

2008 SUMMER SESSION COURSES

Six Week 1 (May 27 – July 3, 2008)

ENG 681—Texts/Authors and Their Critics

2398 MW 6:00-9:30 p.m. HU 123 H. Elam

A study of the close relation between a critical and a literary text by focusing on six major works of literature (different genres--novel, poetry, drama, nonfiction) and six major critical essays, one on each of the texts read. The critical essays are not chosen because they deploy any particular theoretical model. Rather, they are chosen because they were in their time (and are) an important reading of that particular text. Possible pairings: Homer (Odyssey) and Erich Auerbach; Kafka (Metamorphosis, etc.) and Walter Benjamin; Wordsworth (one or two poems) and Geoffrey Hartman, Paul de Man; Keats ('Ode on a Grecian Urn') and Earl Wasserman et al; Molière (Don Juan) and Shoshana Felman; Blanchot (Awaiting Oblivion) and Ann Smock. Critical texts will be on reserve as well as in a packet. For undergraduates: One take-home midterm, one short essay, one final paper. For graduate students: one presentation, one short essay, one term paper.

Homer: The Odyssey. Trans. Fitzgerald.

Erich Auerbach: "Odysseus' Scar," from Mimesis, pp. 3-23.

Molière: Don Juan

Shoshana Felman: "The Perversion of Promising" from The Literary Speech Act

Franz Kafka: Metamorphosis and "The Silence of the Sirens."

Walter Benjamin: "Franz Kafka," from Selected Writings v. 2

William Wordsworth: "There was a Boy" from Bk V of The Prelude

Paul de Man: "Time and History in Wordsworth" from Romanticism and Contemporary Criticism

William Wordsworth: "Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree"

Geoffrey Hartman: "Inscriptions and Romantic Nature Poetry" from The Unremarkable Wordsworth

John Keats: "Ode on a Grecian Urn"

James O'Rourke, ed: Ode on a Grecian Urn: Hypercanonicity and Pedagogy
<http://www.rc.umd.edu/praxis/grecianurn/>

Maurice Blanchot: Awaiting Oblivion

Ann Smock: "Conversation" from Maurice Blanchot: The Demand of Writing

Four Week 3 (July 7 – August 15, 2008)

ENG 582— Studies in an Author: Ernest Hemingway

2397 MTWTH 6:00-8:40 p.m. HU 132 J. Berman

We will read the major short stories and novels of Ernest Hemingway, including In Our Time, The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms, and For Whom the Bell Tolls. Psychoanalytic and feminist interpretations will be emphasized. Undergraduates will write one ten-page essay, several reader-response diaries, and a final exam. Graduate students will write one fifteen-page essay, several reader-response diaries, a final exam, and give a class presentation.

Six Week 3 (July 7 - August 15, 2008)

ENG 580—Models of History in Literature

2399

MW

6:00-9:30 p.m.

HU 133

H. Elam

A study of three writers (Kafka, Beckett, Dante) whose strangeness raises questions about "modernity"--modernity understood not in terms of chronologies but as a persistently attempted break with the past. These writers provoke questions about how history is to be understood, what would chronologies have to do with it, why the effort to articulate the present and how that articulation works. Literary and critical readings will be interwoven. For undergraduates, one take-home midterm, short paper, final paper. For graduate students, one presentation, one short essay, one term paper.

Paul de Man: "Literary History and Literary Modernity," from Blindness and Insight

Nietzsche: The Use and Abuse of History.

Kafka: "Before the Gate," "Imperial Message," "Great Wall of China," "Silence of the Sirens," "Parables," "The Next Village," and a few others.

Dante: Inferno, trans. Sinclair (and other translations)

John Freccero: "Infernal Irony: The Gates of Hell" from Dante and the Poetics of Conversion

Walter Benjamin: Theses on the Philosophy of History.

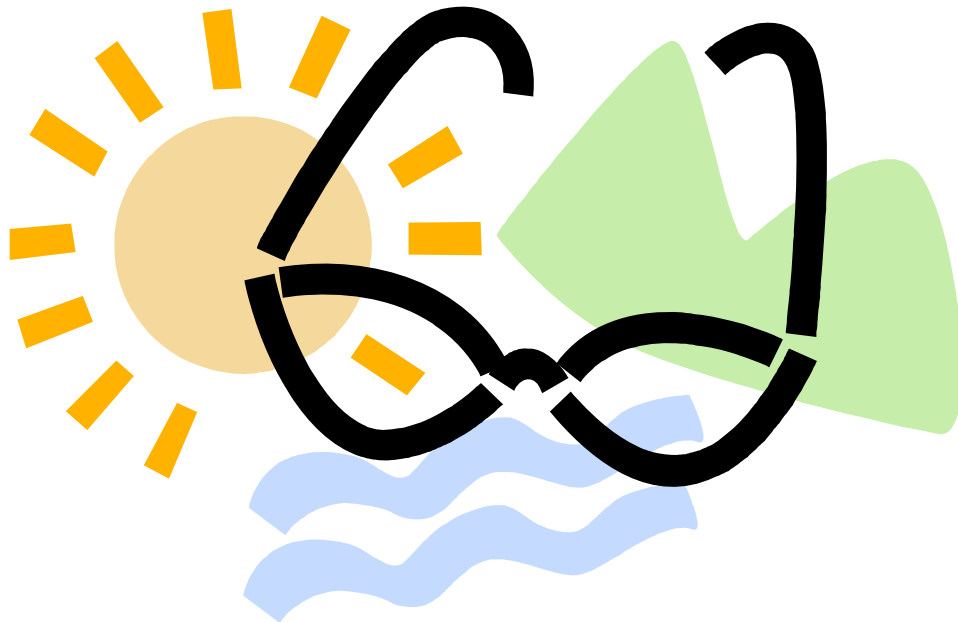
Beckett:

Possible readings:

Dante: *Inferno*

Eliot: *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*

Beckett: *Waiting for Godot*



FALL COURSES

ENG 500—Textual Practices I

(Open Only to English MA Students)
Permission of Department is Required

2087 TH 4:15-7:05 p.m. BA 216 G. Griffith

In this graduate seminar, we will examine some of the significant ways, within what we have come to think of as the Western literary tradition, that texts have been constituted and interpreted. We will take a roughly historical and genealogical approach as we consider, inter alia, the differences between literary criticism and literary theory, and between theory and praxis. Beginning with Plato's less than welcoming attitude to the poet in the Republic, we will read our way through a literary and material history of representation, conflict, conquest, resistance and liberation to arrive at our own learned conclusions about textual practices and textual praxes. The "anchor" texts in the course will be Charles Bressler's *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*, and Terry Eagleton's *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. When we have gained our critical "sea legs," we will weigh anchor and set our hermeneutic sights on four or five selected literary and cultural texts.

ENG 516—Workshop in Fiction

(Permission of Instructor is Required –
Submit Writing Sample to Professor Schwarzschild (5-10 pages of fiction, Humanities 339)

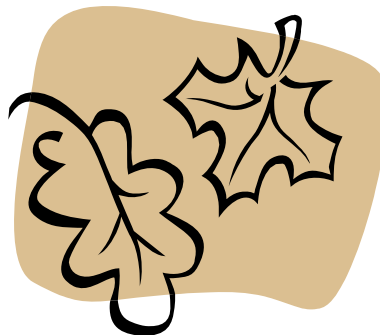
2088 T 7:15-10:05 p.m. HU 112 E. Schwarzschild

Intensive practice in writing fiction. Emphasis on development of fictional technique and individual styles. Students' work is discussed and criticized by all participants in the workshop. Instructors may bring to bear on the criticism of student work a discussion of writings by pertinent authors.

ENG 517—Workshop in Dramatic Writing

6329 TH 7:15-10:05 p.m. HU 039 C. Yalkut

This is a workshop that introduces students to the techniques of dramatic writing. Each student functions primarily as a dramatist, but also as audience and actor. Students give onstage readings of and discuss each other's work, revise scenes and, for the final project, finish a one-act play. During the semester, students will also read plays independently and attend at least one live stage performance.



ENG 580.1 Models of History: Bio-Cultures, Literature, & the Sublime in Early Modern Britain (SEMINAR)

6332 T 4:15-7:05 p.m. BA 224 R. Barney

This course will explore the intimate, often unpredictable, relation between new philosophical and scientific knowledge about human physiology and the emergence of modern concepts of “literature” and the sublime from 1680 until 1820 in Britain. We will begin with the philosophical empiricism of John Locke, which formed the basis of the 18th century’s understanding that all human knowledge was based on sensual experience, before turning to consider how specific medical theories regarding perception (via sight), feeling (via “gut” reaction), or sensitivity (via the nervous system) produced a framework in which to interpret literary texts, as well as to evaluate the response of readers to the emerging category of Literature (with a capital L) as distinct from other kinds of writing. Since what qualified as Literature was also measured by to what degree it was sublime, we will explore this new aesthetic idea, especially its definition in terms of an audience’s paradoxical experience of mental and physical trauma, as well as moral and spiritual edification. While the sublime was often characterized as an elevated, even ethereal, phenomenon, the term “bio-culture” captures the composite way in which the period gradually came to use medical knowledge to examine literary genius and readers’ responses, just as it also conjectured on how being exposed to artistic objects produced physical reactions with far-reaching implications for both individual sensibility and social organization.

On the one hand, this course will provide students an intensive study of literary and philosophical texts from the 18th and 19th centuries that focus on the issues of literariness, cognition, and socio-politics. On the other, it will offer a broader historical and theoretical perspective on ways to approach human embodiment, ideology, and what has come in the wake of so-called “body studies.” Our literary texts will include poetry by authors such as Alexander Pope, James Thomson, Thomas Gray, and Anne Finch on the topics of melancholy, sublime experience, and extreme emotion, as well as novels by Eliza Haywood, Laurence Sterne, and Ann Radcliffe—with a particular eye to the excesses of gothic fiction by the end of the century. Along the way, we will consider a number of theoretical and historical accounts of the emerging “modern” relation between the medical profession and culture, including those by Michel Foucault, Roy Porter, Aris Sarafianos, Steven Bruhm, and Jessica Riskin.

ENG 580.2— Archives of Transatlantic Revolution and Empire, 1750-1850

6333 W 4:15-7:05 p.m. HU 115 J. Greiman

This course will examine the literary production of the transatlantic world in the era of democratic revolutions and Atlantic expansion. Looking closely at four revolutionary moments – American independence, the French Revolution, the Haitian Revolution, and the revolutions of 1848 – we will read across national literary traditions to develop something like an archive of transatlantic empire. We will consider how expansionism and revolution are conjoined in a variety of writings from this period, from Rousseau’s “Essay on the Origins of Language” to Tyler’s *Algerine Captive* and Melville’s *Moby Dick*. In this, we will explore the residual imperialism in both theories of democracy and early democratic republics, looking explicitly at how sovereignty is both preserved and reinvented in this period. On the one hand, this course will be an intense reading course for students building lists in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literatures and cultural, transcultural & global studies. On the other hand, it will offer a case study in theories of sovereignty and its reinterpretation by democratic republics. To that end, our readings will include work by Carl Schmitt, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Giorgio Agamben, and Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri. Masters students will be expected to write two papers (10-15 pages); doctoral students will be expected to write a seminar paper (25-30 pages) and present to the class.

In addition to a course reader, required texts will include:

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Second Discourse* and “Essay on the Origin of Languages”

Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*

Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* and *Rights of Man*

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Man*

Charles Brockden Brown, *Edgar Huntly*

Royall Tyler, *The Algerine Captive*

Karl Marx, *The 18th Brumaire of Louis-Bonaparte*

Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* and “Benito Cereno”

Martin Delany, *Blake*

CLR James, *The Black Jacobins*

ENG 580.3— Modernist Poetics

9029 TH 7:15-10:05 p.m. HU 027 P. Stasi

This course will consist of an intensive examination of the poetry and prose of four modernist writers: T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Wallace Stevens and Marianne Moore. Our attempt will be to understand the theoretical underpinnings of modernism’s aesthetic revolution and to situate this revolution within its historical context. In addition, we will read some of the varied critical responses to this project and consider the lineages of literary and critical thinking that emerge from our primary texts. Requirements will include a class presentation, a 20-25 research paper and occasional short writing assignments.

ENG 581—Victorian Literature: Is There a Victorian Novel?

5509 W 7:15-10:05 p.m. HU 108 R. Craig

A study of the development of British fiction in the nineteenth century. The class will be organized around Victorian debates concerning the nature and purpose of the novel. A wide range of texts will be included, encompassing both major and minor figures, canonical and non-canonical works.

Interested students are encouraged to contact the instructor (rcraig@albany.edu) prior to May 2008 with suggestions and recommendations for course content.

ENG 642—Literary Theory: Theory Reading Literature

7829 T 7:15-10:05 p.m. SS 133 D. Wills

Study of a selection of theoretical works by French writers of the post-structuralist period, with special emphasis on approaches to the literary text. We will investigate the priority of something called theory vis-à-vis reading and literature by treating the former as a necessary and unavoidable process. That means presuming that there is necessarily theory when it comes to reading/literature; that there is no reading, no literature without theories of reading and literature; only more or less explicit, more or less presupposed theoretical choices. The course will be taught in English, but wherever possible, reading of texts in the original languages will be encouraged. Works by Blanchot, Barthes, Deleuze, Derrida, Levinas, Nancy, Cixous.

ENG 680— Culture and Imperialisms

9030 W 4:15-7:05 p.m. HU 019 B. Benjamin

For the first time, the history of imperialism and its culture can now be studied as neither monolithic nor reductively compartmentalized, separate, distinct.

-Edward Said

What is the place of culture under imperialism? This course will trace the often-intertwined intellectual genealogies of *culture* and *imperialism*. Recent scholarship by David Harvey, Neil Smith, V.G. Kiernan, and Randy Martin, among others, has examined the “New Imperialism,” analyzing U.S. military interventionism overlaid atop a neo-liberal economic regime of global capitalist production and accumulation. Meanwhile, a coherent body of research has examined the new cultures of globalization, exploring the modes of expression, identification and social formation that emerge in response to changing dynamics between and among individuals, communities, states, and the world capitalist system. (Possible authors include Frederic Jameson, John Tomlinson, George Yudice, Néstor Garcia Canclini, Roberto Schwarz, Franco Moretti, Inderpal Grewal, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, and Geeta Patel). This seminar seeks, then, to engage with the critical interventions in the emerging work on the “new” imperialism and the cultures of globalization. Part of this process entails contextualizing these arguments within longer historical and intellectual frameworks. To understand the place of culture in our present imperial moment, we will examine the long tradition of liberal, and particularly Marxist, critiques of imperialism from authors such as Hobson, Lenin, Hilferding, Luxemburg, Bukharin, Frank, Amin, and Wallerstein. We will also examine the emergence of “culture” as a modern critical category, looking at recent arguments from Michael Denning, Terry Eagleton, Susan Hegemon, and others about the “cultural turn,” as well as the writings of mid-century anti-imperial cultural theorists such as Frantz Fanon, Walter Rodney, C.L.R. James, Kwame Nkrumah, and Amilcar Cabral. The course will include several contemporary literary and filmic examples to help us raise pertinent questions about the problem of political art and the horizons of cultural critique. These will include texts from authors variously situated at sites of revolt against the current neo-liberal order: Mahasweta Devi, José Saramago, J.M. Cotzee, Jeremy Cronin, Eduardo Galeano, Abderrahmane Sissako, Bong Joon-ho and others.

ENG 681—The Politics of Literary Reputation: Texts, Authors, and Their Critics (Seminar)

6336

M

4:15-7:05 p.m.

BIO 152

R. Bosco

Justifying his highly selective interpretation and appropriation of historical fact to suit his artistic purposes while writing *The Crucible*, the American playwright Arthur Miller remarked, “One finds I suppose what one seeks.” Miller’s comment is merely one individual’s acknowledgment of how the intellectual, imaginative, and aesthetic predispositions of creative writers and readers exert a substantial influence on their disposition toward historical materials, but it is as instructive for biographical and critical writing and theories of, as well as practices in, literary textual editing as it is for fiction, poetry, and drama that nominally locate their sources in history. It is especially instructive in accounting for the variety of ways in which biographers, critics, and literary textual editors have treated the respective lives, thought, and writings of Americans Anne Bradstreet and Edward Taylor, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, and Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost. Put another way, the thesis of this seminar is that, regardless of the theory informing their practice, no biographer, critic, or textual editor *ever* “objectively” or “disinterestedly” approaches the subject of his or her research; it is a thesis admirably demonstrated by the enormous range of revisionist biographical and critical studies on each of these writers produced over the last twenty years as well as by in-print and on-line arguments presently advanced concerning the “authority” and “accessibility” of ongoing and recent editions of the public and private (personal) writings of Taylor, Emerson, and Frost.

Each of these writers enjoys reasonably sound canonical status today, and so the purpose of this course is to examine the ways in which biographers, critics, and textual editors have contributed to that status. Here, Bradstreet and Taylor, Emerson and Thoreau, and Dickinson and Frost have been purposely linked together in order to promote comparative and contrastive discussion of their primary works and the construction and evolution of their respective reputations. Discussions about personal or cultural needs that all these writers and their work were found to fill will dominate the course. Readings will be equally divided among primary texts and biographical, critical, and textual studies.

Requirements include two brief in-class presentations and by the end of the semester a substantial “working paper” and an in-class presentation on a topic related to the explicit thesis of the seminar. Justifying his highly selective

ENG 685— Theorizing Blackness

2089

M

4:15-7:05 p.m.

BA 214

L. Thompson

No true account really of black life can be held, can be contained, in the American vocabulary. As it is, the only way that you can deal with it is by doing great violence to the assumptions on which the vocabulary is based.

James Baldwin, "Interview with Quincy Troupe"

The blackness of black people in this society has always represented the blemish, the uncleanness, the barrier separating individual and society. Castration from blackness becomes the initiatory tunnel, the portal through which black people must pass if they are not to fall on their faces in the presence of society, paternity, and hierarchy. Once castrated they have shed their horrid mortality, the rapacious lust of lower womanhood, the raucous, mother-witted passion of lower womanhood, and opened themselves up to participation in the pseudo-celestial white community.

Patricia J. Williams, "Owning the Self in a Disowned World"

Here again, the end of the essential black subject is something which people are increasingly debating, but they may not have fully reckoned with its political consequences. What is at issue here is the recognition of the extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities which compose the category 'black'; that is, the recognition that 'black' is essentially a politically and culturally *constructed* category, which cannot be grounded in a set of fixed trans-cultural or transcendental racial categories and which therefore has no guarantees in nature. What this brings into play is the recognition of the immense diversity and differentiation of the historical and cultural experience of black subjects. This inevitably entails a weakening or fading of the notion that 'race' or some composite notion of race around the term black will either guarantee the effectivity of any cultural practice or determine in any final sense its aesthetic value.

Stuart Hall, "New Ethnicities"

In *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), W.E.B. DuBois observes that, "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line—the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men." This seminar will explore one side of that color line. African American intellectuals from DuBois to Patricia J. Williams have theorized the concept of blackness. During the semester we will contemplate how blackness is celebrated, defined, performed, interrogated and problematized. By examining such topics as racial authenticity, intersectionality, essentialism and the role of theory in race studies we will assess the stakes involved for scholars of African American studies in excavating the varied meanings and representations of blackness. Since the status of African Americans in the academy (and in the U.S. more broadly) remains a contested issue, the course will also discuss the current trends and debates within black studies such as those concerning canonization, transnationalism, institutionalization, and the standing of gender and queer studies within the discipline. Authors under consideration include: Kimberlé Crenshaw, Ralph Ellison, Frantz Fanon, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Stuart Hall, Evelyn Hammonds, Robin D. G. Kelley, Kobena Mercer, Toni Morrison, Adrian Piper, George S. Schuyler, Valerie Smith, Hortense Spillers and August Wilson. While there are no prerequisites, participants should have some knowledge of African American history and literature. Students are encouraged to purchase *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature* and the *Oxford Companion to African American Literature* as resources for use during the term, and in future research and teaching.



ENG 710—Textual Studies I: Survey

7026 TH 4:15-7:05 p.m. HU 134 J. Lilley

This course introduces some of the central debates and the key concepts that have helped to shape the field of English Studies. By exercising our close reading skills, we will look for important areas of overlap and influence among scholars from an array of different disciplines—philosophy, literature, economics, linguistics, psychology, political science, and sociology, to take just a few examples—paying particular attention to the ways in which they reconfigure the concept of literature and the practice of "literary theory" in the 20th century. We will divide the readings into five three-week segments, each focused on a specific area of interest or overlap: 1) ideas of linguistic, economic and aesthetic value (Saussure, Marx, Agamben); 2) ideology, registration, and exchange (Althusser, Simmel, Balibar, Derrida, Žižek); 3) reason, technicity, and the human (Weber, Horkheimer, Jünger, Stiegler, Deleuze); 4) history and the event (Foucault, de Certeau, Rancière, Badiou); and 5) forms of community/states of exception (Arendt, Benjamin, Schmitt, Agamben, Nancy, Esposito).

ENG 720—Textual Studies II: Ethics & Emotion

(This course is open to all Doctoral students, and MA Students with permission of MA Advisor)

7830 M 7:15-10:05 p.m. HU 108 C. Shepherdson

A close reading of the Critique of Judgment will occupy at least the first 8-10 weeks, with subsequent readings from Derrida, Lyotard, Lacan, Gasche and others who have returned to the problems of the beautiful and the sublime, the problem of disinterestedness, the question of esthetic pleasure, the relation between ethics and esthetics, and the status of the "subject" in esthetic experience. An annotated bibliography will be required, in which students will develop their own specific genealogies of post-Kantian thought, as preparation for a class presentation and a final research paper.

**ENG 771—Practicum in English Studies: Teaching Writing and Literature
(Prerequisite: ENG 770. Open only to English Ph.D. students)**

2094 T 4:15-7:05 p.m. PC 355 M. Rozett

English 771 is a continuation of English 770, with a focus on the practical aspects of teaching the English Department's 100- and 200- level literature and writing courses. Our subject matter will include the courses you will be teaching during the Fall 08 semester and the ones you are assigned for the following Spring 09 semester, with plenty of attention to what we can expect undergraduates to know already and to be able to accomplish in a semester. I will visit each of your classes and encourage you to observe one another teach, and you will be welcome to visit my undergraduate class. We will be using the MLA's "Approaches to Teaching" volumes for a four-part writing project and presentation (a complete list is available on the MLA website). We will also hold workshops on syllabus design, testing strategies, paper-grading, student conferences, and other topics. You will be encouraged to attend ITLAL and Initiatives in Teaching events and learn more about the resources available to undergraduates on the Albany campus.



Course Concentration Distribution

Summer 2008

Literature, Modernity, and the Contemporary

580 Models of History in Literature	Elam
582 Studies in an Author: Ernest Hemingway	Berman
681 Authors and Their Critics	Elam

Fall 2008

Literature, Modernity, and the Contemporary

580.1 Bio-Cultures, Literature, & the Sublime in Early Modern Britain (SEMINAR)	Barney
580.2 Modernist Poetics	Stasi
580.3 Transatlantic Revolution & Empire	Greiman
581 Is There a Victorian Novel?	Craig
642 Theory Reading Literature (x LLC 610/FRE 614)	Wills
680 Culture and Imperialisms	Benjamin
681 Politics of Literary Reputation	Bosco

Writing Practices

516 Fiction Workshop	Schwarzschild
517 Dramatic Writing	Yalkut
580.3 Modernist Poetics	Stasi

Cultural, Transcultural, and Global Studies

580.1 Bio-Cultures, Literature, & the Sublime in Early Modern Britain (SEMINAR)	Barney
580.2 Literature & Transatlantic Revolution	Greiman
680 Culture & Imperialisms	Benjamin
685 Theorizing Blackness	Thompson

Theoretical Constructs

642 Theory Reading Literature (x LLC 610/FRE 614)	Wills
685 Theorizing Blackness	Thompson
720 Ethics & Emotion	Shepherdson



NOTES