In this class, we will read World War I memoirs by soldier-poets Graves, Sassoon, and Edmund Blunden, and by writer-nurse Vera Brittain. Then some World War I poetry. We will put in that context later modernist writings, including Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*, Evelyn Waugh’s *Vile Bodies*, D.H. Lawrence’s *The Fox*, and Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*. We will look at these and other works as partially responses to the war tragedy.

*This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.*

Professor Michael Ullman  
MW 10:30-11:45AM
ENLIGHTENMENT

ART AND ILLUSION

At least as long as people have contemplated art, they've been suspicious of it. Poets are banned from republics, theaters are shut down, the young (and old) are warned not to read too many novels lest they mistake unreal stories for real life. This course examines the relationship between art and reality. In doing so, it pays attention to art’s power: to recreate the world, to trick us, to allow us to enjoy otherwise unenjoyable experiences (like tragedy or terror), to make us feel and think things we wouldn’t otherwise entertain. What happens when everyone lives as if they are acting out a role upon a social stage? Some other topics we’ll consider include include: the relationship between literature and other kinds of art (painting, music, theater/film). Aesthetic categories like beauty, sublimity, the strange, and the uncanny. Fuller course description available on the English department website.

This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.
NEW COURSE FOR FALL 2020

ENG 191-01   CVS 151-08
Professor Nathan Wolff
nathan.wolff@tufts.edu

Emotion & American Literature

When we talk about reading, we often talk about emotion: Does a novel exhaust or excite you? Does it make you happy or sad? Emotion is also central to debates about literature’s political impact: Can, or how can, works of fiction encourage readers to feel sympathy for marginalized groups or outrage over a particular injustice?

This course draws on classic and contemporary science and philosophy of emotion to think in depth about the power and pitfalls of literary feelings including sympathy, disgust, cynicism, shame, grief, and rage. Authors may include Stowe, Alcott, Hawthorne, Walker, Jacobs, Melville, and Whitman.

This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement for English majors and counts toward the Civic Action and Social Movements requirement for Civics Studies majors.
Nowadays, many in and outside of U.S. circles refer to the “prison-industrial complex,” a language which literally comes from *The Wall Street Journal* itself. At least one scholar-activist has criticized this formulation for minimizing, even erasing the continued power of the “military-industrial complex” in its attempt to address the explosion of prisons as an industry, local and global, national and international. What’s more, before imprisonment would be defined according to contemporary economics, it had already been defined by those of the Black Radical Tradition in terms of enslavement--that is, the material and symbolic reduction of enslaved Africans to “chattel” for the white capitalist West. The large-scale transfer of Black persons from antebellum plantations to today’s prisons (where “old,” official slavery remains perfectly legal) can therefore be easily understood as an “internal slave trade” as opposed to slavery’s actual “abolition.” This course confronts this Pan-African problematic of the politics of prison (and mass criminalization) without losing sight of the connection between imprisonment and enslavement, whether past or present. We will focus on North America as a historic site of struggle for recent Black writing from and about prisons, confinement, incarceration, jailing, lock-up/lock-down, etc., etc. In the end, students should be able to think critically about incarceration; identify connections between old and new forms of captivity; analyze the cultural as well as socio-economic operations of jailing or imprisonment; and also interrogate established concepts of law, crime, order, etc., as encouraged by Black or African Diasporic movements of thought.

*This course is cross-listed with Africana Studies and fulfills the post-1860 requirement.*