

ENGL1080 - Literature Core

Spring 2018

ENGL1080.26 **Meaning and the Criminal Mastermind MWF 10**

Students in this course will deeply examine works from the sixteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries in which the creators consider the dark side of artistic creation. These works are like funhouse mirrors, portraits of the artist as conman, conspirator, shady deity, mad king, perpetrator of the perfect crime. Shakespeare's "Richard III," Suzan-Lori Parks's "Topdog/Underdog," Alfred Hitchcock's "Vertigo," Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno," and the poetry of Emily Dickinson are among the classic works that take this strange turn. The class is discussion based, but students will write short responses to the literature. There is a final exam.

John Anderson

ENGL1715.01 (Core Renewal Course: Enduring Questions)

Revolutionary Media: How Reading Changes Us

MWF 10 / T 6-7:50

Corequisite: Must be concurrently enrolled in HIST1705

For First-year Students Only

As digital media have become more prevalent, studies have shown that they have changed the way we read and that various modes of reading shape our thinking, our feelings, and even our brains in varying ways. We read textbooks differently than we read poems, tweets differently than we read novels. This course centers on the cognitive and social contexts of reading, and will read a range of texts in different media, from 1450 to the present, that deal in some way with the nature of reading itself, including pamphlets, poems, novels, a graphic novel, film, and social media. We will also work on developing strategies for effective reading and writing.

Mary Crane

ENGL1080.48 **The American Idea**

MWF 10

In this course, we will examine definitions of America as mediated through several genres: poetry, fiction, essay, and film. From wide open spaces to a cold-water flat, the notion of individual exceptionalism to the obligation to serve a collective good, we will interrogate the many ways literature has grappled with the ongoing struggle to define this place that is, in many ways, still an ideal. Texts will include poems by Whitman, Dickinson, Hughes, and Ginsberg; fiction by Millhauser, Morrison, Danticat, Alexie and Lahiri, non-fiction by David Foster Wallace, and films directed by Orson Welles, Robert Altman, and Paul Thomas Anderson.

Sue Roberts

ENGL1080.36 **Marginal in America**

MWF 10

In this course we will examine a range of texts for their depiction of life on the margins or the peripheries of American society. One emphasis in our reading will be to distinguish between the many stages and states of marginality, i.e., between visible and invisible marginality, permanent and transitory, voluntary and involuntary. Therefore, the marginal experiences we will encounter include that of the Native American, the urban working-class, the African American, the first generation European immigrant, the regionalist voice, the "New" woman, the social anarchist, the refugee, among others. Marginality, in other words, will be encountered in terms of class, race, gender, ethnicity and geography, and, in many cases, these conditions will overlap. Writers will include: Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, Frederick Douglas, Willa Cather, Kate Chopin, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, Langston Hughes, Colm Tóibín, and Barbara Kingsolver.

James Smith

ENGL1080.10 Writing and Rewriting the Fairy Tale MWF 11

Fairy tales consistently provide material for adaptations, spin-offs, and various permutations ranging from novels to movies. What is it about the fairy tale that lodges so deeply in the reading public's psyche? This class will explore the origin of the fairy tale and how it has been written, rewritten, and adapted across genres and time periods. Working with different types of texts including poetry, drama, novels, short stories, and graphic novels, we will examine recurring elements of the fairy tale such as power structures, gender roles, and family relationships. Authors include Angela Carter, Anne Sexton, and Hans Christian Andersen.

Rachel Ernst

ENGL1080.12 Love and Other Difficulties MWF 11

In the classical era and up to the Renaissance, love was considered an appropriate topic for study, even academic study. The assumption was that just because we all have feelings, that does not mean we know how to love, or to love well, and that therefore we need to study it, discuss it, practice, in order to become better at it. This class will study various theories and practices of love via readings in Plato, Goethe, Eugene O'Neill and others, in order to learn how it's done.

Thomas Kaplan-Maxfield

ENGL1080.34 Literature, History, Politics MWF 11

This section of Literature Core investigates the political implications of literature's relationship to history. This course seeks to understand literature not merely as a historical document that records the cultural conventions, linguistic habits, and aesthetic preferences of the past. Instead, we will uncover how literature itself practices a form of reading and writing of history and theorizes the past's relationship to the present and the future. Moreover, by interrogating the connection between aesthetic revolutions and political struggles, we will also examine literature's capacity to intervene in society and consider whether literature can constitute the sort of event that might make history itself. Philosophical and literary texts may include those by Plato, Aristotle, Benjamin, Shakespeare, Eliot, and Vonnegut.

Matthew Gannon

ENGL1714.01 (Core Renewal Course: Enduring Questions)

Reading Melville's Moby-Dick MWF 12 / T 6-7:50

Corequisite: Must be concurrently enrolled in HIST1704

For Freshman Only

Moby-Dick (1851), arguably the greatest American novel, raises questions fundamental to human existence: What is fate? freedom? the meaning of life? the world? Can we know it? This course examines how characters, narrative voice, genre, and plotting create an almost biblical text; how depictions of whaling become parables; how historical references reflect contemporary politics; and how fiction can bring us to reflect on our own lives. Like Queequeg's tattoos, it presents a "mystical treatise on the art of attaining truth . . . whose mysteries not even [he] himself could read" while its value resides in simply raising the questions.

Michael Martin

ENGL1080.20 Spiritual Journeys

MWF 12

Where are you going, and how do you get there? We often describe life itself as a journey or a road that we travel on. Similarly, the idea of the journey is one of the most pervasive motifs in literature: a character's physical wanderings often stimulate changes that are internal and spiritual as well. In this course we will explore how works of English literature portray such characters' travels, exploring journeys that are physical and metaphysical, geographical and spiritual, natural and even supernatural. We will read stories, poems, and plays from different time periods and informed by different religious perspectives -- Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox as well as agnostic and atheist. Authors covered may include Margery Kempe, Christopher Marlowe, John Donne, George Herbert, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Virginia Woolf, C. S. Lewis, Graham Greene, Flannery O'Connor, and others.

Laura Sterrett

ENGL1080.42 Queer Literature

MWF 12

An introduction to the reading of literature focusing on gay, lesbian, and transgender novels, stories, poetry, and plays. Aiming to foster forms of attention to the elusive details of literary texts, we will explore questions of sexuality and gender identification—and complexities of desire and eroticism difficult to classify according to the usual general categories. Because some describe experiences of marginalization or discrimination and because many evoke (often explicitly) forms of desire that some, inevitably, will not share and may even find repellent, these can be challenging texts that show us how discomfiting, how permanently unsettling, literature can be.

Kevin Ohi

ENGL1716.01 (Core Renewal Course: Enduring Questions)

Metamorphosis: Story-telling

MWF 1 / TH 6-7:50

Corequisite: Must be concurrently enrolled in BIOL1704

For Freshman Only

Taking its cue from the literary explorations of human bodily change composed from antiquity to modern times, this course explores a range of writings created in vastly different places and cultures. It aims to promote reflection on change and variety as basic features of reality and therefore of human experience. While not a writing course per se, it gives substantial attention to the technology of writing as a means of transforming our private mental experience into forms that can readily be shared with others.

Dayton Haskin

ENGL1080.14 The Problem of Pleasure

MWF 1

The experience of pleasure—as literature, poetry, and psychoanalytic theory have shown—is never without its opposite: unpleasure. Taking this idea that there is no such thing as “pure” pleasure as our starting point, this course will focus on the various ways in which writers have explored the “problem of pleasure” in their work. What is the relation between pleasure and sexuality, for instance? Between pleasure and time? How is pleasure captured in aesthetic representation, or conceptualized in philosophical texts? Writers may include Sappho, Baudelaire, Proust, Woolf, Lawrence, Freud, Barthes, and Kristeva.

Nell Wasserstrom

ENGL1080.24 Writing and Rewriting the Fairy Tale MWF 1

Fairy tales consistently provide material for adaptations, spin-offs, and various permutations ranging from novels to movies. What is it about the fairy tale that lodges so deeply in the reading public's psyche? This class will explore the origin of the fairy tale and how it has been written, rewritten, and adapted across genres and time periods. Working with different types of texts including poetry, drama, novels, short stories, and graphic novels, we will examine recurring elements of the fairy tale such as power structures, gender roles, and family relationships. Authors include Angela Carter, Anne Sexton, and Hans Christian Andersen.

Rachel Ernst

ENGL1717.01 (Core Renewal Course: Enduring Questions)

Fictions of Development: Adolescence in Historical Context MWF 2 / TH 6-7 50

Corequisite: Must be concurrently enrolled in SOCY1707

For First-year Students Only

How does scientific discourse intersect with literary, historical, and cultural forces? Does it matter that Peter Pan, who refused to grow up, appeared in the same year (1904) as the first major psychological treatise on “Adolescence”? What might the angsty white teenagers of “Rebel Without a Cause” (1950) and *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951) have to do with James Baldwin’s tale of coming of age in Harlem, *Go Tell It On the Mountain* (1953)? More recently, is there any relationship between the idealized teen world of “Clueless” and the dystopian high school in *Never Let Me Go* (2005)?

Maia McAleavey

ENGL1080 - Literature Core

Spring 2018

ENGL1080.02 Narratives of Slavery

T TH 9

Featuring film, visual art, and different types of fiction, this course engages histories and legacies of slavery in the United States. In addition to looking at narratives of slavery depicted in these different creative forms, we will play with the definition of “slavery” so that it can help us think and rethink drug addiction and dealing, gender oppression, histories, and particular kinds of inter-racial relationships. Students will hone their close reading and interpretive skills, develop styles of written and verbal argumentation, and debate and test their ideas with classmates.

Rhonda Frederick

ENGL1080.04 Rule Breakers

T TH 9

This section of the Lit Core will examine the issue of "Rule Breakers"

We will be looking at literature that deals with the act of breaking the rules and the social and moral consequences that result from rule breaking. And we will be looking at the way this is done in various literary forms.

We have to begin with some key questions:

Why and how, do societies create rules?

Who enforces the rules and how are they enforced?

Why do people decide to break rules?

What are the social consequences of breaking rules?

What are the individual consequences for the rule breaker?

Do men and women deal with rules and rule breaking differently?

Bonnie Rudner

ENGL1080.18 Alienation as Literary Motif

T TH 9

This is a close-reading of literature course. Certain themes, alienation, for instance, or the role of women in society will be stressed, and examined. Narrative strategies, points of view, characterization, are discussed as well, as will the connection between literature and society as a whole; matters of aesthetics are also emphasized. Readings may include *Madame Bovary*, *All the King's Men*, *Where I'm Calling From* (Raymond Carver). There are quizzes, hourly exams and three 7 page essays.

George O'Har

ENGL1709.01 (Core Renewal Course: Enduring Questions)

Living in the Material World

T TH 9 / T 6-7:50

Corequisite: Must be concurrently enrolled in CHEM170101

For First-year Students Only

What are the humanistic principles that ground our understanding of the relationship of the human to the material world? Three units—human-matter, human—animal, human-machine--will introduce students to “New Materialisms,”-- that is, a range of disciplinary attempts to understand human embodiment in a world of matter. Students might read excerpts from philosophy, as well selections from the history of science. Literary texts will include novels like *Robinson Crusoe* and excerpts from poetry. Less familiar genres like the “It narrative” may also be included to help students think about the objects they use daily. We may also watch recent movies like *Wall-e* and *Her*.

Elizabeth Wallace

ENGL1080.28 Capitalism and Resistance in Am. Lit. T TH 10:30

The U.S. has long thought about the intertwinement of economics and politics; however, it was not always a given that free-market capitalism and democracy should go hand-in-hand. Drawing mainly on American writers from the colonial era to modernity, this course focuses on the idea of the individual as defined by capitalism and the ways various thinkers have resisted that definition. Literary writers may include Herman Melville, Henry David Thoreau, William Bradford, Frederick Douglass, T.S. Eliot, and William Carlos Williams. Philosophers such as Karl Marx, Louis Althusser, and Michel Foucault will play a central role in our understanding of subjectivity.

Alex Moskowitz

ENGL1080.30 Satire and Society T TH 10:30

What does laughter reveal about society? This section of Literature Core focuses on the historical, unique ability of the comic mode to expose human nature and social structures. The course covers a wide survey of satirical and comedic works in English and Irish literature from the fifteenth to the twentieth century, including Chaucer, Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, James Joyce, and perhaps the greatest satirist of all time, Jonathan Swift. In indulging our funny bones, we will examine what makes these writings witty, ridiculous, or caustic. Our class topics will include things like literary genre, character, gender, class, censorship, authorship, and the relationship between literature and politics. Finally, as we laugh our way through these works, we will evaluate how the objects and forms of satire change over time and why.

Colleen Taylor

ENGL1080.38 In the Wild T TH 10:30

The readings for this course follow a broad organizing theme: the Wild. Across the semester we will ask questions such as: What is the relationship between humanity and nature? How have “civilized” cultures narrated their encounters with “wild” cultures across history? How do we interact with the wilderness beyond, and indeed within, ourselves? We will read a selection of travel writings, novels, and memoirs in which authors grapple with these questions in the context of their particular historical and cultural conditions, and we will ask what the concept of the wild means for humanity today.

Alison Cotti-Lowell

ENGL1080.40 Stories of the Apocalypse and the End of the World T TH 10:30

In contemporary tv, film, and literature, we are fascinated by stories of the apocalypse. From *The Walking Dead* to *The Last Man on Earth*, *Oryx and Crake* to *Zone One*, these stories of disaster, social collapse, and survival seem to enthrall us. Yet such stories are not new. In this course, we will be investigating texts from a variety of historical periods and in a variety of literary forms that share an interest in imagining the apocalypse and its aftermath. We will wrestle with questions concerning how and why we tell these stories and how historical, cultural, and artistic context impact representations of the apocalypse. Potential authors include: W.B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot, Tony Kushner, Haruki Murakami, and Octavia Butler.

Kristin Imre

ENGL1080.16 Queer Drama and Film

T TH 10:30

In this section of Literature Core, we will explore plays and films that deal with queer topics--same-sex desire, transgender experience, queer politics, and more. Students will build skills in close reading and apply rigorous literary analysis to a series of queer texts, while becoming acquainted with relevant topics in queer theory. Readings and films will likely include William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Terrence Rattigan's *The Deep Blue Sea*, Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*, Moises Kaufman's *The Laramie Project*, Gus Van Sant's *Milk*, Pedro Almodóvar's *All About My Mother*, and Jean Genet's *Un chant d'amour*.

Kelsey Norwood

ENGL1080.08 Coming of Age

T TH 10:30

In this section of Lit Core, we will study "bildungsroman", or literature that concerns "coming of age", the passage from childhood to adulthood. We will consider works across time and place that reveal insights into their specific contexts, as well as our own. Texts include *Othello*, *Great Expectations*, the short stories of Flannery O'Connor, *Drown* and *Salvage the Bones*. We will use small and large group discussion, as well as formal (two longer papers) and informal writing assignments as a way to share responses to texts and to generate our own ideas. There is a midterm, final exam, and an informal student presentation. I value your thoughts and encourage you to bring them to class each meeting.

Treseanne Ainsworth

ENGL1080.46 Alienation as Literary Motif

T TH 10:30

This is a close-reading of literature course. Certain themes, alienation, for instance, or the role of women in society will be stressed, and examined. Narrative strategies, points of view, characterization, are discussed as well, as will the connection between literature and society as a whole; matters of aesthetics are also emphasized. Readings may include *Madame Bovary*, *All the King's Men*, *Where I'm Calling From* (Raymond Carver). There are quizzes, hourly exams and three 7 page essays.

George O'Har

ENGL1718.01 (Core Renewal Course: Enduring Questions)

Reading In/Justice: Literature as Activism

T TH 12 / TH 6-7:50

Corequisite: Students must also be concurrently enrolled in ENGL1719.01, the FWS section Entitled "Writing In/Justice: The Power of Response," which is taught by Prof. Eileen Donovan-Kranz, and meets on Tuesday & Thursdays at 1:30, and has the same evening time required TH 6-7:50. Joined together, these courses satisfy both the Writing and Literature Core requirement.

For First-year Students Only

This course examines how literature addresses questions of racial, gender, and economic injustice. Topics include slavery, abolition, and civil rights; feminism and gender equality; labor reform; and global human rights. Readings range from poetry, drama, and fiction to journalism, memoir, and new media. Questions will include: Why are some works created for activist purposes considered art while others are not? How do literary works transcend the writer's intentions to take on new meaning in the public sphere? How has the recovery of forgotten works by women and minority writers become an act of socio-political activism?

Lori Harrison-Kahan

ENGL1080.06 The Pleasure of the Text

T TH 3

This section of Literature Core will explore the concept of "pleasure reading" by thinking critically about what makes reading enjoyable. We will consider qualities of the text (genre, suspense, scandal) and qualities of the reading experience (reading communities, paratexts). One aim of the course is to theorize the enjoyment available in "mastery" of a text. In addition to using class readings as a way to examine literary form, we will consider questions of gender, history, and culture. Texts may include works by Daniel Defoe, Zadie Smith, Arthur Conan Doyle, and Vladimir Nabokov, television episodes and films, as well as essays and literary theory.

Lauren Wilwerding

ENGL1080.22 Fictional Science and the Body Monstrous T TH 3

In this section of Literature Core, we focus on literary works that use representations of experimental science to push the body to monstrous extremes. As we read, we will ask questions such as: To what extent is our humanity dependent on our bodies, and how far can our bodies be changed before we lose our humanity? What anxieties or assumptions do literary texts articulate about the body, or about scientific and technological experimentation? How does scientific knowledge affect how we conceptualize features of identity like gender, race, or sexuality? How does literature converse with or push back against the scientific claim to objectivity? Authors studied may include Mary Shelley, H.G. Wells, Phillip K. Dick, and Ursula Le Guin.

Linda Martin