

Course Information: Fall 2014

English 17-99, Literature

ENG 0017-01

The Poem

Reines, A.

September 11 2001 was the first day of classes in my senior year of college. I want to reckon, with you, the impact of globalization, the Bush years, the War on Terror, blogs, and climate change on American lyric since I approached legal majority and as you, more or less, attain yours. For Freud, there was nothing more difficult to apprehend, to see, to understand, than the recent past. Poetry will be the black mirror against which you shine the obscurity of your adolescence; your coming-of-age, likewise, will be the lamp that illuminates all that's darkest in what we read. This will be a demanding course. Weekly requirements: 1-2 books, plus critical texts and written responses. Books by Alice Notley, Amiri Baraka, Ben Lerner, The Bernadette Corporation, CAConrad, Claudia Rankine, Dana Ward, Geoffrey G. O'Brien, Jeni Olin/Truck Darling, Jill McDonough, Michael Levine, Rachel Zucker, Stuart Krimko, Tao Lin, and others.

ENG 0021-01

General View of English Literature I

Genster, J.

A survey of English literature from (translated) work in Anglo Saxon through the early 18th-century. Readings will probably include Beowulf, selections from Chaucer's Canterbury Tales and Milton's Paradise Lost, lyrics by Wyatt, Sidney, Shakespeare, Donne, Queen Elizabeth, Amelia Lanyer, Ben Jonson, Andrew Marvell, and John Dryden, plays by Marlowe and Shakespeare, and prose by Aphra Behn and Jonathan Swift. Designed as an introduction to the English major, this course will be of interest to anyone who wishes to gain both a broad overview of earlier English literature and a good understanding of the basic techniques of literary analysis.

ENG 0023-01

American Literature: First Contact to 1855

Wolff, N.

This survey will foreground the fact that American literature has always been multicultural, artistically diverse, and filled with debates about human rights, religion, gender equality, economics, race, personal freedom, and how to live in relationship with the earth. Bringing together Native American, white European American, African American, Latino/a, and Asian American voices, the course mixes canonical and less well-known texts by various writers such as Anne Bradstreet, Jonathan Edwards, Phyllis Wheatley, Benjamin Franklin, Handsome Lake, David Walker, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Frederick Douglass, Nathaniel Hawthorne, William Apess, and Chinese merchants in California. We will think about the construction of literary history and the politics of representation. Who gets to speak? Write? Read? Who does not? Why does this matter in 2013? The class will include active class discussion and two field trips, one to the only known slave quarter still standing in New England, the other to the woods. There will be two papers and a final exam.

ENG 0029-01
Literary Studies
Bamber, L.

We will read works by the giants (Tolstoy, Shakespeare, Virgil, Virginia Woolf) and also by very recent authors who delight in the idiom of 21st century English (e.g., Ben Fountain and Tony Hoagland). We will discuss poetry, fiction, weird "little things" in prose, plays, and a movie. The point is that literary pleasure can be found in many forms and in work from many times. A persistent question will be, "What is specifically literary about literary texts?" Another persistent theme will be the place of politics and political concerns in literature; and we will read love poetry of various kinds intermittently throughout the semester.

ENG 0045-01
Non-Western Women Writers
Roy, M.

This course is designed to introduce you to the diversity of women's writing from countries often referred to as "third world." Through an eclectic selection of texts, the course will explore some of the key concerns of women in places such as South Asia, the West Indies, Africa and Latin America. We shall be concerned also with issues of literary technique, genre and representation. We shall focus on the connection between literary texts and the social and political contexts within which the writing was produced. Authors will include Ama Ata Aidoo, Marta Traba, Joan Riley, Anita Desai, Merle Hodge among others. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

NOTE: This course counts towards World Civilization, Women's Studies, Africa and the New World and Peace and Justice.

ENG 0049-01
The English Bible
Dunn, K.

In this course we will read substantial selections from the Bible. Although we will consider theological, textual and historical perspectives in reading the text, our primary focus will be literary. Our most sustained inquiries will be into questions of narrative, but we will also consider issues of poetics, genre, and translation. Finally, we will discuss the place the Bible has in the history of interpretation, with particular emphasis upon the way the book interprets itself and establishes its own canonicity.

ENG 0050-01
Shakespeare I
Genster, J.

A study of eight Shakespeare plays: *Richard II*, *I Henry IV*, *As You Like It*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Measure for Measure*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*. We will engage the plays in a variety of critical, historical and literary historical contexts.

This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.

ENG 0063-01
American Fiction 1900-1950
Johnson, R.

This course explores the emergence and character of American modernism, the self-conscious intellectual and aesthetic movement dating roughly from 1910 to 1945. We will study modernism in its experimental literary expressions; as a social period encompassing the First World War, women's suffrage, Prohibition and the Depression; as a period of diverse cultural expressions that include the Jazz Age, the Harlem Renaissance, European expatriation and urban bohemianism. We will focus on modernist writers' struggles to efface or subordinate plot or structure in narrative (an effort only more or less successful and oscillating in its visibility in texts under study); the condition of the modern subject, alienation; and representations of gender, racial designations, and sexuality, with emphasis on class across these categories and the difficulties attending ideas or efforts to achieve class mobility or economic self-sufficiency in this period. Texts will include: Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth*; F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*; Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*; Jean Toomer, *Cane*; W. E. B. DuBois, from *The Souls of Black Folk*; Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; Nathaniel West, *The Day of the Locust*; selections from the writings of Gertrude Stein; William Faulkner, *The Bear*; James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room*, and others.

This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

ENG 0077-01
The Modern Mind
Cantor, J.

Is there a "modern mind?" The question should raise anxieties about our own reaction to history. Are we-as Nietzsche said-"the heirs to all ages" (a condition he described as being close to madness)? Is history our burden, something we have left behind, or our field of play? Is modern consciousness a state of fragmentation and crisis, a sickness in love with itself, a continual crisis that is always looking for ways to reconstitute itself? What have the effect of Freud's and Marx's thought been on our attitudes towards ourselves, our culture and our civilization? Do we have "culture?" How can we conduct our lives without gods, "without culture," in a constant state of flux? Are there limits to interpretation (and to production) or must we (and can we) learn to live in a dizzying world without boundaries, without fixed points? What new ideas of the meaning and conduct of politics might we derive from the work of modern artists, using the operation of the poetic imagination as a guide for our thinking about our work and the future of our world? The course will try (and fail) to look at all these impossible questions in texts of Freud, Marx, Nietzsche, and their inheritors (N.O. Brown, Herbert Marcuse). And we will consider a range of modern poets, prose writers, and artists who both embody and describe modernism and its resonances. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

ENG 0081-01

Postmodernism and Film

Edelman, L.

What does “postmodernism” really mean? This course introduces students to central issues in postmodern theory (as articulated by critics and philosophers including Jacques Derrida, Judith Butler, Slavoj Žižek, Jean-Francois Lyotard, Frederic Jameson, Donna Haraway, Walter Benjamin, Theodor Adorno, Roland Barthes, and Jean Baudrillard) in relation to a variety of films that engage or mobilize postmodern ideas. In the process, we will ask whether film as a medium has something distinctive to tell us about the relation between modern and postmodern thought and how those two modes of conceptualizing experience intersect with and diverge from one another. Although we will examine a number of films that raise issues central to postmodernism, that doesn't mean that the films we will study are themselves postmodern films. In fact, the tension between the postmodern ideas the films put into play and the resistance to those ideas that the films exhibit will be central to our discussions. The following are likely to be among the cinematic texts examined in class: the Wachowski's *The Matrix*, Scott's *Blade Runner*, Lassiter's *Toy Story*, Polanski's *Chinatown*, Zemeckis's *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, Fincher's *Fight Club*, Shyamalan's *The Sixth Sense*, Gilliam's *12 Monkeys*, Amenabar's *Abre los Ojos*, Nolan's *Memento*, Lynch's *Mulholland Drive*, Luhrman's *Moulin Rouge*, and Haneke's *Funny Games*.

This course does not presuppose any prior experience of literary theory or cinematic analysis and all serious students, whatever their background or major may be, are welcome. But it is not a good fit for anyone unwilling to grapple with demanding texts and complex ideas; nor is it recommended for students unwilling to view film as anything more than a transparent medium of popular entertainment. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

ENG 0091-01

Topics Lit & Culture: Romance (SOPHOMORE SEMINAR)

Fyler, J.

Romance is one of the most interesting and historically most popular genres, combining as it does the sheer delights of storytelling with the working out of seemingly endless variations on a few common themes: alienation; the quest; the loss of and search for identity; the incest taboo; magic; disguise; doubling and repetition as a generator of narrative. We will read a number of romances, across a broad historical range, as we explore the genre's distinctive features. The reading will include at least some of the following works: Homer's *Odyssey*; medieval Arthurian romances, including *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and the works of Chrétien de Troyes and Thomas Malory; Shakespeare's late plays, and J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement, and is limited to sophomores.

ENG 0091-02

**Topics Lit & Culture: From Beijing to Bollywood: Cinema of India and China
Roy, M.**

This new course is designed to introduce students to the cinema of China and India. The aim of the course is comparative: through selected films and critical essays, we will examine how cinema in India and China has represented anxieties about colonialism, nationalism, revolution and globalization. What are the major pre-occupations of Indian and Chinese cinema in the modern era? What has been the role of this powerful cultural production in social transformation? In particular, we will be attentive to each cinematic tradition's engagement with issues of gender, class and erotic desire.

The course is in ENGLISH. No prerequisites. All majors welcome.

This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement of the English major. This course is cross-listed with ILVS0091-05 and CHNS0091-01 and counts towards the ILVS and Chinese majors.