

**Department of English
University at Albany**



Spring Session 2018

ENGLISH GRADUATE COURSE OFFERINGS FOR:

Master of Arts

Doctor of Philosophy

Non-Degree Study

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Department of English
Humanities Building, Room 333
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*Unless otherwise noted, all Courses are by Permission of Department.
Please Contact James Lilley (jlilley@albany.edu) with questions.*

SPRING 2018 COURSES

6153 AENG500 Textual Practices I: Gothic, Ghosts, and Genre

Wednesday 07:15PM-10:05PM Lilley, James

With the Gothic as our focus, this course will offer students an introduction to a variety of methodologies and theories of literary study. Some of the questions we'll ponder: What is a ghost? What constitutes a literary genre? How do texts register the anxieties of cultural, political, and psychological trauma? How do standards of taste emerge? And how have new media technologies transformed the genre of the Gothic into popular and lucrative contemporary aesthetic modes such as the detective story, the vampire flick, and the horror movie? Some of the theories/methodologies we will engage: formalism and genre studies, psychoanalytic and post-Freudian theory, ideology critique and Marxism, theories of the modern and postmodern, and a variety of approaches to gender, campiness, and kitsch. Authors/movies/TV shows to include: Poe, *Stranger Things*, Walpole, *Black Mirror*, Melville, *Blue Velvet*, Kafka, *The Matrix*, *Pan's Labyrinth*.

1794 AENG516 Graduate Fiction Workshop

Wednesday 04:15PM-07:05PM Tillman, Lynne M.

In this Graduate Fiction workshop, each person is expected to be a full participant in discussion and commentary on colleagues' fictions -- stories/prose of all kinds. We will consider the complexity of writing fiction, in all its forms, and with all its vicissitudes. We will focus on what narrative is, what its constituent elements are -- questions of time, order, tone, mood, etc. Voice will be of particular importance. Who is telling the story, another significant question. The workshop will consider the importance and effects of all aspects of writing, including what to leave out and why, why this word not that one. I am interested in close readings, and careful attention to all facets of writing. Entry to the workshop is by permission only. Please email me at tillwhentillman@gmail.com with no more than eight pages of your prose fiction, and tell me your experience in writing, courses, main interests, etc.

9956 AENG517 Writing and Photography

Wednesday 01:00PM-04:00PM Goodwin, Daniel & Schwarzschild, Edward

In this deeply interdisciplinary class, taught by professors from both the English Department and the Art Department, student writers and photographers will collaborate on creative projects related to the current exhibition at the University Art Museum. This spring semester's exhibition, entitled *This Place*, explores the complexity of Israel/Palestine through the eyes of twelve internationally acclaimed photographers. Our collaborations will be informed not only by the exhibit and reviews of the exhibit, but also by wide-ranging readings and viewings of materials related to writing, photography, and museum practices. Throughout the course, we will interrogate the lines between various disciplines as we rigorously examine the ways we see, describe, and understand the world around us. In addition to producing artistic collaborations, students will also be expected to write essays and deliver presentations.

10075 AENG580 Representing Slavery
Thursday 04:15PM-07:05PM Smith, Derik Jalal

We can't get past slavery. Or, we can't seem to get slavery into the past. Since the 1970s, representations of slavery have been prominent in African American high-culture texts. The great majority of these texts have been wrought in the mode of "melancholic historicism," bearing reverent witness to a tragic, defining and "ongoing" slave past. For many, the quintessential text of this mode is Toni Morrison's *Beloved*—which we will read in the seminar. The title character of Morrison's vastly influential novel is a ghost-figure who contains within her a number of selves that seem to have existed at disparate moments in a trans-Atlantic, antebellum past. At one point in the novel, *Beloved* ruminates on history and asserts that "all of it is now, it is always now." The continuing impingement of the slave past on the present is a key trope in representations of slavery that are beholden to melancholic historicism. Our seminar will consider a variety of these representations—as in Gayl Jones's *Corregidora*, Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad*, and (maybe) Kevin Young's *Ardency*—while paying close attention to the politics of the "temporal accumulation" theory of history that is advanced in these texts. We will think about why one important critic—Kenneth Warren—is unimpressed by these versions of history and insists that "to understand both the past and present, we have to put the past behind us." A number of recent critical and creative texts—like Warren's *What Was African American Literature?* and Paul Beatty's *The Sellout*—will help us to think about the relation between developments in American political economy and the rise of the neo-slave narrative in the final decades of the twentieth century. And, our study of rather contemporary representations of slavery will be prefaced by an introduction to the antebellum genre of the slave narrative, and at least one recently-influential history of nineteenth-century slavery in the U.S.A.

4591 AENG581 Anglophone Caribbean: Studies in a Literary Period
Wednesday 04:15PM-07:05PM Griffith, Glyne A

Study of a given period in terms of the texts which comprise it and the contexts within which they have been traditionally understood. In light of the general rubric that this course offer graduate students exposure to texts in a selected period, we will examine a grouping of Anglophone Caribbean textual works – prose fiction, essays of literary and cultural criticism, poetry, and drama - produced during those years immediately preceding formal decolonization and national independence in the English-speaking Caribbean. Our readings will concentrate on the diverse ways in which a colonized people creatively reconfigured ideas of imagined community in order to delineate the contours of a new national consciousness and anticipate the shape of post-colonial experience. Some of the authors and critics working in the 1950s and 1960s, or reflecting on that historical period from the vantage point of the post-60s decades will likely include Edward Baugh, Sylvia Wynter, Louise Bennett, Derek Walcott, Harold Telemaque, Roger Mais, John Hearne, George Lamming, Kamau Brathwaite, Wilson Harris, Rhonda Cobham-Sander, Leah Rosenberg, Shalini Puri, and others.

9037 AENG581 English Renaissance Drama
Tuesday 04:15PM-07:05PM Murakami, Ineke

When Ben Jonson memorialized Shakespeare, he praised him not as a lone “colossus” who “doth bestride the narrow world” eclipsing all other writers, but as the “Soul of the age.” The difference bears consideration for it asks us to evaluate Shakespeare *in context*—not only with the vertiginous historical changes that fostered the rise of commercial theater, nor even next to the extraordinary output of playwrights whose names once outshone Shakespeare’s—but in relation to the wealth of dramatic forms which influenced any writer who grew up in an age that took the *theatrum mundi topos*, “all the world’s a stage,” seriously. Consequently, this class includes only one Shakespeare play. And because this is a “reading course,” most of our time will be spent with the plays themselves, sampling the most influential dramatic forms of the period, from moral drama to revenge tragedy; from civic entertainment to royal entry; from elite masque to folk play; and from city comedy to romantic tragicomedy. We will read professional stage poets like Webster and Middleton next to writers like Preston and Carey who took time out from more respectable employment to dally with dramatic “toys.” Historical and critical readings scheduled to accompany each dramatic text will foster our thinking about problems of genre, theatricality, publicity, privacy, and drama’s function in relation to the cultural transformations that affected all who partook in the heady collaboration that was early modern theater. Expect a take-home exam that emulates the conditions of a Masters or field exam, presentation of an annotated bibliography, and a term paper with presentation.

10076 AENG581 Queer Poetry and Politics
Monday 04:15PM-07:05PM Keenaghan, Eric C.

“The personal is political.” This famous slogan, coined by Carol Hanisch, was introduced into second-wave feminist discourse in 1969, the same year as New York City’s Stonewall riots which often are used to date the start of gay and lesbian liberation. It is a commonplace to assume that poetry is one of the most personal of the arts. What better form, then, to bring together a personal politics and the intimate experiences of individuals’ sexual and erotic lives? But what does a personal politics truly mean? And in the wake of Romanticism’s negative capability and modernist poetics of impersonality, what does it mean for poetry to be presumed to be a form of “personal” expression? How can an often-esoteric art form like poetry be political—that is, can poetry really transform institutions and the socio-political landscape?

Conceptually, this course sets out to examine how queer poetries have held the personal and the political in tension while addressing what it means to love, to live, to survive, and to revolutionize. Pragmatically, this seminar will explore this conceit through a twofold objective: (1) An introduction to the history of American LGBT+ politics and culture during the Cold War (c.1950-1989), from the start of the homophile movement through gay and lesbian liberation to the rise of intersectionality and the response to the HIV/AIDS crisis; (2) The study of a range of American poetries produced alongside, and sometimes as part of, the gender and sexual activist movements from the latter half of the twentieth century. Eight to ten activist-poets will be studied in depth, either in key standalone volumes or their selected works. Emphasis will be placed on “experimental” poetries, but we also will examine agitprop and formalist queer verse by LGBT-identified writers. By using digital archives and published anthologies to access primary historical materials (activist periodicals, mimeo newsletters, manifestos, broadsides), we will consider the poets’ political and

aesthetic innovations in light of their respective moments' activist rhetorics. Selections from LGBT+ cultural and political histories, plus poetics and craft statements by the examined writers, will supplement our readings of the poetry and the primary historical materials. Our ambition will be to do what most queer theorists have failed to do—i.e., to take poetry seriously, by considering its historical, aesthetic, and political ambitions. Thus, we will use the form as a foundation for developing *new* theories and political understandings, rather than groundlessly apply existing queer theory or other literary theories to these poetries. Queer writers (inclusive of straight-identified seropositive writers) who might be studied in-depth include: Allen Ginsberg, Jack Spicer, John Wieners, Judy Grahn, Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, Ronald Johnson, Gloria Anzaldúa, Aaron Shurin, Essex Hemphill, Tory Dent. Other LGBT+ poets from whose work we might read samplings include: Stephen Jonas, Frank O'Hara, Paul Goodman, Muriel Rukeyser, Robert Duncan, Harold Norse, Diane di Prima, Jonathan Williams, Tim Dlugos, Jack Sharpless, Leland Hickman, Antler, Elana Dykewoman, Olga Broumas, Marilyn Hacker, Pat Parker, Martha Shelley, Joan Larkin, John Giorno, Charley Shively, Kenneth Pitchford, Miguel Piñero, James Baldwin, Paul Mariah, Dennis Cooper, Thom Gunn, June Jordan, Eileen Myles, Mark Doty, Kevin Killian, Reinaldo Arenas.

Requirements for PhD and MA students: (1) Preparation for every class meeting and participation in discussion; (2) Three brief response papers (3-5 pages, one per unit—the homophile movement, gay and lesbian liberation, the HIV/AIDS crisis), to be shared on Blackboard 24 hours before the class session; (3) Prewriting assignments for a seminar paper (including proposal, annotated bibliography, and revised abstract); and (4) A researched critical seminar paper (20-30 pages, 15-20 sources). Given our historical focus, no hybrid or creative projects will be permitted for the final projects. We will deal with the writers who have come before us on their own terms, as best as we can, without the temptation of trying to force them into our conceptual, aesthetic, or political rubrics.

Required and recommended texts: In late December or early January, a complete list of required poetry volumes will be sent to enrolled students. A brief reading assignment for the first class session will be available through Blackboard two weeks before the semester's start. Before then, students are encouraged to find online cheap editions of the following required out-of-print or costly (if bought at full price) texts—*We Are Everywhere: A Historical Sourcebook of Gay and Lesbian Politics*, edited by Mark Blasius and Shane Phelan (Routledge); *Rethinking the Gay and Lesbian Movement*, by Marc Stein (Routledge); and *Gay and Lesbian Poetry in Our Time*, edited by Carl Morse and Joan Larkin (St. Martin's Press). I also highly recommend that you purchase one or two of the following out-of-print LGBT+ period poetry anthologies (all available and inexpensive from online retailers)—*The Male Muse: A Gay Anthology*, edited by Ian Young (1973); *Angels of the Lyre: A Gay Poetry Anthology* (1975), edited by Winston Leyland (this title will be available on reserve at the library); *Amazon Poetry: An Anthology* (1976), edited by Elly Bulkin and Joan Larkin; *Orgasms of Light: The Gay Sunshine Anthology* (1977), edited by Winston Leyland; *Lesbian Poetry: An Anthology* (1981), edited by Elly Bulkin and Joan Larkin; *The Son of the Male Muse: New Gay Poetry*, edited by Ian Young (1983); *Poets for Life: Seventy-Six Poets Respond to AIDS*, edited by Michael Klein (1989).

Lastly, all graduate students should apply for a New York Public Library card. As SUNY students and/or NY State residents, you are eligible. It is easiest to get one if you visit the city; just pop into any NYPL branch with the required identification. You also can apply online (<https://www.nypl.org/library-card>), but it could take some time to validate your application. For this course, I recommend students research primary historical documents (and some poetry magazines) through the following online research databases and digital archives, available through

NYPL.org: Independent Voices and the Archives of Sexuality & Gender. Through UAlbany's library, you can access the following, more limited databases: LGBT Life with Full Text and Alternative Press Index.

10077 AENG582 Reading (in) Faulkner
Thursday 07:15PM-10:05PM Cohen, Thomas

Faulkner is perhaps the novelistic titan of early 20th century America, yet it remains a question how the intricacies of his writings and their regional and race motifs are read today. These riddles pertain not just to the manner in which the memes of the "South" and its racialisms seem weirdly conjured today. The course will offer the student an opportunity for a close reading or engagement with Faulkner and the parallel opportunity to question the role of canonical "literature" from a 21st century perspective—that is, ask how Faulkner probes the epistemologies of "reading" as read from the era of climate change, of tele-mnemonics, and of extinction imaginaries. The class will be conducted as a seminar, with student participation in discussion and rotating presentations mandatory. The course itself will open with a series of select readings to introduce students to Faulkner and the critical legacies (modernist, regionalist, psycho-analytic, post-structuralist), then turn to a close reading of *Go Down, Moses*--whose title suggests an active dismantling of the historical and figurative systems which Faulkner inherited from an era of the Book and "American" fables of origin. It is, accordingly, in this work which will be at the core of this seminar that two over-riding motifs converge: that of "race" (the novel most addressing blackness and black figures), and what is called the question of the "earth"—and with that, the trans-animate and an epochal crisis in reading. Students will be encouraged to frame their own interpretive project for the final paper.

10079 AENG642 Current Trends in Critical Theory: Realisms & the Origins of the Novel
Tuesday 07:15PM-10:05PM Hill, Michael K.

This course will be useful to the Masters or Doctoral student who is interested in the following set of literary problems: the history of the novel; genre theory; realism as a narrative technique; and the relationship between science and aesthetics.

We will start where the modern novel itself begins, which is in the eighteenth century, a time where the value of realism emerged as part of the Enlightenment's investment in probability, empiricism, and the human being *per se*. Here we will examine a range of different kinds of texts—literary, scientific, and philosophical—and ask how they approach the problem of realism from their specific disciplinary vantage points. Once we have established the historical claims for realistic writing, we will move into more current work on the topic. This reading will also move between literary and extra-literary kinds of work. Here, specifically, we will be interested in comparing and contrasting early modern endorsements of realist discourse with three other variations—materialist, speculative, and ecological—which either extend or attempt to correct realism's original Enlightenment claims.

Students should expect to read both contemporary and eighteenth-century novels, as well as theorists and scientific thinkers, writing then and now. Texts may include: (Literature) Behn,

Oronooko; Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*; Lennox, *The Female Quixote*; Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling*; Pope, *Essay on Criticism and Essay on Man*; Scott, *Millenium Hall*; Gosh, *The Calcutta Chromosome*. (Philosophy of Science) Bacon, from *Major Works*; Boyle, *A Free Inquiry into the Vulgarly Received Notion of Nature*; DeLanda, *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy*; Morton, *Humankind: Solidarity with Non-Human People*; Smith, from *Essays on Philosophical Inquiry*. (Literary Theory) Gosh, *The Great Derangement*; Jameson, *Marxism and Form*; McGann, *A New Republic of Letters*; Morretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History*; Ong, *Literacy and Orality*.

10080 AENG651 Theories of Language
Thursday 04:15PM-07:05PM Elam, Helen Regueiro

This course will focus on “translation” not in its ordinary sense of ferrying meaning from one language to another but as the most intense expression of a problem within language: “translation” as a nickname for the issue of “meaning” at the heart of literature. Three texts on translation (Benjamin, de Man, Derrida) will function as theoretical stakes for a range of readings (Nabokov, Carson, Beckett, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Agamben, et al). In addition to the literary/theoretical components, students may wish to consider a ‘creative’ component: an actual translation to/from English subtended by a critical introduction and substantial footnote commentary. Three papers (the first two tending toward a term paper), intense class participation.

8509 AENG720 Textual Studies II: Aesthetics and the Fate of Literature
(Please note: AENG720 can be repeated for credit)
Monday 07:15PM-10:05PM Shepherdson, Charles

The recent history of literary theory could be seen as a double turn: (1) a turn away from New Criticism, which was thought to focus exclusively on the literary object, and cultivate “close reading,” thereby detaching literature from its social and political context in the name of an idealized “aesthetic” domain of art, and later as (2) a turn away from post-structuralist thought (particularly deconstruction), insofar as the so-called “linguistic turn” was thought to reduce everything to language and the “free play of the signifier,” thereby detaching art (once again) from its social and political context.

Movements in literary theory with very diverse aims – including feminist theory, the New Historicism, Marxism, and the general development of cultural studies – had the great advantage of restoring the political, social and historical dimension of art. In the process, however, the peculiarity of aesthetic experience has been effaced or ignored. “Cultural theory,” as it is called – rather than “literary theory” – has tended to neglect the borders that separate aesthetic experience from experience shaped by religious, legal, political, medical and other forms of social and discursive practice. Arguments about the “social construction of subjectivity” in literary criticism too often neglect the distinctive character of aesthetic experience, absorbing it into the “social,” “cultural,” or “political” domain, as if there were no difference between the literary work, and literary formations of subjectivity, and the medical, religious, political and other discourses that surround the work of art.

This course will explore the elusive border that separates and links aesthetic experience and experience as it is shaped by neighboring discourses and institutions. We will read two canonical texts – Aristotle’s *Poetics* and Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* – which decisively shaped ancient and

modern conceptions of aesthetics, and we will then turn to some more contemporary figures, to trace this problem in some of its current forms. Authors may include Michel Foucault, Hans-Robert Jauss, Jean-Luc Nancy, Jacques Rancière, and possibly recent work in affect theory and cognitive neuroscientific approaches to literature.

1807 AENG770 Teaching Writing and Literature
Tuesday 04:15PM-07:05PM Carey, Tamika L.

This course explores disciplinary traditions, pedagogical theories, and practical matters that foster and complicate effective teaching within English and Writing Studies. With some attention to recent scholarship and commentary on the evolution of these two fields, the influence of race, gender, and sexuality on embodied pedagogy, and retention, we will take a thematic walk through the process of conceptualizing and designing an effective undergraduate English course. The topics we are likely to discuss include: how to translate learning outcomes into curricular objectives, how to structure classes in regards to scope and workload, how to design the “Writing Intensive” course, how to incorporate technology, and how to create effective lessons. Throughout the semester, seminar participants will lead class-discussions, write short-papers on course scholarship or independent research, and develop a “dream course” portfolio that will, ideally, aid them in their teaching career at UAlbany and beyond.

Course Concentration Distribution Spring 2018

Literature, Modernity, and the Contemporary

AENG581: English Renaissance Drama
AENG581: Queer Poetry and Politics
AENG651: Theories of Language
AENG720: Textual Studies II: Aesthetics and the Fate of Literature
AENG642: Current Trends in Critical Theory
AENG582: Reading (in) Faulkner

Writing Practices

AENG516: Graduate Fiction Workshop
AENG517: Writing and Photography
AENG651: Theories of Language
AENG770: Teaching Writing and Literature

Cultural, Transcultural, and Global Studies

AENG500: Textual Practices I: Gothic, Ghosts, and Genre
AENG581: Anglophone Caribbean: Studies in a Literary Period
AENG580: Representing Slavery

Theoretical Constructs

AENG500: Textual Practices I: Gothic, Ghosts, and Genre
AENG581: Queer Poetry and Politics
AENG651: Theories of Language
AENG720: Textual Studies II: Aesthetics and the Fate of Literature
AENG642 Current Trends in Critical Theory

