in theology and preaching, in the law courts, in documentary records, in civic governance, in chronicles, in autobiography, and in "literature." It was also a period that witnessed a surge in vernacular literacy, particularly in connection with a renewed interest in theology and religion. These developments in the age of Chaucer, Gower, and Langland coincided historically with the two great movements of dissent in the English Middle Ages: the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 and the Lollard heresy. We will examine the relationships among these historical and cultural phenomena -- literacy, literature, heresy, and dissent -- in an attempt to understand why and how this was such a fruitful period for the invention of a concept of vernacular literature.

ENGL-731 Constructions of Masculinity

Feminist theory has challenged us to see gender roles, not as natural givens, but as cultural constructions that vary from age to age and from society to society. Drawing on recent theoretical statements in the developing discipline of "men's studies," this seminar will chart changing conceptions of what it meant to be a man in England from 1550 to 1750. "Lifestages" as charted by third-generation Freudian theorists will provide the focus for comparing texts written across this two-hundred-year period, by writers from high and low social stations, in genres that include books of "characters," medical-advice books, conduct books, and history books, as well as "literary" texts by canonical authors like F242Spenser, Sidney, Shakespeare, Donne, Milton, Dryden, and Fielding.

ENGL-732 Contemporary Critical Issues in Shakespeare

"He was not of an age, but for all time!" We shall test the truth of Ben Johnson's claim by examining a range of Shakespeare's poems and plays with respect to the political issues and critical methodologies of our own time and place. Cultural materialism, deconstruction, Lacanian psychoanalytical theory, and historical phenomenology will provide vantage points for considering scripts that will include some of Shakespeare's acknowledged "masterpieces" (*A Midsummer's Night Dream*, *King Lear*, *The Tempest*) as well as less often studied plays (*Henry VI Part One*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*). We will also read and discuss Shakespeare's non-dramatic works, including "The Rape of Lucrece" and selected sonnets. Participants in the seminar will be asked to write a critical manifesto in which they declare their personal goals for the course and formulate the critical methodology that will help them realize these goals. Guided by these proposals, participants will set up discussion once during the semester, write an eight-page essay drawing on the discussion that ensues, and produce a final ten-page paper that addresses one particular issue across several plays and poems.

ENGL-734 Shakespearean Tragedy

Holmer, Joan

This course will focus on Shakespeare's range in writing tragedy by closely examining his themes and techniques in three tragedies from different periods of his career.

ENGL-740-01 Hip_Hop As Public Culture

[Heath, Scott](#)

Particularly since the early 1990s, we have seen a proliferation of fine art, literature, and scholarship that has furthered the establishment of hip_hop studies in what might be called unlikely venues. In the past few years especially, we have witnessed the development of university courses, academic conferences, museum exhibits, and collaborative research initiatives devoted to an investigation of the culture and its practice. Embedded in the discourse around hip_hop as an intellectual project is an ongoing argument about exactly how we should be arguing about hip_hop and about how we should interpret its prominence as a topic in critical circles. The current discussion engages hip_hop at the line of transition, in a moment of crisis in public culture and cultural studies. The turn of the

millennium witnesses hip_hop being mediated by big industry and marketed globally to an unprecedented extreme. A new core group of entities and individuals is deciding for us what hip_hop is and what hip_hop means. To the extent that hip_hop is referenced synonymously with black culture, we also see particular conceptions of blackness being mediated and marketed as well. And we are challenged to remark upon the ways in which what have been until now relatively privately constructed subjectivities are being regulated in nontraditional spaces. There is a new level of public access to the agency of identity. It is impossible to have a comprehensive discussion about race or Americanness, about class or gender or sexuality, without incorporating a principled discussion of the state of and ramifications of hip_hop culture today. And the character and content of its appropriation and commodification make the current condition of the text a veritable human rights concern. Hip_hop and conversations around hip_hop almost necessarily compromise the boundaries of private and public expressive spheres, challenging us as critical thinkers to account for the consistent evidence of alternative intellectualisms and revised epistemologies. The work facilitates a dialogue through which parameters of nationalist community and cultural authenticity are defined and readjusted constantly. In this seminar we will spend a good deal of time unpacking some of the most recent scholarship and popular work concerning hip_hop and its practice. And we will produce our own potentially publishable contributions to the contemporary discourse.

ENGL-741 Eighteenth-Century Women Writers

Temple, Kathryn

Reading eighteenth-century women's representations of public and private spheres against recent histories of the novel, this course re-evaluates the history of the novel and the history of women writers while critiquing current models of the public sphere. We will read short fictional and non-fictional works by Aphra Behn, Delariviere Manley, Eliza Haywood, Charlotte Lennox, Ann Radcliffe, Frances Burney, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Maria Edgeworth and critical and historical essays by Ian Watt, Jurgen Habermas, Nancy Armstrong, Paula McDowell, Janice Radway, Laurie Langbauer, and Claudia Johnson. A semester-long project will draw on the rich primary sources of the Georgetown microfilm collection and rare book room where students will rediscover and "recover" out-of-print works by eighteenth-century women in order to develop publication projects for Broadview Press.

ENGL-748 Eighteenth Century: Versions of the Self

Todd, Dennis

The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries experienced a revolution in the way the self was conceived and self-identity was defined. Traditional conceptions of human nature were increasingly subjected to subversive pressure from a number of different directions (mass culture, the money economy, philosophy, science). This course examines the questions of personal identity in some major works of the first half of the century, particularly in the poetry and prose of Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift, and in selected works of Defoe, Fielding, Hogarth, and Sterne.

ENGL-750 British Romantic Poetry

Sitterson, Joseph

Once taken to be "nature poets," appreciating and describing its beauties, the major Romantic poets then were taken to be bards or prophets, possessing visionary truths conveyed in their poems; recently, that prophetic stance has been criticised as escapist, evading social and historical realities. We are going to test these various beliefs by studying in depth some poems by Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats. We will also read Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Austen's *Emma*, and Scott's *Waverley*, in relation to issues raised by the poems.

ENGL-751 British Romantic Literature

Sitterson, Joseph

A study in depth of poems, and some prose, by at least three of the following writers: Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, and Byron. Study of this material will include investigation of cultural context, and will also be based on the belief that no work of literature "can permanently please, which does not contain within itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise" (Coleridge).

ENGL-764 Issues in Cultural Studies`

[Schwarz, Henry](#)

This course is an advanced introduction to contemporary theories and practices of culture as defined by the major institutions of Cultural Studies in Britain and America. We will be analyzing the role of culture as an ensemble of concrete, material practices that shape identity through the interlocking categories of class, race, gender and sexuality, among others. Contemporary methods for the analysis of literature, film, philosophy and music will be considered. We will examine both the history of the discipline since the early 1960s, and focus on a special topic of contemporary relevance. This year's topic will be "Indigenous cultures and war." Requirements: two short papers, one oral presentation, one final paper stemming from a group research project. Active participation is necessary.

ENGL-771 20th Century Poetry of War

[Forche, Carolyn](#)

In this seminar we will read poetry written out of the experience of modern warfare and its aftermath by soldier poets, combat veterans, resistance fighters, pacifists and war resisters, conscientious objectors, and civilians: the men, women and children who have suffered the ravages of war and who constitute the majority of its casualties. Beginning with the poets of the Great War, we will read, in English and translation from other languages, poets who bore witness to the Russian Revolution, the Spanish Civil War, the Second World War, the American wars in Southeast Asia, as well as wars of uprising and liberation in Asia, Africa and Latin America and wars now being prosecuted in the Arab world. In the context of the history of war poetry from the Iliad and the Aesneid to the present, we will consider the ways in which modern technological warfare has transformed poetic forms and modes and altered the destiny of the lyric. As part of our course work, in late March we will attend the symposium "Cry Havoc! War and Remembrance," sponsored by the Lannan Center for Poetics and Social Practice. Course work will include close reading and discussion of poems, class presentations and a research paper or final project.

ENGL-802 Dickens

Glavin, John

A reading of major texts by Charles Dickens in the light of recent critical theory. We will concentrate on the history and theory of Victorian publishing, antihumanist versus humanist models of fiction production and consumption, and gender theory. The Dickens texts will include *Bleak House*, *Little Dorrit*, and *Our Mutual Friend*.

ENGL-804 Yeats

O'Brien, George

This course will study the poems, plays, and philosophy of W.B. Yeats. It will also view the poet in the context of Modernism and in the context of the Ireland of his day.

ENGL-805 Nineteenth Century Comic Fiction

Pfordresher, John

What do we mean by comedy, and by the comedic conclusion to a narrative? What are the relationships between comedy as a literary genre and the societies which generate and consume comic texts? These are some of the questions which we will explore as we read widely in classic and contemporary writing on the theory of comedy, and, contemporaneously, a series of highly regarded texts written in England, mostly during the Victorian period.

ENGL-807 Fictions of Race

Ragussis, Michael

We will begin by exploring the ways in which a variety of ethnic and racial identities were formulated in eighteenth-century Britain through the return of *The Merchant of Venice* to the London stage in 1741, and the return of the immensely popular figures of the stage Jew, the stage Scot, and the Stage Irishman in the London theater. We then will move to the ways in which the novel (as opposed to the stage) undertook the representation of ethnic identity in the nineteenth century, reading works especially concerned with the representation of Irish or Jewish identity (by such writers as Maria Edgeworth and Charles Dickens). Finally, we will look at

some prominent twentieth-century versions of this issue by studying *Black Like Me* (a white man passes for Black in the Deep South during the late 1950's) and *Europa, Europa* (a Jewish boy passes as a non-Jew in Germany during the Third Reich); we will study both the book and the movie version in each case. During the semester, while we will be attentive to differences in genre, historical period, and national context, we will remain focused on ethnic and racial identity as a category of performance, and we will give special attention to plots of ethnic passing, cross-dressing and masquerade.

ENGL-815 The African-American Novel

Mitchell, Angelyn

In this course students will study the origin, development, and intertextuality of the African-American novel and its tradition by examining representative texts from the nineteenth century to the present. We will read the novels as cultural productions of their respective times by employing the methodologies of new historicism and cultural critique. We will also interrogate the concepts of self-definition and self-representation as they relate to race, class, gender, and color.

ENGL-822 Modern American Documentary Poetry

Professor Kadlec

American poets have been flamboyantly sampling extraliterary texts since the 1920s. This course examines the presence of archival material in documentary poems as part of the modernist movement of American history and American poetic tradition. We will study the formal representation of such sources as Columbus's journals, John Adams's diaries, and U.S. Bureau of Ethnography reports as "indigenous" materials employed by poets to celebrate or critique dominant ideologies. A focal point of discussion will be the politics of archival material in poetry, as well as the politics of the documentary genre itself as the basis for a survey of modern poetry. Who and what do these poems purport to voice? Who and what do they write out? We will read Ezra Pound, Marianne Moore, William Carlos Williams, Langston Hughes, Muriel Rukeyser, Charles Olson, Paul Metcalf, Susan Howe, and others.

ENGL-828 Romantic and Realist in Nineteenth Century American Literature

Hirsh, John

This seminar will examine the development first of New England transcendentalism in the early nineteenth century, and then of Realism in post-Civil War America. Students will read extensively in both major authors (like Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, James, Clemens, Chopin, and Wharton) and (less extensively) minor authors (like Alcott, Child, Hedge, Marsh, Parker, and Reed). They will also be asked to produce both a seminar report and a seminar paper on a topic of interest to them, and to edit, after an appropriate and quite fun introduction, an unpublished literary manuscript preserved in Georgetown's Rare Book Room or elsewhere.

ENGL-833 Black British Literature

[Dominique, Lyndon](#)

Although there has been a sustained black presence in Britain for the last 400 years resulting from the slave trade, at first glance, it appears that 'blackness' only came to complicate 'Britishness' once Britain began to receive large amounts of immigrants from its former colonies immediately after World War II. In this course, we will read contemporary novels, poetry and drama that not only deal with this cultural conflict but also give rise to a 'black British' cultural identity that attempts (and, perhaps, fails) to incorporate African, Caribbean, Asian and mixed-raced peoples as a united political group. But our particular investigation of this contemporary cultural identity will also be informed by, and grounded in, the black presence in British literature that preceded World War II. Beginning with Shakespeare's *Othello*, we will map out a historical and political trajectory of the black presence in British literature prior to 1945 using four perspectives: the literature written by and about blacks in Britain, the literature published by blacks in Britain, and the literature written about people who were likened to blacks in Britain. In this way, the course will explore not only the ongoing changes of black representations in British culture from the 17th to the 21st centuries but also how heavily the contemporary 'black British' cultural identity has its roots in political struggles and literary representations of the 'black British' past.

ENGL-835 Lit of Irish Revival

[O'Brien, George](#)

The making of the modern nation state of Ireland was not only a complex political event but also a political event that had its origins in the country's literary, cultural, and linguistic heritage. This course examines how that heritage was adapted and deployed in the years leading up to the coming into being of the modern Irish state.

ENGL-840-01 Sexuality and Gender Studies

[Luciano, Dana](#)

This seminar will provide an overview of the origins, development, and effects of the critical paradigms currently operating under the sign of queer theory, locating these within a larger history of critical, theoretical and political debates on gender, sexuality and pleasure. We will begin by historicizing and critically examining the emergence of queer theory, investigating both the fields of study that influenced it and the conditions of its academic institutionalization, and will then go on to consider the kinds of knowledge projects queer theory has underwritten. Topics of particular concern will include: the imbrications of race, gender, class and sexuality; identity politics; the relationship of queer theory to feminism; transgender/transsexual and bisexual theories; sexual historiographies; sex radicalism; the relationship between queer scholarly inquiry and LGBT political activism and cultural production.

ENGL-841 Institutions of American Literature

Bass, Randall

This course will trace the creation and institutionalization of an American literary canon, from 19th-century arguments for a national literature, through the canon debates of the 1920s, '30s, and '40s, to the expansion and redefinition of an "American" literature in the 1980s. We will examine the relationships between American literary scholars. Some of the writers to be read include: Parrington, Kazin, Matthiessen, Chase, Trilling, Bercovitch, Lauter, Jehlen, Fetterly, Gates, Baker, Denning, Carby, Gunn, Crews, Tompkins, and Reising.

ENGL-843-01 Sex and Time

[Luciano, Dana](#)

What does it mean to “do” the history of sexuality from a literary-studies perspective? This course will examine methods of reading sex and sexuality across time. We will divide our time between an overview of contemporary theoretical and critical developments in the field of sexuality and a consideration of selected literary texts from antebellum America. As we examine the relationship between literary works and their cultural contexts, we will put considerable pressure on how “appropriate” cultural contexts are defined and developed by literary scholars. Students will also be expected to conduct primary research at the Library of Congress and elsewhere, working toward the development of a critical-historical archive. Course readings will likely include: theoretical, historical, and critical essays by Michel Foucault, Michael Warner, John D’Emilio, Lauren Berlant, David Halperin, Hortense Spillers, Bruce Burgett and others, and literary works by Washington Irving, Catherine Maria Sedgwick, Nathaniel Hawthorne, William Wells Brown, Julia Ward Howe, Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, Harriet E. Wilson, and Harriet Prescott Spofford.

ENGL-855 Feminist Drama

Cima, Gay

In this course we will study contemporary playscripts by British and American women, examining them in the context of recent feminist theatre theory and criticism. We will consider the scripts in terms of actual performance situations, exploring, for example, the ways in which feminist playwrights try to subvert the iconicity of the actor/character relationship and thereby complicate the nature of spectatorial pleasure in the theatre. The reading list will include scripts by such playwrights as Caryl Churchill, Louise Page, Maria Irene Fornes, Joan Schenkar, Ntozake Shange, and Adrienne Kennedy, as well as several theoretical books and selected articles on feminist theatre and performance art.

ENGL-861-01 Literacy and the Law

[Hirsh, John](#)

This seminar explores the relationships between literacy and law. The course will explore learning theories and practices regarding emergent literacy and examine their legal and social implications. Readings will be

drawn from three areas: educational theory and practice, law, and children's literature. The course will focus upon whole language and other approaches which now inform literacy instruction in America. Legal implications to be considered may include restrictions on literacy due to slavery and educational disadvantage, statutory interpretation, equal protection and diversity, freedom of speech, school finance, discipline, and English as a second language. In order to provide practical experience in emergent literacy, students are required to participate in a practicum of at least one hour per week in which they work with a student in emergent literacy. The practicum may be a tutorial or literacy program sponsored by the Law Center (normally, the beginning reading program at Sursum Corda community near the Law Center) or some other arrangement approved by the instructors. Writing requirements include both a journal and short paper. The seminar is also open to graduate students in the Department of English, with permission of the instructor and Director of Graduate Studies.

ENGL-864 Theory of Writing

Slevin, James

The course examines different ways of understanding literacy (understood as a form of critical activity) and writing (understood to include all genres of writing including "literature"). Attending particularly to the fields of Rhetoric and Composition and literary/cultural studies, the course will explore practical implications-for curricula and pedagogy-of competing theories of critical, cultural, and multicultural literacy. Students through their reading and writing will have the opportunity to envision their own goals as writers and teachers of writing. Written assignments will focus on the applicability of theory to practice and the theoretical implications of various practices, with particular attention to the teaching of literature in the writing classroom. Authors studied will include Louis Althusser, Mikhail Bakhtin, David Bartholomae, Ann Berthoff, Pierre Bourdieu, Kenneth Burke, Frederick Douglass, Michel Foucault, Paolo Freire, Shirley Brice Heath, E.D. Hirsch, Richard Ohmann, Walter Ong, Mary Louise Pratt, Robert Scholes, and George Bernard Shaw.

ENGL-875 Issues in Cultural Studies

Schwarz, Henry

This course is an advanced introduction to contemporary theories and practices of culture as defined by the major institutions of Cultural Studies in Britain and America. We will be analyzing the role of culture as an

ensemble of concrete, material practices which shape identity through the interlocking categories of class, race, gender and sexuality, among others. Contemporary methods for the analysis of literature, film, philosophy and music will be considered. The special topic of this year's seminar will be "Culture and Colonization: Dominance, Resistance, Reciprocity."

Requirements: two short papers, one oral presentation, one final paper stemming from a group research project. Active participation is necessary.

ENGL-876 Contested Stages: Contemporary Feminist Performance

Cima, Gay

Paula Vogel, the 1997 winner of the Pulitzer Prize, will be one of the feminist playwrights-in-residence this year at the Arena Stage, which is now under the direction of another feminist, Molly Smith. What are the implications of this astonishing feat? In this course, we will take advantage of our location to plan field trips to local theatres and site-specific cultural performances, testing the boundaries of the feminist classroom and of feminist performance theory itself. The various events staged during Black History and Women's History "Months" will offer us opportunities to act as feminist performance critics and artists. This course is devoted to an investigation of the sites of contestation within feminist performance theory, particularly as these sites illuminate feminist theatre and daily cultural performances within students' lives. We will examine cultural differences and connections as they are staged within plays, performance artwork, and rituals created by feminists from a wide variety of U.S. communities.

ENGL-878 Feminist Theory and Social Relations

Fox, Pamela

This course will examine past and present intersections between feminist theory and Marxist-based social theory (of varying kinds) to provide students with exposure to a specific direction in feminist studies. We will focus on theory which studies the relationship between material conditions and culture at large, paying particular attention to both the connections and disjunctions between the categories of class, race, and gender.

ENGL-880 Feminist Cultural Theory

Fox, Pamela

This course will introduce students to the range of methodologies and positions included in feminist theoretical approaches to cultural texts. Earlier work in Anglo-American criticism and French psychoanalytic theory will be reviewed, and current directions in cultural criticism will be explored (including recent work on popular culture: film, television, music, video). The second half of the course will gradually focus on materialist feminist critical practices.

ENGL-883 Colonial and Postcolonial Literature

Schwarz, Henry

An exploration of the intersections between culture and politics in the colonial and postcolonial situations, with reference to current theoretical debates about the status of "Third World Literature."

ENGL-884 Feminism and Postcolonial Theory

Professor Gopalan

Among the various debates in postcolonial theory, debates on national identity and racial difference have dominated the terrain. By contrast debates in feminism have focused on the articulation of sexual difference and the construction of gender. This course attempts to force a dialogue between these two theoretical areas, so that, on the one hand, we insist on the question of sexual difference in postcolonial theory and on the other, force the question of racial difference and national identity in feminist theory.

ENGL-892 Class Fictions in Contemporary America

Professor Fox

This interdisciplinary course examines U.S. literary and popular representations of "low" classes/cultures (working class/poor/'underclass') in the 1980s and 1990s. With the aid of recent feminist and materialist cultural criticism/theory, we will focus on ways in which categories such as race, gender, and ethnicity help to construct our contemporary notions of what "class" means in America. How has the discourse changed over

two decades? Students will have the opportunity to study a wide variety of texts, forms, and genres -- fiction, autobiography, film, television, music -- and to take up a broad spectrum of issues, including welfare policy under the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton administrations; immigration laws and protest movements; police violence.

CROSS LISTED COURSES

CCTP-627-01 Looking at Photography

[Schaefer, James](#)

Photography is many things: it is a technical process, a documentary tool, a personal memento, a form of art, a tool for propaganda, a device to generate commerce, or any combination of these elements. It is both an act and the thing created by that act. Its apparent subject matter can be portraiture, still life, landscape, couture fashion, historical artifact, criminal evidence, scientific data, or any combination thereof. Why photograph was taken and what it means to a viewer can vary wildly depending on its physical condition, its provenance, and the different “given circumstances” (a term borrowed from the theatre) under which it was taken and under which it is viewed. The who, what, when, where, why, and how of these separate acts are frequently at odds with one another -- when they can be determined at all.

Perhaps most importantly, photography is simultaneously ubiquitous and nearly invisible. From its earliest days, now nearly 200 years ago, photography has been thought of as a window on reality. Even the most sophisticated viewers tend to see the thing represented, accepting it as truth, while failing to see the thing that is the photograph itself, let alone the intellectual, artistic, technical, and political process of which it is the end result. But as the late Richard Avedon put it, “All photographs are accurate. None of them is the truth.” The “thingness” of the photograph and the multiple processes that create it affect our understanding of the thing represented. How the photographer sees affects what the viewer sees.

This course will examine photography as both a way of seeing and a mode of rhetoric. We will approach the topic historically, but the markers of change over time – the technical innovations, the varying subject matter, and the generations of men and women who have made photographs for innumerable reasons – will not be considered as milestones of progress. Our purpose will not be to gauge the distance that separates us from photography’s 19th century pioneers, Niepce, Daguerre, and Talbot – nor, for that matter, from such famous 20th century practitioners as Adams, Weston, or Evans. Rather, we will explore these historical markers as accretions, like the layers of a pearl, on the core human need to make images of the world.

CCTP-681-01 Technologies of the Text

[Macovski, Michael](#)

In this seminar, we consider the term "text" from many perspectives—including digital media, experimental books, art objects—and even musical scores and dance-notation "texts." We ask how such forms are redefining the terms "author" and "reader"—and how they are changing our definitions of "literature" and "news" and "social networking."

Each term, we develop special topics in the seminar according to the particular research interests of each class member. In past years, for instance, we have read the most popular hypertext ever written—namely, "Patchwork Girl," a powerful take-off on the novel *Frankenstein* (which we also discuss during the course). We have also read graphic novels such as the award-winning *Fun Home*, *Akira*, and *Persepolis* (we saw the movie-version of the latter as well). And we also considered many texts from a cross-cultural perspective, including American versions of Japanese anime and other non-Western genres.

During previous terms, we have also looked at the historical origins of today's digital culture—including the history of libraries, museums, and art collections. We have discussed the origins of copyright law, comparing the first amazing trials with today's debates about digital copyright (including the famous Napster and Mickey Mouse cases). And we have investigated notorious internet hoaxes (including the Lonely Girl scandal)—and traced their origins to the most intriguing art and literary forgeries (such as those by Thomas Chatterton).

Students with specifically literary interests might also consider how various textual forms affect novels, plays, and poetry. How is literature influenced by, say, Thackeray's emphasis on his novels' illustrations, Joyce's preoccupation with pagination, or Emily Dickinson's use of stationery and paper scraps? How did the serialization of Dickens's novels in periodicals affect their composition, distribution, and readership? What do William Blake's bizarre paintings tell us about his poetry? In the past, we have also read influential literary by Chaucer, Defoe, Sterne, Pope, Wordsworth, Byron, Hemans, Austen, the Brontes, Joyce—as well as some of the more recent, experimental developments within literary and electronic

textuality.

If you would like more information about it, please email Michael Macovski at msm44@georgetown.edu.

CCTP-687-01 History of the Book: Theory of Text

Macovski, Michael

How does English literature change as we move from oral to scribal to print culture--and from the material to the digital text? How did the serialization of Victorian novels in periodicals affect their composition, distribution, and readership? And how is the literary history of particular eras inflected by such cultural influences as law, economics, and technology?

Such questions are central to "The History of the Book"—that is, the understanding of literary texts as both material artifacts and potentially disembodied (electronic) forms. This course offers students of literature an opportunity to explore some of the cultural and historical concepts behind such issues as literary authorship, forgery, piracy, translation, production, dissemination, and audience. It provides the historical foundation underlying several central debates within current literary theory, including the unstable status of the author, the gendered politics of literary publication, the economics of book distribution, the shifting definition of literary textuality, the history of literary censorship, and the legal evolution of copyright and hypertext in the Digital Age.

In order to bring these issues into focus, we will read some influential literary works that stand as particular examples and illustrations within the History of the Book. In addition to landmark examples by Chaucer, Defoe, Sterne, Pope, Blake, Wordsworth, Byron, Hemans, Austen, Dickens, and the Brontes, we will also trace some of the more recent and experimental developments within literary textuality and hypertext. Theoretical readings will include essays by Foucault, Benjamin, Derrida, Borges, Habermas, Darnton, Sutherland, Eisenstein, Eaves, McGann, Woodmansee, Negroponte, Landow, Drucker, and Hayles, among others.

CCTP-704-01 Gender, Sexuality, and the Body

[Coventry, Michael](#)

There are no sites of identity more intense, more personal, and more contentious than the intersection of gender, sexuality and the body. Using these themes as a locus, this seminar will range across a rich field: from psychoanalysis to queer studies to performance studies and beyond. Concurrent with our thematic focus on gender/sexuality/body, we will also address questions of method: what does it mean to do a cultural studies of gender/sex/body? To meet these two aims, readings will consist of both theoretical explorations as well as case studies which use theoretical constructs to perform cultural analysis. Students may expect to encounter the works of Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Joan Scott, Luce Irigaray, bell hooks, Gayatri Spivak, and Donna Haraway, among others.

Substantial reading, writing, and discussion will be required. In order to facilitate a research project, a project proposal (including statement of method), literature review, and preliminary evidence analysis will be the primary student product.

CCTP-719-01 Film Theory

[Goldman, Melissa](#)

This course will provide an overview of a century of film theory. We will move more or less chronologically, grouping theorists into conceptual frameworks or paradigms, in order to trace the shifting interests within film theory. In addition, we will be watching films to help us further elucidate the theoretical concepts and to see how (and if) theory can be turned into practice. Our goal is simple: to understand and make sense of the theory, which we will accomplish via very close readings of the written texts in conjunction with relevant film analysis. Together, we will be critical readers, in dialogue with the theory. Film theory addresses issues that have roots in philosophy, aesthetics, literary theory and social commentary. Its theoretical concerns often duplicate concerns of politics, feminism and post-colonialism. Each of the texts is chosen to challenge and expand our understanding of the specifically cinematic medium, asking questions like: How does cinema generate meaning? How does it work on us? What type of subject does it construct? Needless to say, we will not arrive at conclusive answers to any of these questions. Rather, the questions raised by the texts will challenge and enhance our understanding of the complexity that is cinema.

CCTP-744-01 When Silence Was Golden: The Culture and Practice of Silent Film

Goldman, Melissa

We will look at works from throughout the silent period, with particular attention given to American silents.

Feature-length films will include:

Nanook of the North (Robert Flaherty 1922)

Sherlock Jr. (Buster Keaton 1924)

The Iron Horse (John Ford 1924)

Pandora's Box (G.W. Pabst 1929)

The Smiling Madame Beudet (Germaine Dulac 1922)

The Blot (Lois Weber 1921)

The Crowd (King Vidor 1928)

Sunrise (F.W. Murnau 1927)

The Jazz Singer (Alan Crosland 1927)

We will consider the importance of various factors on silent film production including audience demographics, picture palaces, technological developments and the Hollywood production system. We will explore the contours of what it meant to be a "star" (Louise Brooks and Rudolph Valentino will be our case studies) and what it meant to look and to be looked at. We will examine the cultural and political ramifications of different silent film genres such as the documentary, the western, comedy and melodrama. We will explore how cinema created and responded to cultural myths – in particular, myths of America, of race and of gender. We will closely analyze components of the films from shots and POV to editing and score.

Each film will be accompanied by readings that further elucidate the film, its director, or its genre and by primary source readings that address issues contemporary to the film. For example, when we watch a western, we will also read Theodore Roosevelt's "The Strenuous Life."

In addition to class participation, requirements for this seminar include weekly written responses and the preparation of a final conference paper, which will include an abstract, an oral presentation and a final written paper.