

Spring 2012

512

The Art of Novel Writing

William Cobb

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

This graduate-level creative writing course will be focused primarily on the art of novel writing. As far as technique goes, we will try to understand and master the demands of sustaining longer narratives: the need for dynamic, multifaceted characters, captivating locations for the action, and dramatic event as the cornerstone of plot. On a less analytical level, it will also focus on the kaleidoscopic possibilities (and magic) of the world, a chaotic place peopled with go-go dancers, morbid elementary school teachers, convenience store artists, perverted bankers, bad grandmothers, good cousins, and that high school coach who scared the bejesus out of everyone. With nothing more than a collection of highly charged words we will attempt to create new worlds and identify new wrinkles and new understandings of our own. Students will be required to write several pieces of fiction during the semester, which should culminate in three short stories or chapters, and to give it their all. The guiding principle will be Have Fun With It. Create a world that surprises you, and your readers. Put everything you have into it, and make it strange. You will be encouraged, but not required, to work on a novel—a short story is often the fetus of a novel, and a good place to cut one's teeth on narrative. Readings will be a selection of three recently published novels to be decided at a later date, but student favorites in recent years have been Per Petterson's "Out Stealing Horses," Marilynne Robinson's "Gilead," and Cormac McCarthy's "The Road." They will all certainly be 21st century novels, with emphasis on works in the last few years.

513

News from Poems

Julia Kasdorf

M 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 47 Burrowes

"It is difficult / to get the news from poems / Yet men die miserably every day / for lack of what is found there." (W. C. Williams, from "Asphodel, that Greeny Flower") Readings for this workshop demonstrate the documentary possibilities of poetry, from Muriel Rukeyser, Charles Reznikoff, and Robert Penn Warren to recent books by Martha Collins, C. D. Wright and others. To what extent are all poems urgent works of non-fiction? How have poets used historical research, found text, facts, public language and the recorded interview? How does the self-reflective author function in documentary work? And what, finally, do you want to learn about the world in the course of writing your own poems? Every week, students can expect to write one new poem for workshop, some to prompts, and to read a book or substantial assignment.

515

Brian Lennon

W 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM; 7 Burrowes

To the extent possible, we'll alternate between reading, reviewing and discussion of works in progress by members of the class and reading, reviewing, and discussion of other things. "Other things" might include recently published works of literary nonfiction, with an emphasis on work by authors born outside the United States and on work relevant to the current geopolitical situation (for example, recent memoirs by Assia Djebar and Orhan Pamuk, or the trilogy of J. M. Coetzee's essay-novels *Elizabeth Costello*, *Slow Man*, and *Diary of a Bad Year*, or the trilogy comprising Coetzee's fictionalized autobiography, in *Boyhood*, *Youth*, and *Summertime*). It might also include work in the new creative writing studies (for example, Mark McGurl's *The Program Era: Postwar Fiction and the Rise of Creative Writing*).

540

Elizabethan Prose and Poetry

Marcy North

T 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 47 Burrowes

In Stuart England, much fashionable poetry circulated in hand-copied manuscripts before it ever reached print. The universities, Inns of Court (law schools), and London coterie served as networks for this lively cultural exchange. They encouraged their students and members to participate as both collectors and poets, to seek out the fashionable early verse of the newly appointed Dean of St. Paul's, John Donne, and to engage in the verse dialogues and debates that Donne and his contemporaries initiated. About a dozen authors are especially prominent in this culture, among them, Donne, Ben Jonson, Robert Herrick, Henry King,

Thomas Carew, and several university poets. Their most fashionable verse reached as many readers as a printed work did, and some of their poems are extant today in over fifty manuscripts. In the miscellany manuscripts that preserve their work, however, authorship is often secondary to the collectors' interests in certain genres, subjects, and verse debates. Only John Donne's poetry was regularly gathered together and copied into single-author anthologies. For the other Stuart poets, a handful of poems could mark an authorial cluster. Individual items were often copied next to and in conversation with works by minor and anonymous authors, where they contributed to thematic foci such as the death of a luminary, the question of women's constancy, or the problem of the king's favorite.

This seminar offers graduate students a chance to read these important Stuart poets in manuscript and, at the same time, to analyze how manuscript culture both celebrated and rendered trivial their authorship. Our primary texts will include authorial manuscripts, poetic miscellanies, and first print editions. We will discuss the extent to which patterns of verse exchange, processes of manuscript production, and competition from the print industry enabled and encouraged the broad dissemination of some manuscript poems and yet discouraged collectors from assembling single-author manuscript anthologies. We will study early modern practices of disputation, commonplace collecting, elegizing, male-female dialogue, and libeling to observe their influence on the organization of poetry in manuscript. And, we will situate these poets in their respective literary and political communities to determine how they contributed to their own legacies in manuscript and print. Students will have the opportunity to acquire skills in paleography and archival research and to focus their final projects on manuscript material that is not available in modern editions. Our secondary material will include a few studies of individual authors and much newer work on the politics and practices of verse collecting, verse exchange, and even libeling.

545

Chaucer

Caroline Eckhardt

W 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 430 Burrowes

Contact Instructor for more Information

553

Literacy in Crisis: The Politics and Practices of Writing Literacy Narratives

Mya Poe

W 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM; 207 Burrowes

"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*, policy publications such as "A Nation At Risk," and historical documents such as "Why Johnny Can't Write."

561

Studies in the Romantic Movement

Poetry and Politics: Wordsworth and the Younger Romantics

Nicholas Joukovsky

R 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM; 7 Burrowes

This seminar will explore the intersection of poetry and politics in the Romantic period by examining the ways in which the younger generation of English Romantic writers--Byron, Shelley, Keats, Peacock, Hunt, and Reynolds--responded to the work and career of their older contemporary William Wordsworth. For the first few weeks, we will trace the various stages of Wordsworth's public career to about 1820, with emphasis on the reception of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798, 1800), *Poems, in Two Volumes* (1807), and *The Excursion* (1814). The aim will be to place Wordsworth in context by seeing him as his younger contemporaries saw him. To this end, we will read some of his overtly political poetry, which is rarely if ever anthologized, along with the early critical attacks of Jeffrey and Hazlitt, as well as later satires such as Peacock's *Melincourt* (1817) and Shelley's *Peter Bell the Third* (1819), which respond directly to the changing politics of Wordsworth and his fellow "Lakers" Coleridge

and Southey. Then, for the rest of the semester, we will explore some of the ways in which Wordsworth's presence helped shape the literary careers of Byron and Hunt, Shelley and Peacock, Keats and Reynolds, despite their frequent disagreement with his poetic and political principles. Since all of these younger writers were politically liberal or radical, and since most of them knew each other, in some cases intimately, we will naturally want to investigate questions of intertextuality and influence in their work, as well as to consider whether they may be said to belong to a single movement or "school" that defined itself, at least in part, through its opposition to Wordsworth. There will also be opportunities to investigate the still largely ignored impact of Wordsworth on Romantic women poets, most obviously Felicia Hemans. While the course will survey a wide range of historical and cultural approaches to Romantic literature, it will provide a particularly good opportunity to study questions of literary politics, poetic influence, and intergenerational conflict.

Seminar papers will provide practice in several genres of scholarly writing. Each student will be expected to produce a short oral report accompanied by an annotated bibliography, a brief scholarly or critical note, a full-length article, and an oral conference paper based on that article.

564

Studies in the 19th Century American Literature

Chris Castiglia

T 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 7 Burrowes

This seminar will examine the varieties of intimate life that existed in nineteenth-century American literature. Friendship, marriage, spiritualism, citizenship, parenthood, brutality, sentimentalism, and colonialism—all these relationships (and more) relied on theories and representations of intimacy. In the seminar, we will read a range of contemporary theories of intimacy as well as primary texts by authors such as Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Emily Dickinson, Theodore Winthrop, Elizabeth Stoddard, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Harriet Jacobs, Edgar Allan Poe, George Thompson, and Walt Whitman.

566

Proseminar in African American Literature

Shirley Moody

R 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM; 47 Burrowes

In this course we will consider works by African American novelists, poets, dramatists, and essayists, along with selected filmmakers and musicians, in terms of the aesthetic, cultural, intellectual, and political currents that shape and are shaped by these various and varied texts. Moving from the era of slavery, the course will progress through the Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction period into the twentieth century Harlem Renaissance / New Negro movements. We will also engage with texts characterized by the radicalism of the Depression era, as well as literature of the Civil Rights era and Black Arts movement before considering some contemporary African American literature. While our course will provide a survey of developments in African American literature, our venture will be characterized by close and careful engagement with a necessarily limited selection of texts. Our approach will be attentive to the intersections of race, class, gender and sexuality, the politics of canon formation, questions of authenticity, performance, memory, history and narrative, and the ways in which texts variously engage and challenge the conventions of genre and form. Each student will lead an in-class presentation and produce an annotated bibliography, an abstract and a conference length paper. We will likely read works by Harriet Wilson, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Zora Neale Hurston, Lloyd Brown, Alice Childress, J. California Cooper, Elizabeth Alexander, Toi Derricotte, Victor LaValle, Suzan-Lori Park, and Kyle Baker, among others.

571

Writer in the Community

Julia Kasdorf

W 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 47 Burrowes

This is a service learning course that involves graduate and undergraduate students in the teaching and practice of writing in non-university settings. It aims to increase student understanding of and appreciation for the uses of writing among diverse groups of people. We will study and discuss the uses of creative writing—poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction—as a means of developing literacy and promoting human growth and healing in public institutions. Students enrolled in the course will have a strong background in creative writing, and will be committed to meet the demands of a service learning course with weekly visits to off-campus sites such as retirement communities, shelters, community centers, and prisons.

574

20th Century American Fiction
Expatriate American Modernists
Sandy Spanier
W 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM; 47 Burrowes

This course will focus on American expatriate writers between the World Wars. Many were born around the turn of the century and came of age during the Great War, which Malcolm Cowley described as “a watershed” that gave young writers “the feeling of having lived in two eras, almost on two different planets.” Gertrude Stein called them a “lost generation”—a label that most of its members contested. It was a time that engendered searching for values (many of the old ones having been shattered), acts of rebellion against social and literary complacency and conventions, and movements like the “Revolution of the Word” (dedicated, in Kay Boyle’s words, to creating a “lively, wholly American, grandly experimental and furiously disrespectful school of writing”). We will revisit Paris in the Twenties, examining the fiction of such famous modernists as Hemingway, Dos Passos, and F. Scott Fitzgerald, along with their lesser known contemporaries, including Boyle, Robert McAlmon, Zelda Fitzgerald, Ernest Walsh, and others publishing in the *avant-garde* “little magazines.” We will look at other sites of expatriation between the World Wars as well (Katherine Anne Porter went to Mexico and Germany, Kay Boyle from Paris to Austria to England to Vichy France) and will consider more broadly the issues of expatriation and American identity. We will examine various writers’ experiments in genre and form, including memoirs, as well as what happens when *avant-garde* sensibilities of the Twenties meet the rise of Fascism and other social realities of the Thirties. And we will interrogate some of the long-held definitions and assumptions about modernism that have excluded the work of some writers from serious critical consideration over the decades by dismissing it as “sentimental,” “popular,” or “political.”

577
Contemporary Literature
Susan Squier
R 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 105 Ag Sciences

The goal of this seminar is to prepare you to write about comics, whether your focus as a scholar is literature, rhetoric, cultural studies, or science studies; whether you have read comics your whole life, or thought the whole point of studying literature was to get away from comics; whether you plan to write about comics in your dissertation, or are merely curious about the medium. We’ll approach and analyze comics as a very powerful form of multi-dimensional story-telling, in genres that are virtually limitless. We’ll read a number of long-format, challenging comics, as well as shorter comics, instructional comics and medical comics. And we’ll read a number of works that present synoptic theories about the medium of comics in general.

Finally, because in my view the way to write about comics *with authority* is to have an appreciation of what it takes to create them, this seminar will also include studio time in which we will learn about the construction of comics, on a practical and pedagogical level. While most of you are talented writers, not all of you may be artists, but that will not be a problem. (If you don’t believe me, read page 9 of Abel and Madden: I personally aspire to the stick figure comic!) Knowledge of the nuts and bolts of comic writing and drawing will make you a better comics critic or theorist.

By the end of the seminar you will have:

- Learned the basic lexicon of comics.
- Learned the basics of story telling, visual and verbal, in comics.
- If you chose to, taken your own comic from a faint idea to a finished project.
- Given a report in which you analyze the composition of one comic of your choice.
- Written a seminar paper on one or several comics (no longer than 20 pages).
- Read some of the best comics out there.
- Have a sense of the comics you want to read next.

Because the production and consumption of graphic narratives/ comics reaches across many disciplines, this course is open to graduate students beyond the department of English.

584
The Rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement
Jack Selzer
T 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 7 Burrowes

This seminar is designed to give students opportunities to publish even as they become more familiar with the most important social movement in America’s twentieth century. The seminar (which can accommodate students in both literary and rhetorical studies) will provide sophistication in rhetorical criticism and archival research methods as we make a sustained inquiry into the rhetorical activities that accompanied the Civil Rights Movement in the United States from about 1954 until about 1975. We will consider important documents and speeches by central figures in the movement (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, Stokely Carmichael and Angela Davis); anthems and songs and other kinds of music (including music of resistance to the movement); the deployment of bodies in various persuasive ways (e.g., lunch counter

protests, sit ins and sit downs, marches, the resistance of Rosa Parks, the display of Emmitt Till, Freedom Rides, etc.); pulpit rhetoric; photography and other forms of visual rhetoric; fictional, poetic, documentary, and film representations of the movement; and the rhetoric associated with key events and groups—the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Birmingham campaign, the March on Washington, Freedom Summer, the Selma to Montgomery march, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Black Panthers—associated with this vital episode in American civic life. We may have a chance consider as well associated movements, such as those mounted in support of women's rights, farm workers' rights, gay rights, and so forth.

Students will perform their own sophisticated inquiries into subjects relevant to the course topic: each student will complete a substantial research project that involves a study of some rhetorical event related to the civil rights movement. The goal is to give students a chance to do learn the methods of rhetorical criticism and archival research as applied to original and important scholarship on a rhetorical issue that they care about—and a chance to publish that work. Considerable attention will be given to publication opportunities, research methods, and the conventions of academic publication in rhetorical and literary studies.

597A

Oceanic American Studies

Hester Blum

T 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 47 Burrowes

U.S. American literary studies has undergone in recent years a transnational or hemispheric "turn," which has moved away from notions of American exceptionalism by emphasizing the transnational dimensions of U.S. cultural and political formulations and exchanges. This course asks what happens if our scholarly perspective is reoriented from the perspective of the sea. If methodologies of the nation and the post-nation have been land-locked, how would an oceanic turn allow us to explore new ways of thinking about familiar and unfamiliar texts in pre-1900 U.S. literature? As oceanic perspective suggests that unmooring our critical position from nation-based perspectives can make possible other ways of understanding questions of affiliation, citizenship, mobility, rights, and sovereignty, all of which have been read in recent critical history as overdetermined by nationalism. We will explore the nascent field of Oceanic American Studies through readings of primary and secondary texts by Herman Melville, Susanna Rowson, Martin Delany, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Fanny Kemble, Sarah Orne Jewett, Robert Adams, Charles Warren Stoddard, Jack London, Cesare Casarino, Margaret Cohen, Ian Baucom, and Paul Gilroy.

597B

Theatre, History, and Performance

Proseminar in 20th Century Drama

Iyunolu Osagie

R 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 47 Burrowes

This is a survey course in the history and performance of drama. The course teaches skills and methodologies that will enable us engage dramatic literature and performance in their historical, cultural, aesthetic, and ideological contexts. The course is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the historical development of 20th century theatre (example Brecht, Ibsen, Miller, Beckett, Hansberry, etc) by examining the foundational principles in plays by Sophocles, Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Shaw, etc. We will examine the features and characteristics that shape 20th century drama by examining some ground-breaking essays on what drama is and is not. In the second part of the course we will examine performance and how meaning is produced in theatre. We will examine the performativity of live theatre and the expectations for and of players and audiences. Why is performance a useful tool for examining culture, politics, and history? We will also engage the development of performance theory in our discussion.

Requirement: Class participation, a five-page draft (mid term), and a fifteen page final paper.

597C

Multilinguistic Writing

Translingual Writing and Transcultural Communication in Globalization

Xiaoye You and Suresh Canagarajah

W 6:35 PM – 9:35 PM; 7 Burrowes

The global flows of capital, information, cultural products, and people have increasingly made us aware of our multilingual reality. Language use in our classrooms and communities has always been multilingual rather than monolingual. Around the globe, most people speak more than one language, or speak more than one variation of these languages. In addition, these languages and texts are constantly changing as they come into contact with each other. Even for native speakers of English, writing involves a negotiation of diverse codes and discourses. The construct "translingual" captures the notion that writing and communication go beyond the separation of languages into static and monolithic products. What does the translingual perspective mean for research and teaching in applied linguistics, communication, education, and English studies? Adopting a translingual approach, this class will examine creativity, meaning construction, and genre norms in literary and non-literary writing. The course will lead to reconfiguring disciplinary constructs in composition, applied linguistics, speech communication, and literature to accommodate translingual communication. Class readings include *Cross-language*

597D

Critical Pedagogies

Tina Chen

T 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 213 Buckout

Critical pedagogy is an approach to teaching and curriculum informed by critical social theory that "... seeks to understand and critique the historical and sociopolitical context of schooling and to develop pedagogical practices that aim not only to change the nature of schooling, but also the wider society" (Pennycook). A key distinction is made between two types of education: banking education occurs when the teacher attempts to transfer the contents of his/her mind into those of the students whereas transformative education (that is, true critical pedagogy) is what develops when education proceeds by means of dialogue between teacher and student concerning real-world issues meaningful to the students, with the intent of encouraging and actively supporting students' political and personal development. Inherent in this is the idea that students and teacher act upon their sociopolitical surroundings as a result of what takes place in their classes. This course will provide a general overview of critical pedagogy—its definitions, history, key concepts, and major theorists—and focus on some of the ways in which critical pedagogy theory has impacted various disciplines and their respective theoretical traditions, such as postmodernism, feminism, and critical race theory. Some of the theorists we will read include: Karl Marx, Paolo Freire, Henry Giroux, bell hooks, Peter Maclaren, Patti Lather, Bill Readings, Jane Gallop, and Pamela Caughie.

597E

The New Environment Non-Fiction

Ian Marshal/Robert Burkholder

M 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 207 Burrowes

For decades, non-fiction writers have sought to make readers care about environmental problems. The classic work of eco-advocacy, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, appeared almost 50 years ago. But the genre has changed considerably since Carson helped to inspire the modern environmental movement. Carson joined the poetry of nature writing with the measured tones of science. She did not write about herself. Nothing in the book would make a reader laugh. In the last 10 years, however, environmental non-fiction has become hipper. The authors usually combine polemic with aspects of others genres – memoir, travelogue, even science fiction. Some of the best recent work is quite funny.

The new environmental non-fiction raises many provocative questions. What has changed in the environmental movement, the national political scene, and the cultural milieu to make new forms of eco-advocacy seem necessary and compelling? What do writers gain and lose by breaking with the old narrative structures and rhetorical styles? What do the new works tell us about the challenge of writing effectively about environmental issues in the 21st century?

The heart of this seminar will be critical readings of exemplary works of the new environmental non-fiction. To build a foundation for that critical reading, we will devote a week to the history of the environmental movement and a week to the nature-writing tradition. We also will read several older works of eco-advocacy. The major assignment of the seminar will be a paper on an aspect of the new environmental journalism, and the seminar will conclude with a Saturday conference where students will present their work.

This course is supported by an Institute for the Arts and Humanities Collaborative Teaching grant.

597F

What's Love Got to do with it?: Science, Medicine And Affect

Chloe Silverman

W 10:10 AM – 1:10 PM; 103 Pond

This interdisciplinary graduate seminar will act as an introduction to the role of affect in scientific and biomedical theories and practices. Although emotion is often portrayed as a liability, something that undermines the objectivity of value-neutral, unbiased scientific work, this course begins from the premise that paying close attention to the accounts of scientists about their own work suggests instead that emotion plays a central role in scientific work and careers. Readings for the course will be drawn from the philosophy of affect, gender studies, science studies, and the history of science and biomedicine.