

Spring 2017 Graduate Seminars

ENG 599R: Master's Thesis

Catherine Nickerson

ENG 711R – 000: Shakespeare: Animal Matters

Pat Cahill

TU 10AM-1PM

In this seminar we'll aim to think through the nature and significance of animals and animal-objects in a selection of early modern dramas by Shakespeare and his contemporaries, which will include comedies (e.g. *The Taming of the Shrew*; *Lyly's Midas*; Jonson's *Volpone*) histories (e.g., *King John*; Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris*;) and tragedies (e.g., *Titus Andronicus*; *Othello*; Middleton's *Changeling*; Dekker, Ford and Rowley's *The Witch of Edmonton*). In addition to reading these dramas together, we will watch some filmed performances; consult digital and library resources on the drama; and survey scholarship that variously engages animal studies; history (including that of playhouses and bear-pits); race/gender/sexuality studies; eco-criticism; and affect theory.

ENG 789 – 000: Special Topics in Literature – Anger in Postcolonial Theory and Lit.

Deepika Bahri

TH 10AM-1PM

[Cross-listed with CPLT 751 and WGSS 730R]

Content: This course explores what writer Jamaica Kincaid calls "the angry thing," Roy "political anger," Césaire "creative anger," Armah "victim anger," Devi "luminous and burning . . . source of my inspiration," and Bhabha "the basic political instinct of anger," in postcolonial theory and literature. The violence of colonialism and the legacies of capitalist modernity and its destruction of habitats and entire peoples are documented in a tradition of protest writing that endures well into the present. In selections from writing by critics Memmi, Fanon, Mbembe, Ngugi, Parry, Harvey, Appadurai, Shiva, Bhabha and writers Kincaid, Césaire, Dangarembga, Devi, NoViolet Bulawayo, Ayi Kwei Armah and poets as well as mixed media and spoken word artists Raman Mundair, Rupi Kaur, Tabish Khair, Hollie McNish and Stephen Morrison-Burke, this course examines the thematics of anger in the emotional public sphere, the saying of "something that people generally do not want to hear" (Kincaid), and the disclosure of "the secret of things" in the "sublimated rage" of art (Adorno).

Texts: TBA

Particulars: TBA

ENG 789 – 001: Special Topics in Literature – Western and Russian Postmodernism

Mikhail Epstein

TU 4-7PM

[Cross-listed with RUSS 700, ILA 790, CPLT 550]

Content: This course offers a comparative perspective on postmodernism in Western and Russian cultures (literature, visual art, religion, and cultural theory). The course will discuss the general concept of postmodernism as shaped by American, French and Russian theorists and will bring together various disciplinary perspectives on the questions of contemporary cultural self-definition: How to characterize our relation to the legacy of Modernity and Modernism? How the traditional views on individuality, authorship, text, reference, truth, and reality are reshaped in postmodernist theories and practices? And finally: what comes after this "post-"? The Russian version of postmodernism will contribute to our systematic exploration of this global and multicultural phenomenon. The course will be taught in ENGLISH; knowledge of Russian is not required. Undergraduate students will need permission of the instructor.

Texts: TBA

Particulars: TBA

ENG 789 – 002: Special Topics in Literature – Literature and Justice: Writers on Trial

Shoshana Felman

M 4-7PM

Max 2

[Cross-listed with CPLT 551, FREN 780, WGS 730R, ARTHIST 775R, LAW 621, (Undergrad Permission Only - Please contact complit@emory.edu)]

Content: History has put on trial a series of outstanding thinkers. At the dawn of philosophy, Socrates drinks the cup of poison to which he is condemned by the Athenians for his influential teaching, charged with atheism, and corruption of the youth. Centuries later, in modernity, similarly influential Oscar Wilde is condemned by the English for his homosexuality, as well as for his provocative artistic style. In France, Flaubert and Baudelaire are both indicted as criminals for their first, innovative literary works; Emile Zola is condemned for defending a Jew against the state, which has convicted him. E. M. Forster writes about a rape trial / race trial of an Indian by the colonizing British Empire. Different forms of trial are instigated by religious institutions, as well as by psychoanalytic ones. Jacques Lacan, the French psychoanalyst, compares his expulsion from the International Psychoanalytic Association, with a religious “excommunication”-- for charges of nonorthodoxy and heresy (compare Luther, Spinoza). However different, all these accused have come to stand for something greater than themselves: something that was symbolized -- and challenged -- by their trials. Through the examination of a series of historical and literary trials, this course will ask: Why are literary writers, philosophers and creative thinkers, repetitively put on trial, and how in turn do they challenge culture and society and reflect their crises? What is the role of literature as a political actor in the struggles over ethics, and the struggles over meaning? How does literature become the writing of a destiny, what can be called a life testimony or Life-Writing?

Texts: Texts selected among: Plato’s Dialogues; Molière’s plays; Shakespeare’s plays; Oscar Wilde (Plays, Autobiography, Critical writings); Gustave Flaubert (novels, letters); Charles Baudelaire (poems, criticism, theory of art); Emile Zola (political writings); Herman Melville (novellas); Bertolt Brecht (plays)); Hannah Arendt (Eichmann in Jerusalem, Interviews); Spinoza (Ethics); Sigmund Freud (Psychoanalytic Writings); Jacques Lacan (psychoanalytic seminar); E. M. Forster (novel); Virginia Woolf (novel); Franz Kafka (short stories, parables).

Particulars: Regular attendance; Two short papers distributed throughout the course of the semester; Brief oral presentations; Intensive weekly reading (weekly one-page reading reports) and active preparation of texts for class discussion; ongoing participation.

ENG 789 – 003: Special Topics in Literature – The Sublime

Deborah Elise White

W 4-7PM

[Cross-listed with CPLT 751]

Content: This course will explore the idea of the sublime especially as it informs eighteenth-century- and early-nineteenth-century British writing (poetry and prose) with an emphasis on Romanticism as well as considerable attention to philosophical writing on art and aesthetics from Germany. What is the sublime? The ecstatic, the extreme, the difficult—any mode or figure that involves the intertwining of pain and pleasure—all these make up the traditional notion of the sublime along with imagery of ruins, darkness and natural disaster. Our readings and discussions will consider how the notion of the sublime involves a power that exceeds the power of representation to contain it and thus marks the limits of aesthetics *within* the language of aesthetics itself. With these issues in mind, we will conclude with some consideration of how recent theoretical and critical writing addresses the sublime and its place in discourses concerning contemporary scenarios of disaster (air war, terrorism, climate change). While the seminar has a strong theoretical component it will cover a number of canonical 18th-19th-century British writers.

Texts: Texts to be drawn from writings of Longinus, Addison, Burke, Collins, Grey, Kant, Wordsworth, Shelley, Derrida, De Man, Karatani, Spivak, Weiskel, and Žižek with particularly intensive focus on Burke, Wordsworth and Kant.

Particulars: TBA

ENG 789 – 004: Special Topics in Literature – Pedagogy of Literature

Goodstein

TH 1:00-4:00, Max: 12

Content: REQUIRED FOR ALL 4th-YEAR ENG STUDENTS

This colloquium focuses on helping graduate students prepare to teach successful literature and cultural studies classes. Building on your experiences teaching composition and argumentation, we will address the full range of issues surrounding teaching undergraduate language and literature classes, from developing syllabi and assessing the effectiveness of pedagogical strategies to coping with the pragmatic challenges that arise in practice. We will read and discuss pedagogical theories, become acquainted with contemporary empirical work on teaching effectiveness, and work together to develop strategies for success. This course will also help you prepare for the next steps in your career by providing support as you develop multiple syllabi, draft statements of teaching philosophy, work on your web presences, and begin to put together your teaching portfolios.

ENG 789 – 005: Special Topics in Literature – Water Graves

Valerie Loichot

W 1-4PM

Max 4

[Cross-listed with CPLT 751 & FREN 770]

Callaway C202

Content: Martinican philosopher and poet Edouard Glissant writes: “The cemeteries of countries and cities of creolization, and, generally, of powerful hurricanes --Guadeloupe, Martinique, Haiti, New Orleans, Cartagena-- grow into glittering small towns like white beaches, whose avenues open onto fleeting illuminations rather than onto the mute space of a dull hereafter.”

The seminar focuses on the shared vulnerability -ecological, societal, cultural- of sites of creolization in the Caribbean and in the US South. Particularly, it explores how poets, fiction writers, performer and mixed-media artists represent the vulnerability of land and people in response to the lack of official rituals granted to the drowned. In addition to figuring death by drowning in the aftermath of slavery and “natural” and human-made catastrophes, their aesthetic creations serve as memorials, dirges, tombstones, and even literal supports for the regrowth of life underwater. Water, as we will see, is both a place of disconnection (island) and relation (archipelago), as well as an abyss and conduit between the dead and the living.

Hurricane Katrina, which revealed to the world the coincidence of natural and technological vulnerability, poverty, and racial inequality, will serve as a privileged platform to discuss the historically related event of the Middle Passage and the states of ecological and social frailty of our 21st century.

Course Material: In addition to the books to be purchased, readings will include selections from texts by Derek Walcott (*The Star Apple Kingdom*), Édouard Glissant (*Poetics of Relation* and *Overseer’s Cabin*), C.L.R. James (*The Black Jacobins*), George Washington Cable (“Belles Demoiselles Plantation”), William Faulkner (*Absalom, Absalom!*), Longfellow (“The Slave in the Dismal Swamp”), Natasha Trethewey (*Native Guard*) for poetry, fiction, and essays; Judith Butler (*Frames of War*), Colin Dayan (*The Law Is a White Dog*), Joseph Roach (*Cities of the Dead*), Ian Baucom (*Specters of the Atlantic*), Tanya Shield’s (*Bodies and Bones*), Alexander Weheliye (*Habeas Viscus*), Vincent Brown (*The Reaper’s Garden*) for theory. We will also discuss creations by artists Radcliffe Bailey, EPaul Julien, Eric Waters, Kara Walker, and Beyoncé (US); Fabienne Kanor, Patricia Donatien-Yssa, and Laurent Valère (Martinique); Édouard Duval-Carrié and Gabrielle Civil (Haiti); and Jason deCaires Taylor (Guyana).

Texts:

Required Books (to be Purchased with indicated ISBN only)

1. Aimé Césaire. *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land*. 978-0819564528 or *Cahier d’un retour au pays natal* for students reading in French. 978-2708704206
2. Edwidge Danticat. *Farming of Bones*. 978-1616953492

3. NourbeSe Philip. *Zong!* 978-0819571694
4. Jesmyn Ward. *Salvage the Bones*. 978-1608196265

Particulars: Sustained participation, 3 short response papers, oral presentation, and research paper with annotated bibliography.

ENG 789 – 006: Special Topics in Literature – Against Culture/For Education

Elizabeth Goodstein & Sander Gilman

TU 1-4PM

[Cross-listed with HIST 585, CPLT 751, & PHIL 789R]

Content: Inspired by the contemporary “crisis of the humanities,” this course will explore the trajectories of educational visions and cultural ideals in western modernity after the Enlightenment. Tracing a genealogy from Humboldt to the present and paying special attention to critics at the previous fin de siècle who questioned the institutionalization and professionalization of education in the modern research university, we will address the cases for and against education as an instrument of democratization and cultural progress. We will also examine efforts to overcome or resolve the conflicts between individual and collective in modernity through alternative visions of education as a pursuit of worldly knowledge in literary *Bildungsromane*. This course is open to graduate students and advanced undergraduates.

Texts: Readings may include:

Hannah Arendt, “Crisis in Education” (1954)
 Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1869)
 John Dewey, *School and Society* (1899)
 W.E.B. DuBois, *Souls of Black Folks* (1903)
 Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1929)
 Wilhelm von Humboldt, *On Public State Education* (1792)
 Maria Montessori, *Pedagogical Anthropology* (1913)
 John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University Defined and Illustrated* (1852)
 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Anti-Education* (1869)
 Georg Simmel “The Concept and Tragedy of Culture” (1911)
 Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (1972)
 Max Weber, “Science as a Vocation” (1922)
 Oscar Wilde, “The Decay of Lying” and “The Truth of Masks” (1891)

Particulars: Evaluation will be based on weekly short response papers circulated to the group for discussion and a substantial final essay based on original research.

ENG 789 - 007: Special Topic in Literature - Theories of Democracy

Munia Bhaumik

M 1-4PM

[Cross-listed with CPLT 751]

Content:

This graduate seminar undertakes the dual task of interpreting at the crossroads of literary and political theory to consider various concepts of democracy. We will consider various genres (often understood as either literary, philosophical, poetic, or political) to situate our readings between historical periods, forms, disciplines, or area studies. The first few weeks will be an introduction to readings in political philosophy, including Plato, Aristotle, Alexis de Tocqueville, and John Locke. As these writings were influential beyond their historical period, we will consider echoes and critiques in the writings of Thomas Jefferson and Hannah Arendt. The challenge of the class will be to inquire into how disparate references to democracy relate to practices of reading and critique in literary studies. For example, discussions will seek to uncouple the rhetoric of sovereignty and legalism from democracy.

The second half of the course readings will be guided by graduate student interests: some example may include focus on the American experiment in democracy (Emerson, Thoreau, Walker, Melville); post- or de-colonial theories (Du Bois, Dussel, Gandhi, scholarship generated by the Bandung Conference or Tahrir

Square); and/or the question of democracy in critical theory. What political writings invigorate a democratic ethos, thinking, and exegesis? What are some paradoxes and contradictions? How do narratives of democracy move from the Enlightenment to the post-colony? What iterations of democracy remain within a normative, limiting frame? Moreover, the course will conclude by considering the relevance of critique to literary studies as well as philosophies of anarchism, civil disobedience, non-violence, pragmatism, idealism, materiality, and decolonization.

In addition, the course will also integrate instruction on how to develop your ideas from a graduate seminar into a publishable essay over twelve weeks.

Texts:

Plato, selected short excerpts from *Laws* and *The Republic*

Aristotle, selected short excerpts

John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*

Hannah Arendt, *Promise of Politics*

Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*

David Walker, *Appeal*

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (selected chapters)

Herman Melville, *Billy Budd and Benito Cereno*

W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*

Mahatma Gandhi, *Satyagraha*

Recommended: Wendy Belcher, *Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks*

Particulars: Students will collectively elect readings from critical and literary theory to add to discussion. Some examples may include Jennifer Greiman's *Democracy's Spectacle*, Aamir Mufti's *The Enlightenment in the Colony*, Jacques Derrida's *Rogues*, Enrique Dussel's *Twenty Theses on Politics*, Nancy Ruttenberg's *Democratic Personality: Popular Voice and the Trial of American Authorship*, Wendy Brown's *Undoing the Demos* or collected volumes such as *Democracy in What State?* or *We, The People?*.

ENG 799R: Doctoral Dissertation

Catherine Nickerson