



English Graduate Courses Fall 2012

501

Materials and Methods of Research

Hester Blum

M 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 210 Chambers Building

This course will introduce first-year graduate students to the study of literature in its methodological and professional dimensions. Our primary focus will be on how to perform research, both practically and theoretically. We will explore how best to use the library, how to find sources, how to make use of both digital and print research tools, how to use archives, and how to use these materials in crafting scholarly or creative writing. In doing so, we'll also be thinking more critically about why to take a given approach to materials, how to determine the research methodologies of others and how to choose our own, and how to identify and enter critical conversations. Short writing assignments throughout the term will be tied to library exercises as well as to critical and theoretical readings.

In this class we will study--and model--the kinds of critical conversations that enable individuals to enter the professions of literary studies and creative writing. We will conduct workshops (both class-generated and featuring guest speakers) on attending conferences, writing abstracts, applying for grants and residencies, entering into scholarly or creative collaboration, and publishing both scholarly and literary texts.

512

Charlotte Holmes

W 6:35 PM – 9:35 PM; 7 Burrowes

This semester in the graduate fiction workshop, we'll concentrate on the art and craft of the short story. Prompted by the visit to campus of Nobel laureate J.M. Coetzee during the fall 2012 semester, we'll read and discuss fiction by these recent Nobel winners: Coetzee (South Africa, 2003), Elfriede Jelinek (Austria, 2004), Orhan Pamuk (Turkey, 2006), Doris Lessing (England, 2007), Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio (France, 2008), Herta Müller (Germany, 2009), and Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru, 2010). As writers, of course, you will be engaged in your own creative projects-- the writing of short stories and novels. My expectation is that you'll end the semester with a finished draft of at least one short story (or novel chapter that stands on its own) that you will submit to a literary journal at semester's end. Everyone will have a chance to workshop two different pieces or three (substantially) different drafts of the same piece. Everyone will take a turn at presenting one of the assigned books. We'll do weekly journal assignments.

513

Robin Becker

W 12:20 PM – 3:30 PM; 47 Burrowes Building

In this graduate seminar, students will read and prepare weekly presentations on 10 individual collections of poems, writing a weekly poem "in conversation" with that week's poet. In addition, we will read several books on the elements of prosody including *The Art of the Poetic Line*, *The Art of Description* and *The Art of Syntax*. Students will submit a portfolio of 10 revisions at the end of the semester.

515

Toby Thompson

T 6:35 PM – 9:35 PM; 7 Burrowes Building

English 515, the graduate nonfiction seminar, will be constructed as a writing seminar. It will concentrate on creative nonfiction and how we, as nonfiction writers, create. Techniques for mining memory, as well as for creating memorable stories, will be taught. Rites of passage, such as love affairs, family deaths, interesting jobs, great trips, various disorders and assets are possible topics. The line between nonfiction and fiction in creative nonfiction will be discussed. Several contemporary or near-contemporary texts will be read. One six-thousand word piece, due at the middle of the semester, and revised by the end, will be required. Or the student may choose to write a completely new piece for the second due date. Writing samples will be submitted

and discussed on a bi or tri-weekly basis. Since this is a writing, not a literature course, readings will be assigned as the subjects they cover emerge in class; a rigid time frame for required readings is not practical. There will be no examinations. Grades will be based on writing assignments, readings (short written reactions to texts will be required) and class participation. Attendance at all classes is required.

521

Old English Language

Scott Smith

T R

9:45 AM – 11:00 AM; 202 Leonhard Building

This course introduces the vernacular language and literature of early medieval England. Students will acquire the basic linguistic knowledge necessary for reading Old English, working with short texts early in the semester and moving to longer prose and poetic texts after midterm. While this course is primarily dedicated to language issues, we will also discuss the texts we translate as literary texts. The course also considers manuscript issues, historical language change, the relationships between vernacular and Latin traditions, the politics of translation, and the aesthetics of early English literature. No prior experience with Old English is required.

540

“The interval between earth and heaven”: Citizens and Gods in Elizabethan Literature

Patrick Cheney

W 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 7 Burrowes Building

This seminar begins by asking, “Does literature make us citizens or gods?” Two major strands of literary criticism coming out of antiquity answer the question differently: Aristotle, “citizens”; Longinus, “gods.” Whereas the *Poetics* uses a formalist methodology centered on catharsis to see literature creating the health of the individual in a democratic or a monarchical state, *On Sublimity* uses a full process-oriented methodology to see literature depending specifically on the democratic state to house a sublime author. In the first model, literature shapes government; in the second, only a free government creates literature. Catharsis and sublimity, nationhood and godhood, politics and theology, citizenship and godliness: these become the DNA of literary analysis arriving in sixteenth-century England from the Continent, making the Renaissance the Renaissance. To investigate this topic, the seminar will focus on a single phenomenon of Elizabethan literature: the moment when the human and the divine meet—that special space that Longinus terms “the interval between earth and heaven.” Consequently, we will center on reading fictions of dreams and visions, for in such experience men and women encounter the world of spirit, and crystallize the form that identity will take, citizenship or godhood. We will first track this topic in biblical and classical literature, and then come to settle on the Elizabethan fictions of Edmund Spenser, Philip Sidney, Christopher Marlowe, and William Shakespeare. Key works will be *The Faerie Queene* (Books 1, 2, 3, and 6), *The New Arcadia* (selections), *Doctor Faustus*, and *Hamlet*. But we will read other works by these four authors, such as the November eclogue of *The Shepheardes Calender*, the Neoplatonic sonnets of *Astrophil and Stella*, *Tamburlaine*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. We will augment these readings with literary criticism from antiquity and the English Renaissance, and with modern criticism both on the authors and on the intertwined (yet generally separated) topics of nationhood and godhood. Weekly response papers; one in-class teaching presentation; and a research project, with abstract, bibliography, “conference paper,” and final critical essay.

545

Medieval and Renaissance Chaucer

Robert Edwards

T 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 47 Burrowes Building

This seminar will read a selection of Chaucer’s major works in the two literary and historical contexts that most affect them—Chaucer’s medieval contemporaries and the Renaissance poets who saw him at the head of a national tradition of authorship. In the 1380s and 1390s, Chaucer was not a sure bet to emerge as the preeminent poet of his age. At home, Langland and Gower offered powerful and attractive alternatives to his work; abroad, Italian and French writers were playing a high stakes game of poetic ambition and cosmopolitan prestige. We will read portions of Chaucer’s dream visions and the *Canterbury Tales* as responses to contemporary models and competitors, including those Chaucer does not name, such as Boccaccio. Chaucer’s self-appointed literary heirs Thomas Hoccleve and John Lydgate established the figure of father Chaucer early in the fifteenth century, but the full encounter with that figure occurs later, in print culture and on the stage, with Renaissance editions of Chaucer’s *Workes* (and a lot of Chaucer apocrypha) and the poetic reconceptions of Spenser, Shakespeare, and others. We will look at some of the materials forms in which early modern poets read Chaucer and study what they did with their impressions. The seminar will require active participation, several short research exercises, a conference presentation, and final seminar paper. No prior knowledge of Middle English is assumed, and foreign-language materials will be read in translation.

548

Cognition, Passion and Embodiment in English Renaissance Drama

Garrett Sullivan

M 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 7 Burrowes

This course will focus on cognition, passion and embodiment before the Cartesian revolution, with particular emphasis on early modern drama. While we think of emotion and cognition in proprietary terms, as operations internal to our bodies, Renaissance natural philosophy understood them as transactions or forms of engagement with the environment. Moreover, the Renaissance theater offered its own particular models of somatic engagement; it served as a laboratory for affective experimentation, a site of passionate contagion, and the locus of a distinctive ‘cognitive ecology.’ In order to see this, we will take up major works (mostly but not exclusively tragedies) by the likes of Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Middleton, John Webster and William Shakespeare alongside primary texts centered on the passions, psychology, physiology, and the art of memory. We will also read recent literary criticism as well as historical and theoretical work on cognition, memory, emotion, and the body.

Students will be required to keep up with the reading, write three response papers, make a presentation on a research topic of their own choosing, and write and present a final essay, for which they will each complete a rough draft. Discussion will be an important part of the class, and everyone will be expected to participate.

554

The Science of Enlightenment

Carla Mulford

T 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 7 Burrowes Building

“Nature and Nature’s laws lay hid in night / God said, ‘Let Newton be,’ and all was light.” So wrote Alexander Pope, not just about Newton but about the immense number of scientific findings made available in literate discourse as a result of the scientific revolutions of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and early eighteenth centuries. In this course, we’ll take into account the range of theoretical and practical implications resulting from the “new science,” from fascination with alchemy and the stars to the impulse for overseas expansion in behalf of what came to be called the First British Empire. Writers we’ll likely study include an eclectic mix: Edward Taylor, Cotton Mather, Alexander Pope, Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Phillis Wheatley, the Bartrams, James Cook, and Charles Brockden Brown. Coursework includes: 1) spirited discussion each week in class; 2) an individually designed **talking point** designed for discussion (with handout, as needed, to assist the discussion); 3) an assigned **book report** (with a handout to assist in following the report) based on each student’s reading of one scholarly book that will support the primary reading; 4) a **proposal for the seminar paper**; 5) a **seminar paper turned in twice**, a first completed paper and a second completed paper. The course fulfills the pre-1800 requirement. Students who have taken my classes have, with frequency, turned their seminar papers into publications (and one student’s paper has won an award)!

560

Hawthorne and Melville

Christopher Castiglia

R 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM; 47 Burrowes Building

This seminar will focus on several texts by two of the most celebrated prose writers of the antebellum period, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville. Rather than covering the full range of these authors’ texts, we will focus on exemplary texts from throughout their careers: *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Blithedale Romance*, *The Marble Faun*, *Typee*, *Redburn*, *Moby-Dick*, and *The Confidence Man*. In addition to examining the style, content, context, and circulation of these texts, we will study their critical reception over the past sixty years, and the impact of feminist, critical race, queer, poststructuralist, postcolonial, transnational, psychoanalytic, and aesthetic theory on the making and unmaking of canons and representative texts. Finally, we will discuss the relationship between Hawthorne and Melville, both as friends and as authors each of whose work profoundly shaped the other’s.

562

The 1890s

Emily Harrington

W 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 7 Burrowes Building

In the 1890s, certain cultural critics considered civilization to be on the verge of collapse, degenerating into a world dominated by sensual appetites. Yet it was also a period of the new, the “New Woman,” the “new sciences,” the “new imperialism.” It was a period of exciting developments in thought about gender, sex, politics, class, race, art, literary and aesthetic forms. We often think of it as a transitional period between staid Victorian gradiosity and Modernism, but the decade has avant-garde and reactionary tendencies that are all its own. We will read literature by Oscar Wilde (of course), Walter Pater, Arthur Symonds, Henry James, Max Beerbohm, W.B. Yeats and the Rhymers, as well as works by less canonical though equally important women writers, George Egerton, Ella D’Arcy, Michael Field, Alice Meynell. We will also read selections from *The Yellow Book*,

examining the real variety in what was thought to be a scandalous periodical. We'll also be able to visit the rare book room at the library in order to see originals not only of the *Yellow Book*, but also of some of the exquisitely printed books of the period. Assignments will likely include a presentation, weekly responses and a seminar paper.

574

Intellectuals

Benjamin Schreier

M 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 7 Burrowes Building

This seminar has two parts: 1) study of key works in the theory and critical history of intellectuals; and 2) a practicum of sorts in which we test these theories and histories via an examination of the New York intellectuals. The schedule of readings will roughly reflect this bifurcation, with the first half of the semester (more or less) devoted to theoretical readings and the second (more or less) devoted to literary and cultural writings of the New York critics. We'll devote a bit of time to the question of connections between the New York intellectuals and the neocons. Questions about the politics of literature, culture, and writing will predominate. Readings for the first half will likely be drawn from people like Marx, Nietzsche, Gramsci, Foucault, Deleuze, Chomsky, Badiou, Zizek, Butler, Robbins, Bove, O'Hara, Ross, Jacoby, and Said; readings for the second half will likely be drawn from authors like Trilling, Kazin, Howe, Phillips, Rahv, Arendt, Macdonald, Blackmur, Schwartz, Podhoretz, Kristol, Bellow, etc.

577

Kit Hume

W 6:35 PM – 9:35 PM; 47 Burrowes Building

This is a course in fiction written during the last twenty years. The books are drawn from American (including Native American, African American, Asian American, and Anglophone literature from various Spanish- and Caribbean-influenced cultures), British, Subcontinental Indian, Anglophone African, Canadian, Antipodean—anything written in English. Where possible, novels exhibit various sexual orientations, religious concerns, and avant-garde as well as traditional literary techniques, and a spectrum of political orientations. Each week, a seminar participant is responsible for presenting the text of the week by offering a brief biography of the author and a selective bibliography emphasizing the work being read. Discussion will focus on ways of working with such a text and how one could usefully write an article on it. Everyone will write a minimum of two drafts of an article on one of these texts or on some other text or texts that interest you. The last few meetings are devoted to workshopping your article. Throughout, my focus is on professionalism, on how to publish, and on how to succeed in building your academic career.

The tentative reading list for Fall 2012

Chris Adrian, *The Great Night* (American; a modern rewrite of *Midsummer Night's Dream*)

A.S. Byatt, *A Whistling Woman* (British, neurocognitive)

Apostolos Doxiadis, *Logicomix* (graphic/historical novel about Bertrand Russell and math)

William Kennedy, *Chango's Beads and Two-Toned Shoes* (American; Hemingway; Cuban Revolution; Albany riots)

Michael Muhammad Knight, *The Taqwacores* (Muslim American, Punk Rock)

Jamie O'Neill, *At Swim Two Boys* (Irish, gay, Uprising history)

Arthur Phillips, *The Tragedy of Arthur* (American, about Shakespeare scholarship, a lost play, forgeries)

Ishmael Reed, *Juice* (African-American, Satiric, re O. J. Simpson)

Alex Shaker, *Luminarium* (neurocognitive, software, virtual reality)

David Treuer, *The Translation of Dr Apelles* (Native American, challenges the stereotypes of that marketing category)

Karen Tei Yamashita (Asian-American, west-coast city)

582

Feminist Theory of the 1960s and 1970s

Susan Squier

F 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 47 Burrowes Building

In an era when *Mad Men* is a huge hit, and 60s decor has become very retro-fashionable, this course will retrieve a core contribution of the 1960s and 1970s for the 21st century: its brilliant, feisty, and visionary feminist theory. We will read through some of the major texts of the era, from Shulamith Firestone's scorching *The Dialectic of Sex* and Dorothy Dinnerstein's *The Mermaid and the Minotaur* to Nancy Chodorow's *The Reproduction of Mothering*, essays in art criticism by Linda Nochlin, and film criticism by E. Ann Kaplan, Teresa de Lauretis, and Laura Mulvey. Our goal will be two-fold: to appreciate the meaning of these texts in the context of their time and to generate an understanding of their meaning today.

584.001

**The Contemporary Feminist Rhetorical Scene:
Theory, Practice, Pedagogy, and Politics**

Cheryl Glenn

T 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 207 Burrowes Building

NB: Come to the first class having read Gilligan's *Joining the Resistance*.

Course Description: “The Contemporary Feminist Rhetorical Scene: Theory, Practice, Pedagogy, and Politics” will open with the challenges to traditional Western rhetorical history, principles, practices, and values. We will then examine the works of various academicians, rhetoricians, public intellectuals, and politicians who have made firm contributions to the contemporary feminist rhetorical scene. As we read professional narratives alongside essays concerning new ways to appreciate/analyze, theorize, and practice rhetoric, we will establish the specific ways women have contested and transformed theories, practices, pedagogies, and ontologies of rhetoric. Women around the world are rethinking, embodying, and practicing rhetoric in ways that are revolutionizing disciplines and discourses, including theory (from feminist and critical-race to disability and postcolonial), research (methods and methodologies), pedagogy (teaching, learning, and mentoring), professional experience (from office and studio to stage and arena); the body (aging, body image, and health care), the mind (from ways of knowing to ways of being); domestic life (from nurturing to violence), politics (from demonstration to legislation), and, of course, rhetoric itself (from theory to practice).

Required Texts: *Joining the Resistance* (Gilligan), *Feminist Rhetorical Theories* (Foss, Foss, and Griffin), *Readings in Feminist Rhetorical Theory* (Foss, Foss, and Griffin), *Feminism and Affect at the Scene of Argument* (Tomlinson), *Unspoken* (Glenn), *Rhetorical Listening* (Ratcliffe), *Feminist Rhetorical Practices* (Kirsch and Royster), *Feminism and Composition: A Critical Sourcebook* (Kirsch, Maor, Massey, Nickoson-Massey, Sheridan-Rabideau), *Teaching to Transgress* (hooks), *Feminist Research in Theory and Practice* (Letherby), *True Confessions* (Gubar), *Arts of the Possible* (Rich), *Women's Ways of Making It in Rhetoric and Composition* (Ballif, Davis, Mountford).

584.003

**Literacy in Crisis: The Politics and Practices of Writing
Rhetorics of Literacy**

Mya Poe

R 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 7 Burrowes Building

“Middle-class anxieties about loss of status and downward mobility have repeatedly been displaced and refigured in the realm of language practices and literacy.” - John Trimbur, “Literacy and the Discourse of Crisis”

This course provides a historical view of literacy in the U.S. to understand why we ask certain questions about writing. We trace how debates about falling literacy rates and the “literacy crisis” can be found repeatedly throughout U.S. history and how these discourses of literacy reflect various cultural tensions around immigration, national security, and economics. Contrasting these discourses of literacy found in the public sphere and government policy to literacy narratives of writing done in communities, families, and prisons, we find that writing practices are actually complex and fluid, deeply shaped by literacy sponsors, and meaningful in specific ways to the people who use those practices. Readings will include ethnographies and narratives such as *Ways With Words*, *Voices of the Self*, *Writing From These Roots* as well as publications such as “A Nation At Risk” and “Why Johnny Can't Write.”

586

Article Writing Workshop

Nicholas Joukovsky

R 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM; 7 Burrowes Building

The aim of this workshop is to help graduate students develop promising seminar papers into publishable articles that will be ready by the end of the semester for submission to reputable or even prestigious journals. To achieve this goal, you will need to do additional research as well as additional writing and extensive revision. The nature and scope of the revision will naturally vary from student to student and from paper to paper, but unless you have already done a good deal of revision, you should plan to produce at least three complete drafts and perhaps as many as six revisions of the introduction and conclusion.

Since most of you will be working on papers in fields outside my areas of expertise, it will be essential for you to work not only with me but also with at least one expert in your chosen field, preferably with more than one. If the person who supervised your original work is not available this semester, try to find someone else who can help you. This can be a good opportunity to introduce yourself to faculty members whose seminars you have not been able to take.

Students should begin the workshop with at least one seminar paper of at least 15-20 pages that a faculty member has identified as potentially publishable. If you have several such papers that you would like to revise, you should focus on one of them first

and work to prepare it for publication before turning your attention to the others. Too many graduate students have a drawer full of potentially publishable papers, none of which is quite fully revised and ready for submission. Getting the first one ready to go out is always the biggest challenge, and I want to see everyone get to that point this semester.

Each weekly meeting will include workshop sessions devoted to students' articles, which will be circulated to the group in advance. Everyone should expect to present his or her work at least three times, beginning with the entire article in the early weeks. Later workshops may focus on specific portions of the article, especially the introductory framing. Everyone should aim to submit a penultimate draft to me before Thanksgiving break. This will allow time for final polishing and actual submission by the end of the semester. If you finish revising your first article earlier, you will be able to present a second at one of the later workshop sessions.

Lectures and Q&A sessions will cover all aspects of article publication, from initial conception to final appearance in print. Topics will include such matters as evaluating journals, selecting a target journal, framing and structuring an argument, bibliographical searching, choosing which editions to cite, using electronic databases, locating and accessing archival material, systems and styles of documentation, cover letters and editorial correspondence, readers' reports and requests for revision, copyediting and proofreading, copyright forms and offprints. The aim throughout will be to demystify the whole process of writing for publication and getting your work accepted.

597A

Justice and (In)equality

John Marsh

W 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM: 7 Burrowes Building

The seminar will approach the question of equality from a number of different disciplinary perspectives, including economics, philosophy, and literature. We will ask what has led to the newfound interest in the question of equality, why the disciplines of philosophy and literature have not shared in that revived interest, and what these disciplines could offer the existing debate. The seminar starts with the facts of contemporary inequalities in terms of income and wealth, then considers some basic theories of justice (Locke, Rousseau, Kant), moves to the classic discussions of inequality (Rousseau, Marx, Rawls, Spencer, Sen, Nussbaum) and concludes with some challenges to the concept of equality (and inequality) as it has conventionally been defined (Iris Young, Catherine MacKinnon, Elizabeth Anderson). Throughout the semester, we will turn to works of literature (Whitman, Agee, Morrison) for other perspectives on these debates and for finer-grained representations of how inequality affects individuals and communities.

597B

American Writers and the City

Michael Anesko

T 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM: 7 Burrowes Building

While many influential works of criticism have suggested that classic American literature deliberately avoids or ignores complex social realities (e.g., *The Machine in the Garden, A World Elsewhere*), a countervailing argument might be adduced after careful consideration of a broader range of authors and texts. Students in this seminar will be invited to challenge conventional wisdom by taking up works that confront the history of urban America. Beginning with Charles Brockden Brown's novel of Philadelphia (*Arthur Mervyn* [1798]), the course will range forward to James T. Farrell's gritty chronicle of Depression-era Chicago (*Young Lonigan* [1932]). Besides taking up works of fiction, the seminar will also consider significant examples of reportage and cultural criticism.

597C

Proseminar in Anglo-American Modernism

Robert Caserio

W 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 47 Burrowes Building

The course intensively surveys British and American writers and theorists who exemplify or define the period term "modernism." The choice of literary texts will draw on works by Henry James, G. B. Shaw, H. G. Wells, Joseph Conrad, Virginia Woolf, Ezra Pound, W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot, Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, Wyndham Lewis, D. H. Lawrence, William Faulkner, Wallace Stevens, Hart Crane, Djuna Barnes, Katherine Mansfield, James Weldon Johnson, and Claude McKay. Supplementary readings will include philosophy (William James, Emile Bergson), psychology (Freud and W. James), and aesthetics (Jose Ortega y Gasset, Roger Fry). Topics to be discussed: the pros and cons of constructing "modernism" as a literary-historical entity; modernist aesthetics' "conquest of autonomy"; comparisons and contrasts of modernist literary discourse with non-literary discourse; the relation of modernism to reactionary ideologies (fascism, racism) and to progressive social movements (feminism, sexual liberation, socialism, secularism, anti-imperialism). Writing requirements: all the reading, engaged in-class discussion, an annotated bibliography of recent criticism of one of the syllabus' major readings, and a short essay (conference paper-length) about one of the course's writers or topics.

597D

Critical Whiteness Seminar

Linda Selzer

W 3:30PM – 6:30PM; 47 Burrowes Building

This course examines several theoretical approaches to critical whiteness studies, including scholarship that analyzes whiteness as a structural form of privilege, as a construct in the historical development of nation and citizenship, as an invisible or unmarked norm, as a performative location, and, of course, as representation in literature and other cultural productions. Seminar participants from all research areas who have an interest in critical whiteness studies are welcome to take the course. An effort will be made to include each participant's research interest in course reading materials. Our primary readings will be a number of recent scholarly articles in the field and works of fiction. Over the course of the semester we will discuss other forms of cultural production from the perspective of whiteness studies, including film, music, and electronic media. This course is designed to provide a grounding in the theoretical variety of research in whiteness studies and to offer practical applications of its methods that will be helpful to seminar participants in developing their own articles. Requirements for the course include active seminar participation, a review of a recent critical book on whiteness studies, and a final project.