

Fall 2022 Graduate Courses

ENG 730/CPLT 752: Romanticism, Imagination, Planerarity – Deborah White

Tuesday, 1:00PM – 4:00PM

[8 seats ENG/ 4 CPLT] [Cross-listed with CPLT 752]

Course Description: A survey of major works of British Romanticism as they explore encounters with the untranslatable and the inhuman in global contexts traditionally defined by revolution, industrialization, and imperialism. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has suggested the word planetarity to help name such encounters--that is, encounters with an alterity (or otherness) unassimilable both to economic formulas of capitalist globalization and to psychic figures of interiorized subjectivity. In this seminar we will consider how romantic-era prose, poetry, and drama is inextricable from such economic formulas and psychic figures and yet also the site of their coming into crisis--the site where their norms break down. For many of these texts, "imagination" stands in a privileged relation to such moments of breakdown. What only seems paradoxical is that the planetary stakes of romanticism emerge from its investment in imagination or what Percy Shelley--channeling Sydney--calls "the defense of poetry." This seeming paradox will inform much of our work, and also serve as a point of departure to address a wide range of issues informing romantic era writing.

Texts: Blake, Wollstonecraft, Equiano, Wordsworth, Coleridge, De Quincey, Byron, Percy Shelley, Keats read in conjunction with more recent critical and theoretical writing.

ENG 789: Surrealism and Psychoanalysis – Walter Kalaidjian

Wednesday, 1:00PM – 4:00PM

[3 seats CPLT/ 3 WGS/ 3 PSP/ 6 ENG] [Cross-listed with CPLT 751R – 2; WGS 730R-1; PSP 789-2]

This interdisciplinary seminar will explore literary and pictorial surrealism with particular attention to surrealism's ongoing dialogue with Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis in transnational contexts. In addition, the seminar will consider the affinities between the surrealist "found object" (l'objet trouvé) and the object relations theory of Melanie Klein and D. W. Winnicott in discerning fantasies of race and gender difference in the surrealist imaginary. Readings and discussions will begin with surrealist manifestoes of the modern interwar period, Salvador Dalí's early dialogue with Jacques Lacan, Georges Bataille's writings for the journal and secret society *Acéphale*, and particular attention will be devoted to the gender and sexual politics of women's place within and beyond surrealism by examining the feminist writing, visual art, and occult practices of Leonora Carrington, Remedios Varo, Mina Loy, and Ithell Colquhoun. In addition, the seminar will study postcolonial surrealist aesthetics in figures such as Frida Kahlo, Suzanne Césaire, Alejo Carpentier, and Wifredo Lam as well as contemporary Afrosurrealism.

We will explore the archive of the Raymond Danowski Poetry Library and investigate surrealism's migration at mid-century from Europe to London and finally New York City in little magazines such as *Minotaure*, *VVV*, and *View*, Charles Henri Ford's avant-garde journal of the 1940s.

ENG 789: Contemporary African and Black European Literature - Michelle Wright & Nathan Suhr-Sytsma

Monday, 1:00 PM – 4:00PM

Course Description: While the majority of discourses theorizing Black identities in the diaspora are “outfacing” – that is, they focus on the dyadic relationship between whiteness and Blackness, this course will focus on the theorization of Blackness within literal and figurative Black topographies and temporalities through the lenses of gender, sexuality, class, nationality, and religion. In the process, we will examine resonances, solidarities, and divergences among African and Black European literature and thought. Our reading will be equally diverse in terms of genre (poetry, novels, short stories, essays) and stylistic approaches, ranging from more familiar narrative frames to more experimental ones. Authors may include but will not be limited to: May Ayim, Bernadine Evaristo, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Jennifer Nansubuga Makumbi, Katherine Oguntoye, Peggy Piesche, and Chika Unigwe.

ENG 796: Survey of English: Histories, Theories, Methods – Deepika Bahri

Tuesday, 10:00AM – 1:00PM

CPLT 750-1: Literary Theories – Geoffrey Bennington

Thursday, 1:00PM – 3:45PM
[4 seats ENG/ 6 CPLT] [Cross-listed with ENG 789]

Course Description: The course explores some of the ways in which an influential way of thinking about language has affected ways of thinking about literature. After investigating the main tenets of structuralist theory, as derived from Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale*, we shall go on to see how the internal logic of structuralism led to the rather different positions often referred to as 'post-structuralism' and/or 'post-modernism', and to a questioning of the position of theory itself.

WGS 752R: Queer Theory – Kadji Amin

Thursday, 2:30PM – 5:15PM

[Cross-listed with ENG 789]

Course Description: When queer theory emerged in US English Departments around 1990, "high" theory held significant cultural capital in the Humanities, the "linguistic turn" was in full force, gays and lesbians could not legally marry or even have sex in many states, homophobia was the norm, and LGBT culture and sexuality were considered scandalous. By contrast, today in the US, the heyday of high theory is over, many have turned away from the linguistic turn, gays and lesbians can legally marry and have sex, homosexuality is increasingly acceptable, and LGBT people have become the figureheads for "homonationalist" politics. What is the place of queer theory in this changed landscape?

By now, early queer theory has been thoroughly critiqued for its implicit whiteness, its US-centrism, its linguistic basis, and its bias towards humanistic methods and habits of thought. At the same time, the interdisciplinary and increasingly global field of Queer Studies is flourishing. What aspects of queer theory still have a future? What is the relationship between queer theory and Queer Studies? Does queer theory itself need to be radically remade for a changed world?

This course will explore the career of queer theory in its material context. It will attend to key critiques of queer theory and foreground provocative new works proposing a different way forward for the field.