Fall 2013

English 303 (7430): Graduate Fiction Workshop  
Lorraine Lopez  
This is a graduate workshop in fiction writing with an emphasis on narrative craft. As such, the workshop undertakes more complex and nuanced consideration of elements of fiction, as members are already familiar with basic techniques of characterization, scene, narrative structure, and development of story. The function of this workshop is to help writers develop fiction that they are actively engaged in creating: new work—published work, writing samples submitted for admission to the program, and work that has been turned in for other workshops may not be submitted for workshop—that will likely become part of the final thesis.

English 304 (7440): Graduate Poetry Workshop  
Rick Hilles  
The primary focus of this intensive graduate workshop in poetry writing will be for your poems in progress; we will also read and discuss various volumes of contemporary poetry, many in conjunction with the Visiting Writers Series. All workshop members will be expected to: participate intensely in class discussions, prepare in advance substantive and substantial written comments on peers’ work-in-progress, attend regular conferences with the workshop leader, and, by the end of the semester, produce a significant body of new poems.

English 307 (7460): Literature and the Craft of Writing: Frost and Stevens  
Mark Jarman  
Our course will examine the work of these two poets side-by-side, with a special emphasis on the craft and innovations of both poets. We will consider how these poets employed lyric stanza, blank verse, the sonnet, the sequence, and the epigram. Issues like metrical versus free verse will usually be close-at-hand. We will begin by considering nineteenth century precedents for each poet. Along the way, we will also consider poets who benefitted from the example of one or the other. In the case of Robert Frost, Robert Lowell and Seamus Heaney; and Elizabeth Bishop and John Ashbery in the case of Wallace Stevens.

English 312 (8346): Seminar in Seventeenth Century Literature: Texts and Consequences: An Introduction to Textual Scholarship  
Leah Marcus  
Textual studies as a discipline is at the foundation of literary studies in that it determines the shape of the texts we read, teach, and write about. This course will introduce graduate students to the field, which has generated considerable excitement and scholarly attention in recent years. We will be studying the rhetoric of the edition: how are literary texts subtly (or not so subtly) shaped by the ways editors prepare them for readers? We will also consider different theories of the literary text, and how they help to determine the form in which literary texts reach readers, both in print and online. Finally, we will consider several prominent recent controversies over specific editions: the Oxford Shakespeare and its two-text King Lear, Hans Gabler’s edition of Ulysses, and others of particular interest to students. Major emphasis will be placed on gender assumptions and colonialism as forces that help to shape editions.
Writing assignments: The course will include a short (5 page) paper due the sixth week of class and a longer paper (15-20 page) due during finals week. In addition, you will be responsible for portions of each seminar session and you will offer a preliminary discussion of your ideas for the long paper during two seminar meetings at the end of the course. The longer paper will consider issues of textual scholarship that are particularly relevant to you in your primary area of interest.

English 355 (8155): Special Topics in English and American Literature: Things  
Jonathan Lamb  
The laconic title belies the complexities of the issues surrounding things. What is now known as the New Materialism comprises three distinct schools of thought apart from the general category of Cultural Materialism. Let us say that Cultural Materialism investigates the transit, exchange, installation and appreciation of commodities, a system that grew very fast after the eighteenth-century, when markets for goods became global. It is based, like capitalism itself, on the assumption that the movement, sale and consumption of chattels is a good thing, an activity we ought to pursue and enjoy, and whose history is of central importance to the understanding of social life. The three schools of thought are not of this opinion, believing instead that things have qualities and tendencies of their own, independent of what we might think or desire. Actor Network Theory, chiefly associated with the historian of science Bruno Latour, has used the model of
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the laboratory and the parliament to suggest that things come about and act to some degree independently of human intentions; thing theory (Bill Brown) has made it possible to imagine that the things we regard as property are, like human chattels, extremely unhappy with their servitude; object-oriented ontology has carried this position further into an eco-critique of consumption and of the human assumption of dominion over the earth and its resources.

The course will begin with several introductory sessions and eventually evolve into a series of presentations, as students feel competent to handle the various theories on show and make a choice of how and where they would like to wield them.

**English 320 (8450): Studies in American Literature: American Classics and their Afterlives**

*Cecelia Tichi*

This seminar will investigate U.S. literary prose source texts and the bases on which they have recurrently been reconfigured for renewal and exploitation. The white whale and the scarlet “A” circulate ubiquitously, as do “The Call of the Wild” and Call me Ishmael,” while Uncle Tom and Tom Joad reappear well into the twenty-first century. From prose fiction sources we find a proliferation of reinvigorating genres and modes of adaption and mutation as these now-classic texts reemerge in film, popular music, opera, stage drama, blogs, YouTube, and Twitter. Anchoring in the source texts, the seminar will search out their multimedia “afterlives” and seek to understand how and why texts reappear at certain pivotal socio-cultural, historical moments. Source texts include: *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, *Moby Dick*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *The Call of the Wild*, *The Great Gatsby*, and *Death of a Salesman*.

**English 337A (8137): Introduction to Literary Theory: Pro-Seminar: Secularism, Literature, and the Politics of Culture**

*Allison Schachter*

In this course we will study a range of twentieth and twenty-first century theoretical texts that question the boundaries of secularism, civil society, and minority rights. Engaging with these critical discourses in anthropology, comparative and world literature, postcolonial studies, and modernist studies, we will interrogate the political, social, and aesthetic implications of reading literature through the lens of the secular. We will move beyond the binary of secularism and religion, to consider how modern literary works negotiate the politics and aesthetics of secularism. Is secularism a discourse of the majority? How do minority writers engage with and challenge the divide between the secular and the religious? Is the novel a secular genre? What is the relationship between secularism and modernity? This course serves as the English Department’s Pro-Seminar and will introduce students to a range of theoretical and critical perspectives. Students will incorporate these perspectives into their own work and learn to make critical interventions in their fields of interest. Readings will include works by Erich Auerbach, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Walter Benjamin, Edward Said, Talal Assad, Aamir Mufti, Saba Mahmood, Daniel Boyarin, Judith Butler, Hannah Arendt, and Seyla Benhabib.

**Spring 2013**

**English 303 (7430): Graduate Fiction Workshop**

*Tony Earley*

**English 304 (7440): Graduate Poetry Workshop**

*Kate Daniels*

This is an intensive workshop in poetry writing. Students are expected to complete 10-12 new poems (or the equivalent) over the course of the semester. We will read a series of essays on poetry and poetics, as well as individual volumes by some of the poets who will visit campus as part of the Visiting Writers Series. Oral presentations on the readings will be assigned. Extensive revision and regular conferencing with the instructor are expected.

**English 305 (7450): Graduate Nonfiction Workshop**

*Peter Guralnick*

This is a graduate workshop in Creative Nonfiction with a particular emphasis on the profile and long-form narrative piece. Three major pieces will be required, along with some brief additional exercises. Every student in the course will critique each of the papers in writing, and the class will consist primarily of constructive discussion of the work. In addition there will be readings of work by such writers as Gay Talese, Gary Smith, Janet Malcolm, Jonathan Lethem, Joseph Mitchell, Jack Kerouac, Ernest Hemingway, David Foster Wallace, and Alice Munro. Much of the focus of discussion will be on issues of characterization, narrative technique, selectivity of detail, and angle of
perception—in other words, how to make a real-life story or profile come alive in much the same way that fictional narrative can. The implicit bond between reader, writer, and subject will also provide a jumping-off point, along with the proverbial Rashomon-like nature of truth. Most of all, the workshop should be seen as a kind of shared enterprise in which a mutual enthusiasm for writing should lead to discussion that is as wide-ranging as it is lively and engaging.

**English 307 (7460): Graduate Seminar: Narrative Poetry**
**Rick Hilles**

This graduate seminar is designed for all M.F.A. students who are or will be putting together a first book; to this end, we will focus on seminal first books, including (in poetry): the 1855 Edition of Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass;* Frost’s *A Boy’s Will;* Stevens’s *Harmonium;* Bishop’s *North and South;* Hayden’s *A Ballad of Remembrance;* Old’s *Satan Says;* Bidart’s *Golden State;* and Carson’s *Glass, Irony, and God. Guest lecturers in prose include: Tony Earley (who will speak on Hemingway’s *In Our Time* and Salinger’s *Nine Stories*) and Nancy Reisman (who will discuss Marilyne Robinson’s *Housekeeping*). Each seminar participant will also give a presentation on a first book. Grading: 1/3 for each—class participation, seminar presentation, and writing project.

**English 318 (8420): Graduate Seminar in Victorian Prose and Poetry: Victorian Popular Literature After Darwin**
**Jay Clayton**

Survival of the fittest, eugenics, the inheritance of acquired characteristics, the mutability of species, degeneration, extinction—these and other Darwinian topics proved irresistible to popular novelists after 1859. This course examines the interaction between genre fiction in the late-Victorian period and controversial interpretations of evolutionary theory. We shall focus on a range of popular genres, including a children’s novel, Charles Kingley’s *The Water-Babies: A Fairy Tale for a Land Baby* (1863); utopias such as Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s *The Coming Race* (1871) and Samuel Butler’s *Erewhon* (1872); science fiction such as Robert Lewis Stevenson’s *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Grey* (1890), H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine* (1895), and Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897); mystery writing including Charles Dickens’s *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870) and Arthur Conan Doyle’s *Sherlock Holmes* stories; Sara Grand’s new woman novel *The Beth Book* (1897); autobiographical writing including Samuel Butler’s posthumous *The Way of All Flesh* (1903), Edmund Gosse’s *Father and Son* (1907), and H. Ryder Haggard’s imperial romance, *She* (1887).

To establish the boundaries for our investigation into late-Victorian popular genres, we shall contrast how a realist like George Eliot responded to evolution in *Middlemarch* (1871-72). Readings will also include selections from Darwin, Galton, and Huxley, and will be combined with some exploration of digital tools for sourcing, analyzing, and data mining in the archives assembled by N.I.N.E.S. (Networked Infrastructure for Nineteenth-century Electronic Scholarship). Students will be encouraged to begin (possibly in collaboration with others) a digital humanities project in lieu of writing a research paper. Projects and papers that draw on other periods or regions are welcome.

**English 321 (8455): Studies in Southern Literature: From Paleo-South to No-South**
**Michael Kreyling**

This graduate seminar is designed as a historical survey of primary texts and critical approaches. When it’s over you should be able to enter the southern studies conversation at several points, signaled by an author’s name, a historical era, or a critical approach. I’m asking each of you to do a couple of things to prove that: 1) an individual seminar presentation (you should be familiar with this format) during one of the meetings organization of and participation in a semester-ending “conference”; 2) a “review of the relevant documents” or “state of the field” written report on the texts assigned for one of the numbered meetings [these are not exclusive – that is, two are more of you can do the same “era” or “topic,” but the work has to be done solo – the old hermit-in-the-cave model of graduate study; 3) a critical essay ready for submission to an appropriate journal or professional conference – I know that conference papers are generally shorter than journal articles, but I’m going to rule that the paper has to be a minimum of 20 pages not counting “sources cited.” I’ll talk in more detail (due dates, etc.) once the semester gets started.
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**English 355 (8155): Special Topics in English and American Literature: English/American Literature Cinema, Modernity, and Modernism**  
Paul Young

How was the 20th century cinema modern? We will approach this question via several channels: theory, history, and criticism of modernity and mass culture; scrutiny of the opportunities (and influences on) modernist visual art and literary practice offered by the cinema; close analysis of both commercial films and artisanal, experimental works; and ethnographic films, which we will cast both as imperialist fantasies and as discursive pressure points at which 20th century colonialism openly airs its ideological stakes. Readings will range from turn-of-the-century philosophy, sociology, and journalism (Simmel, Bergson, Kraucaer) and Frankfort School critical theory (Benjamin, Horkheimer, and Adorno) to research the ethnographic gaze, African American film-making in the teens and 20s, and the functions of cinema for avant-garde movements in art and literature. Films screened (weekly) will range from the earliest films ever shown and early feature films by D.W. Griffith, Fritz Lang, and others; to pre-World War II avant-garde experiments (possible directors include Ray, Dulac, Duchamp, Clair, Léger, Buñuel, Cocteau, and Eisenstein); U.S. structural films of the 1960s and 1970s (Frampton and Snow); and a bit of Alfred Hitchcock, whose work we will use as a test case for Hollywood cinema’s sustained conversation with modernism through the end of modernity’s century.

**English 355 (8155): Special Topics in English and American Literature: Introduction to TransArea Studies: Atlantic and Hemispheric Studies**  
Vera Kutzinski

In this course we will focus on the dynamics of geocultural relations as articulated in literary, critical, historical, and anthropological texts about the Americas. We will scrutinize key terms/tropes such as routes, migrancy, mobility, hybridity, transculturation, and translation and their use in critical-theoretical scholarship that has been instrumental in the formation of two sets of overlapping transnational discourses: one, that of the hemispheric Americas (aka inter-American and New World studies, transamerican and hemispheric American studies) and, two, that of the Atlantic world (aka Atlantic studies, diaspora studies). Our purpose is to assess the possibilities and limitations of the theoretical models that organize each of these discourses: center-periphery, contact zone, diaspora, the Black Atlantic, circum-Atlantic, and TransArea. We will do so by putting these paradigms to the test, unpacking and questioning the assumptions on which they rely and from which they seek to derive their internal coherence and conceptual authority. Since many of the texts we will read are in English translation, translation, multilingualism, and polyvocality as critical concepts and literary practices will concern us throughout the course. Three very different texts from the nineteenth and twentieth century, all of them in translation, will serve as our textual laboratories as we move between theory and critical practice: Alexander von Humboldt’s *Essai politique sur l’Île de Cuba* (1827; *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba*), Fernando Ortiz’s *Contrapunteo cubano* (1947; *Cuban Counterpoint*), and Manuel Zapata Olivella’s novel *Changó, el gran putas* (1992; *Changó, the Biggest Badass*).

How to define our object of study and its spatio-temporal location(s) is an initial and recurring concern. Is it America, América, the other America, the Americas, the New World, the New Continent, the American hemisphere—terms that all imply certain relations to Europe in particular and the rest of the world more generally? Is it the fluid space of the Atlantic? How do we decide what cultural relations are worth studying? How do we as academics relate to our object of study? What sorts of knowledge do we hope to gain from our theories and research (e.g., knowledge about geocultural exchanges and influences, literary and otherwise; knowledge for living together; hemispheric knowledge)?

Studying cultural relations in the Americas and in the Atlantic world requires comparisons. On what methodological basis do we compare forms of expressive behavior, in our case, mainly writing? What assumptions do we make and what expectations do we have when we compare texts from different geocultural spaces? The question of how we can describe, analyze, and theorize about geocultural relations in the most precise ways possible will lead us to engage with the concept of movements across actual and imagined geographies, and with movements as constitutive of those geographies. People, good, and ideas have moved and move within and across temporal and geographical spaces. How best to analyze their movement, which may be unidirectional or multidirectional, using different modes and forms of conveyance at different points in history? How do we deal with movements between spaces that are less stable than we once thought (e.g., nations)? We will consider how the framework of TransAreas, in conjunction with theories about performance, can help us identify and map patterns of mobility and approach what might be called a poetics or aesthetics of movement.