

Dr. Rachel Banner

Discipline & Punish: Criminality in 19th-Century U.S. Literature

This course will study representations of crime, criminals, prison, and punishment in 19th-century American literature. In 19th-century America, people were concerned with and captivated by spectacles of crime and punishment, a fascination evident in the literature from the period. This historical moment was host to the expansion of chattel slavery and plantation surveillance, the rise of new systems of incarceration and punishment--including the sharecropper system, prison labor camps, and the opening of the 'revolutionary' Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia--, and a multitude of cultural anxieties about who criminals were and what ought to be done with them.

Course discussions will focus on various literary and popular written forms concerned with the figure of the criminal. We will study the ways these diverse texts theorize criminality in relation to race and racism, sexuality and gender, capitalism, and social class.

Assigned readings will include texts from traditional literary genres like the novel, short story, and autobiography, as well as newspaper accounts of crimes, execution sermons, and criminal confession narratives from the period. Students should expect to write a close reading response essay, a midterm essay, an annotated bibliography, and a 10-page research essay. They will also give two short presentations during the semester.

Dr. Michael S. Burns

African American Rhetorics

In this seminar will address the history and development of African American English (AAVE), its roles within and beyond black culture, and its relationships to black experiences in mainstream U.S. society. As a motivating theme, we will view the rhetorical practices of black Americans as expressions of culture and means of resistance to racial oppression in the U.S. The course will draw rhetorical frameworks from Western European and African Diasporic traditions (e.g., Aristotle, Asante, Jackson and Richardson), sociolinguistic theory (e.g., Smitherman, Rickford and Rickford), and sociocultural theory (e.g., Omi and Winant). Students will write three papers: two short 5-page papers and a 2500-3000 word research paper. The main goals of the course are to have students engage in rhetorical analysis and develop a more critical understanding of the role language has played in the black American Experience.

Dr. Juanita Comfort

African American Women's Essay Tradition

General Description: This seminar focuses on African American women writers who have helped to expand the scope of the essay genre – in its literary, cultural, personal, contemplative, polemic, academic and other variations – well beyond its privileged belletristic origins. This seminar gives special attention to works produced during and after the Civil Rights, Black Arts, and Black Power movements (mid-1960s forward). The authors under study – well known as novelists, poets, playwrights, scholar-teachers, and political activists – have found the essay to be a powerful vehicle for asserting their distinctive identities as black women. We'll engage the aesthetics, politics, and rhetorics of the genre from these authors' own intellectual, cultural and literary vantage points, as well as against the historical backdrop of larger societal and essay-writing traditions. Concepts from black feminism and womanism will constitute our primary critical lens. Seminar participants should gain a deeper appreciation for the richly diverse standpoints that these writers bring to the essay genre along with insight into discursive strategies that help make marginalized groups visible to privileged groups.

Dr. Randall Cream

Digital Research Methods

This course helps students to become proficient with using emerging digital methods to conduct research in the fields of English. Proficiency in digital research methods is a key skill for a variety of employment, internship, and graduate school opportunities. This course will provide in-depth instruction in three leading edge methodologies: textual aggregation and analysis (data mining), image manipulation and analysis, and spatial/location representation data and metadata. These methodologies are used in many of the subfields of English studies. This course builds upon and complements discipline-specific theoretical courses that prepare students to *frame, pursue, and interpret* questions of importance in the fields of the humanities. This course enables students to undertake meaningful research by working to *gather data, analyze and evaluate data, and critically respond to that data* within the fields of the humanities. The course uses critical theories and methodologies from the digital humanities.

Dr. Eric Dodson-Robinson

Cross-Cultural Receptions: Akira Kurosawa's Shakespeare and the Nō Plays of W.B. Yeats

This course considers Kurosawa's transformation of Shakespearean tragedy and Yeats's reception of Japanese drama. The class bridges the disciplines of early modern drama, Asian studies, film studies, and modern poetry and drama, with an emphasis on the crosscultural reception of dramatic tradition. While 'influence' is often considered a one-way phenomenon, this class will scrutinize cultural preconceptions and analyze the bidirectional dynamics of reception from both Asian and European perspectives. Students will learn to think and write critically about such cross-cultural interactions through multidisciplinary engagement with film, plays, poetry, and appropriate theory and research. Considering cross-cultural reception from two different cultural perspectives leads to a fuller understanding of both, as well as to a more thorough understanding of the processes of translating, adapting, and transforming foreign traditions.

Dr. Erin Hurt

Latin@s in Literature and Popular Culture

This course draws on theories of popular culture to explore how various texts—novels, memoirs, television, film, music, twitter—construct Latina identity in the U.S. cultural imaginary. Though popular culture has long functioned as a sphere in which Latinas have historically been marginalized, stereotyped, and given limited representation, it has more recently become a space where Latina cultural producers negotiate, contest, and redefine understandings of *Latinidad*. This course will first focus on how U.S. commercial mass-mediated culture (re)presents *Latinidad* to Latina and non-Latina publics, and will then explore the ways that Latina cultural producers draw on popular media and material culture, both within their literary texts and as texts themselves, to engage with mainstream depictions and stereotypes in order to debate their social identities. Our analysis of these texts will consider issues such as representation, stereotypes, gender, sexuality, beauty, the body, agency, ambivalence versus acculturation, authenticity, appropriation, commodification, the use of “Latina” as a marketing category, reception, and modes of cultural production. *This course meets the Writing Emphasis requirements for General Education, which means that development of your writing abilities, and the ability to communicate effectively, is an important objective of this course.*

Dr. Graham MacPhee

The Greatest Novel In English? Reading James Joyce's *Ulysses*

General Description: James Joyce's novel *Ulysses* is often described as the "greatest novel ever written in English," yet many potential readers are put off by its reputation as an especially "difficult" and "inexplicable" book. Don't be intimidated by the scare stories—this seminar will give you the "key" to understanding this brilliant, funny, and ground-breaking novel. We will look at the historical context within which Joyce was writing and trace how these events shaped the humor, insights, and experimentation of his fascinating novel. Understood in relation to the momentous events of the time—war and revolution in Ireland, racism and imperialism in the British Empire, and new ways of seeing gender relations and sexuality in the modern world—you'll find a real sense of achievement in taming a text that has (sadly) scared off less courageous readers.

The course will encourage students to examine how historical context expands the range of interpretation. Thus, students will be asked to consider the extent to which a literary work might imagine Irish identities that both reflect the legacy of British colonialism in Ireland and look beyond it to a modern and post-colonial nation. The seminar will also develop students' skills in close reading, critical writing, and deepen their understanding and appreciation of literary modernism.

Dr. Paul Maltby

Rhetorics of Redemption: Being Saved in American, 1945-Present

This seminar will explore the rhetorical forms in which the doctrine of redemption, in its Christian articulations, has been conveyed in North America since World War Two. (The doctrine has a contentious history that dates back to the Colonial era.) The course will examine how the key tropes and strategies, which structure and organize narratives of redemption, render the doctrine persuasive. Hence, analysis will focus on (a) tropes of transfigurability and transcendence; (b) figures of purification and healing; (c) motifs of justice and reward; (d) literary epiphanies as signifiers of redemptive knowledge; (e) encodings of redemptive timescapes (messianic time, salvation history). The course will also explore the political prescriptions embedded in the rhetorics of redemption, and the ideological and material conditions of reception that help validate the doctrine. By way of preliminaries, the course will acquaint students with the founding principles of soteriology (as formulated by Saint Paul, Saint Augustine and John Calvin in their understanding of Grace and the Substitutionary Atonement) and contemporary theological reflections on redemption (Mark Johnston, Paul Moser, Jürgen Moltmann). In the main body of the course, the sample texts will encompass a wide range of genres through which the rhetorics of redemption find expression: Fiction (Flannery O'Connor, John Updike, Tim LaHaye/Jerry B. Jenkins); Conversion Narratives (Thomas Merton, Billy Graham); Spiritual Writing (Marilynne Robinson, Norman Wirzba); Film (Terrence Malick and Martin Scorsese); Painting (Thomas Kinkade and his evangelical counterparts); Civil Rights Discourse (Martin Luther King; protest songs and sermons); Presidential Addresses (Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, George W. Bush); Advertising (commercials marketing self-reinvention); and Cybernarratives (MMORPGs - the promise of reborn selves in virtual worlds). In short, the seminar will illustrate how rhetorical forms animate the doctrine of redemption and promote its presence in American culture with seductive appeals to the dream of self-transfiguration.

Dr. William Nessly

Theorizing the Novel: Kazuo Ishiguro and Chang-rae Lee

This seminar is targeted toward students interested in narrative and the theory of the novel, contemporary literature, ethnic and minority literature, and the study of imperialism. As a focused study of two similar authors, the course will involve a rigorous, in-depth study of narrative form and a detailed introduction to the theory of the novel. By narrowing our focus, we will be able to go

deeper into the novels and theories than is usually possible. You will read five novels—Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills*, *An Artist of the Floating World*, and *The Remains of the Day*, and Chang-rae Lee's *Native Speaker* and *A Gesture Life*. You will also read selections from classic novel theorists such as Ian Watt and Mikhail Bakhtin, Foucaultian scholars of the novel, and theoretical works by Edward Said and Lisa Lowe, among others. Unreliable narration, links between imperialism and the novel, comparisons of American and British contexts, and the representation of trauma will be important topics of the course.

Dr. Pauline Skowron Schmidt

Teaching Shakespeare in the Secondary Classroom and Beyond

This Writing Emphasis course, designed for English majors and minors, will explore five of Shakespeare's most popular plays: *Hamlet*; *Henry IV, Part One*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *Macbeth*; and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Shakespeare is an essential - yet challenging - author, particularly when he is introduced in various middle and high schools. We will focus on the plays themselves, but also examine the ways in which these plays are taught at different levels of education. We will read the work of educational specialists who believe that we learn best by doing; that the arts organically get infused into the teaching of literature, especially drama. By examining cutting edge scholarship on multimodality (Miller, 2012), process drama (Heathcote, 1984 and 1995; Wilhelm & Edmiston, 1998; Schneider, 2006;) and new literacies (Gee, 2011; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003), you will design and craft your research paper for the course.

Dr. Eleanor Shevlin

Novels, Newspapers, and Magazines as New Media: Print Novelties in the Eighteenth-Century Print Marketplace

This seminar explores a time in which novels, newspapers, and magazines were the new media of their day and the implications of that recognition. All born of print, this trio of new genres helped to create a marketplace rich in an ever-expanding array of reading material and new opportunities for an increasing number of authors. While newspapers and magazines often featured fiction as well as poems and other literary pieces, their pages also afforded an expanse of reports, advertisements, and news items that could then be appropriated, reworked, and repackaged as fictional narratives. It is not coincidental that so many eighteenth-century novelists also wrote for the papers and magazines. Novelists Daniel Defoe, Eliza Haywood, Henry Fielding, Charlotte Lennox, and Oliver Goldsmith, for instance, were all firmly ensconced in the periodical world. Informed by the theoretical and historical work of Laurel Brake, Michael Harris, Ralph Cohen, and others, this seminar will focus on the eighteenth-century's forms of new media with an eye to better understanding generic transformations, the use value of genre as a concept, the integral yet often overlooked ties between periodicals and novels, the effects of this new media on eighteenth-century culture broadly conceived, and, by extension, our own age of media transformation.

Foremost, we will explore the connections between eighteenth-century novels and periodicals as well as their ties to and relationships with the emergence of the professional author, expansion of the print marketplace, and growth of reading publics. Together we will read novels and periodicals, giving particular attention to the work of Eliza Haywood, a best-selling author, friend of Henry Fielding, actress, bookseller, and periodical owner and essayist. In addition to in-class informal writing assignments, you will write a 3-page position paper (750 words or more) and use this paper to generate seminar discussion; write a 3- to 4-page (850 words or more) paper on research using the ECCO and/or Burney databases; offer a 15- to 20-minute formal presentation on a particular topic assigned for a given class period, and complete a final project that consists of several stages (proposal, progress report/annotated bibliography) and results in an electronic

scholarly edition, edited and compiled collaboratively, of a text relevant to the seminar's focus. Although this work will involve collaboration, each student will be graded on his or her individual contributions.