Course Information: Fall 2012

English 200+, Graduate Seminars

ENG 0291-01
Graduate Seminar: Queer Theory: Negativity, Sociality, and Politics
Edelman, L

This seminar will focus on the emergence and development of queer theory in the US academy over the past fifty years. While examining the relation between queer theory and other major theoretical movements, from the rise of deconstruction to the present moment, this course will focus largely on queer theory's internal tension between communitarian politics and what has been called its "anti-social" turn. We'll be concerned throughout the semester with the relations among sexuality, politics, and theories of reading with the aim of conceptualizing the place of negativity in literary analysis. The authors whose works we will study this semester will probably include: Guy Hocquenghem, Michel Foucault, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Judith Butler, D.A. Miller, David Halperin, Teresa de Lauretis, Leo Bersani, Lauren Berlant, Michael Warner, Judith Halberstam, José Muñoz, David Eng, Jasbir Puar, and Heather Love.

ENG0291-02
Graduate Seminar: Language, Play, and Desire in Early Modern England
Haber, J

This course will explore the twin Renaissance obsessions with language and erotic desire. We will consider sexualities both orthodox and marginalized, and examine early modern constructions of gender and the body. Simultaneously, we will examine contemporary hopes and fears about the power (and limits) of language, poetry, and the theater, and we will use current criticism to aid us in formulating questions about the intersections and conflicts among these various ideas. Readings will probably include poems and plays by the following: Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, Mary Wroth, John Donne, Ben Jonson, John Webster, Thomas Middleton, and Margaret Cavendish.

ENG0291-03
Graduate Seminar: Race and the Senses
Sharpe, C

Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man Lucius Brockway comes up with the winning slogan at Liberty Paints, "If It's Optic White, It's the Right White." How do we understand optic whiteness in the context of something like liberty? That is, how do we understand race and racial formation as material history and also as visual, auditory, and visceral event? In this seminar we will think not only about how racial difference (particularly "whiteness" and "blackness") have been seen and produced we will also try to think through, to pose questions about, and produce possible modes of understanding how race has structured visual, auditory and other fields. That is, we will attend to how race is produced by and produces ways of seeing, hearing, feeling by reading texts, looking at images and film, and listening to music. Probable texts: Uncle Tom's Cabin, Blake: Or the Huts of America, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom, Benito Cereno, Three Lives, Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man, Invisible Man, Property, Jazz, and/or Beloved, Zong!, Max Roach's Freedom Now Suite, Louis Armstrong, and Wynton Marsalis among others. Probable theorists include: Fred Moten, Daphne Brooks, and Jennifer Stoever-Ackerman, as well as theorists of sound, vision, and visuality. We may also have at least one guest lecturer.

ENG0291-04
Graduate Seminar: The Victorian Novel
Litvak, J

We will read novels by Dickens, Thackeray, Charlotte Brontë, Emily Brontë, Collins, Braddon, Eliot, Trollope, Hardy, and Stoker, placing them in the context of recent criticism and theory. Discussions will be based on careful analysis of the novels, but we will also be considering such general literary and cultural issues as realism, the gothic, and the grotesque; comedy, sentimentality, and sensationalism; gender and the novel; subjectivity and middle-class ideology; "Englishness" and its racial others; sexuality and the marriage plot; childhood, illness and death; fiction, literacy, and the marketplace.
This course is required of all second-year students who entered without an M.A.; other English graduate students may audit individual classes, but they may not register for the course. Students will meet with a different member of the faculty every other week for an hour to discuss important topics in the areas of professionalization, pedagogy, and intellectual currents in our discipline.