Course Information: Spring 2016

English 100-199, Literature

ENG 0115-01
Philosophy and Literature in the 18th Century
Keiser, J.

Tristram Shandy, the protagonist of Laurence Sterne's novel of the same title, says that a man's body and his mind are like a jacket and its lining: "rumple the one--you rumple the other." This joke riffs on a long-running philosophical debate about the relation between mind and body; it is just one example of how eighteenth-century literature engages philosophy. This course looks at the relationship between literature and philosophy across the eighteenth century by pairing literary works with selections from the philosophical texts they respond to. Some of the questions we'll be examining include: How much control does the mind have over the body? Can perception be trusted? What obligations do we have to other beings? Are reason and feeling opposed? What makes a person the same person over time? Are people responsible for crimes they commit while asleep? Primary readings may include poetry by Dryden, Rochester, Pope, and Swift, and prose by Defoe, Johnson, Sterne, Mackenzie, Smollett, and Hays. Philosophical selections may be drawn from Hobbes, Lucretius, Locke, La Mettrie, Hume, Smith, and others. Though we will be working across disciplines, our primary focus will be on the literary works, and this course assumes no prior knowledge of philosophy. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.

ENG 0122-01
Romantic Literature & Culture II: Monsters, Dreamers, and the End of the World
Hofkosh, S.

The King is declared insane and his profligate son rules in his stead. England is at war with France as Napoleon’s increasing power threatens England’s own imperial ambitions. Agitation for political reform prompts violent reaction, including the massacre of peaceful protesters by sabre-wielding soldiers. Writing during this era of turmoil and crisis, Lord Byron is said to be “mad, bad, and dangerous to know”; the young doctor who travels with him after his scandalous separation pens one of the earliest vampire tales. The teen-aged Mary Godwin elopes with the married radical poet Percy Shelley and then dreams about creating a monster. Samuel Taylor Coleridge takes opium and publishes unfinished poems, while Thomas de Quincey takes opium and records his nightmares in his autobiography. John Keats writes about fallen gods, a severed head buried in a pot, and a woman who is a snake. Felicia Hemans, abandoned by her husband, writes for her life. Mary Prince, surviving slavery in the West Indies, arrives in England to find that freedom may be its own kind of dream.

We will read selected works by these and other writers who explore the dynamics of national, social, psycho/sexual, and racial identity and power under pressure in Regency Britain from 1811 to the accession of Victoria in 1837. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.
ENG 0124-01
Visual Narrative Before Cinema
Hofkosh, S.

This course considers the intersection of words and images in British culture during the century before cinema, from the late 18th up to the turn into the 20th C. With attention to early and recent writing on aesthetics, the mode of ekphrasis (verbal description of a work of visual art), and theories of media history, we will explore the relation between language (telling) and the visible (showing) in William Blake's illuminated books, the poems of John Keats and later Pre-Raphaelite renderings of them, illustrated Victorian novels and stories, Henry Fox Talbot and the discourse of photography, and other examples of literature in (sometimes fraught) dialogue with visibility and the visual arts. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.

ENG 0160-01
Environmental Justice and World Literature
Roy, M.

Who is most hurt by environmental degradation and abuse and who benefits? This course examines what contemporary world literature has to say about environmental racism, toxic colonialism, ecofeminism, and the social construction of nature, globalization, and urban ecological issues. We will ask: What analyses and insights can we gain? What is the role of art in the struggle for social change? Reading includes authors from diverse racial and national locations—Zambia, South Africa, multicultural U.S., India, Malawi, Nigeria, China, Guatemala; and primary texts include films, essays, poems, short stories, and novels. Authors include Helena Maria Viramontes, Zakes Mda, Marilou Awiakta, Mo Yan, Rigoberta Menchú, Audre Lorde, and Mulk Raj Anand. The goal of this course is empowerment for social change. How can each of us participate as a change agent in the struggle for environmental justice, locally and globally? How can our understanding of literature contribute? Group work, a field trip, one research paper, and active class discussion will be important parts of the course. Non majors as well as majors are welcome. This class counts toward the Environmental Studies major, the Peace and Justice major, and the post-1860 requirement for the English major.

ENG 0161-01
Memory for Forgetting
Sharpe, C.

What does it mean to remember an event? Why are some events remembered and others forgotten? Through reading memoirs, graphic novels, novels/short stories, and viewing films and documentaries, visual arts, and critical/theoretical works about North American slavery and the Holocaust we will think about the processes of remembering. Class will be run on a discussion basis. We will read: Maus I & II, Auschwitz and After, The Kiss, My Bondage and My Freedom, "Man of All Work," Beloved, Property, etc. We will view: The Nasty Girl, Paragraph 175, Night & Fog, Africans in America (excerpts), Daughters of the Dust, and other film & visual arts. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.
ENG 0163-01
Speak Memory: Contemporary Memoir
Freedman-Bellow, J.

We will look at a number of contemporary memoirs, paying particular attention to how each author sifts, sculpts and sets down his or her memories. Why tell the tale at all, and why tell it in just this way? What is exposed and what is masked, what retrieved and what invented? We grudgingly allow our novelists to forage in reality for their material, but would we grant our memoirists reciprocal rights in the realm of the imagination? We'll ask these and many more questions of Kovaly, Nabokov, Roth, Amis, Aly, Orwell and others. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

ENG 0165-01
Perspectives on American Poetry
Bamber, L.

Much of what we find most interesting (and most subversive) about post-modernist literature, philosophy and art has parallels in Buddhist philosophy and practice. The attack on the hierarchical, dualistic, idealizing and self-substantiating tendencies of Western metaphysics was anticipated by Buddhist teachers from a variety of traditions. The tradition most relevant to this course is Soto Zen; we will use Shunryu Suzuki’s *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* as our theoretical framework and look at selected American poets whose work is illuminated by the ideas we find there. We will begin with some contemporary poets (e.g. Allan Ginsberg, Gary Snider, Jane Hirshfield, Mary Kean) who are themselves Buddhist and who are part of the current effort to translate Buddhism into a modern American idiom. (As one Buddhist teacher put it, we need to understand how Buddhism changes when life is no longer a matter of "Chop wood, carry water" but "Make love, drive freeway.") Then we will consider the two great American poets of the nineteenth century, Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman, to see if they can be understood as part of an alternate tradition. Other poets we will read are Wallace Stevens, Elizabeth Bishop, Frank O'Hara, James Schuyler, and Mark Halliday. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement. No prior experience with either Buddhist thought or deconstructionism is required.

ENG 0171-01
Women & Fiction
Bamber, L.

The course will begin with Pride and Prejudice, a novel whose business is to get its heroine(s) married. The texts we will read after that all tend to subvert the marriage plot in one way or another. At the same time as they challenge traditional ideas of women's destiny, they also subvert the conventions of narrative and representation. This is a course for readers who are interested in matters of form and language as well as gender and identity. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.
ENG 0192-01
Seminar in English: Afro-Palestina & Colonial Fascism
Thomas, G.

The realities of political repression and resistance to repression under racist colonialism and imperialism get a special analytical treatment by Black and Palestinian movements for liberation and self-determination. This course takes a concentrated look at texts in these joint and complimentary traditions of opposition to white Western empire-building, or white Western colonial fascisms, both historical and contemporary. It takes a look at two fields of creative, visionary praxis that (to quote Fanon) shake the world in a very necessary manner. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

ENG 0192-02
Seminar in English: The Brontës and the 19th-Century Novel
Genster, J.

We will read Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*, Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights*, and Anne Brontë’s *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, in conjunction with works by their contemporaries. Other writers to be studied may include Elizabeth Gaskell, Charles Dickens, Anthony Trollope and George Eliot. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.