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## English Graduate Courses Spring 2013

**502**

**Theory and Teaching Comp**

**Keith Gilyard**

**T 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 7 Burrowes Building**

This pro-seminar introduces students to the field of Composition Studies with emphasis on the research developments and intellectual exchanges that have marked the discipline's emergence. Students will develop their ideas about what it means to teach writing; become familiar with methods for studying composition; discuss issues surrounding the politics of writing, language education, and educational policy with particular focus on linguistically diverse student populations; and articulate how they would use composition scholarship to help them work (practice) in classrooms.

**512**

**Writing of Fiction**

**Elizabeth Kadetsky**

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

In this semester's graduate fiction workshop, I will encourage you to be creative, to break rules with cognizance, to read-read-read and then forget everything you've read, to write from where you dream, to get into a trance, to write all the time and admit only to yourself and your writing colleagues that every other responsibility gets in the way, to write your own writing—no one else's, to write with vision, to be fierce, to take no prisoners, to make a scene, to read Charles Baxter's essays, to protect neither yourself nor anyone else, to be mean, be funny, make your narrator likeable but flawed, or break that rule but know why, get left-brain-language out of your left brain, to listen to Beethoven or the PJ Harvey or Alan Vega while or while you're not writing or listen to something else. To listen to music to learn rhythm. I'll also lead course members in advanced fiction readings focusing on collections of short stories and novellas that cohere in some way, whether through overt linking, echoing of time or place, or simply a deliberate sensibility, thematic center or style on the part of the author.

**513**

**Writing Poetry**

**First Books**

**Julia Kasdorf**

**M 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 47 Burrowes Building**

This workshop is inspired by a curiosity about the construction of first books. We will read books produced early in the careers of contemporary and Modern poets with an interest in discovering the ways that poets have gone about assembling first (or nearly first) collections, and with a concern for the decisions that an emerging author must make prior to the publication of the first manuscript. How does the title, order, arrangement into sections (or not) influence the movement and meaning of a book of poems? At what point does one begin to think beyond the individual poem and begin writing toward a greater whole? We'll consider journal and chap book publication as initial moves toward the first book. And we'll consider the relevance of poetry, and especially books of poetry. So that we can sustain a serious and evolving conversation about publication and book making while also paying careful attention to the poems students will be writing, the course will combine lots of reading, discussion, writing and workshop critique. Students can expect to draft a new poem for workshop and to read the equivalent of one new book or lengthy article every week.

515

**Writing Non-Fiction**

**Toni Jensen**

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

This semester's graduate nonfiction workshop will focus on writing and reading contemporary creative nonfiction that is diverse in its subgenre and form. What happens if literary journalism is told by more than one narrator? How do segmented essays shift and disrupt the linear time of memoir? How much more of the "truthiness" debate can we all stand? We'll explore these and other questions from the world of nonfiction, with an emphasis on crafting new work, revising it, and sending it out for publication by semester's end.

522

**Beowulf**

**Scott Smith**

**M 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 7 Burrowes Building**

This seminar is devoted to the monumental Old English poem *Beowulf*. Surviving only in a single damaged manuscript dated to approximately 1000, the poem has become a 'canonical' text since its first full translation into modern English prose by J. M. Kemble in 1837. *Beowulf* has also maintained a presence in modern popular culture, inspiring numerous feature films, novels, comics, and games, while Seamus Heaney's lauded translation from 2000 earned the poem renewed 'serious' attention in the new millennium. In this course we will read this complex and rewarding Old English poem in full, considering points of language, style, and interpretation. The course also addresses key critical issues surrounding the poem: the *Beowulf*-manuscript, dating, sources and analogues, structure, style, and reception. ENGL 521 Old English Language (or its equivalent) is a prerequisite for the course.

541

**Medieval Practices of Reading: Reading the Arthurian Legend, Reading Troy**

**Caroline Eckhardt**

**W 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM: 430 Burrowes Building**

Two great secular narratives of the European Middle Ages — the Arthurian legends and the Trojan War tales — both complemented and contested each other in providing constructions of the past that were used again and again in new contexts, whether as nostalgic precedents with implied critiques of the present, as ethical models for proper and improper behavior, or as political and nation-building propaganda.

Sometimes these two narratives intersect, with the Trojan story set as an antecedent to the Arthurian era, as in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* (12th century); or in the framing stanzas at the beginning and ending of Sir *Gawain and the Green Knight* (14th century); or in the career of William Caxton, England's first printer and an extraordinarily influential figure at the ostensible juncture of the medieval and early modern periods: the first book ever printed in English was Caxton's Troy collection (ca. 1475), followed a few years later by his printing of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (1484) and Malory's *Morte Darthur* (1485).

After a glance at Geoffrey's *History*, our course will include the two most important English Troy versions, Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and Lydgate's *Troy Book*, along with major Arthurian works: *Gawain and the Greek Knight*, the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*, the Stanzaic *Morte Arthur*, selections from Brut chronicles and from Malory. Excerpts from continental works, such as Guido delle Colonne's *History of the Destruction of Troy*, will provide essential comparative contexts. We will emphasize medieval practices of reading and literary circulation, considering topics such as how reading was performed (silently? aloud? privately? at court? to family groups? by women?); literacy and authorship (who was producing and reading these texts? — Lydgate was a monk, Malory a soldier, a prisoner, and perhaps a scoundrel); how allegory and prophecy were deployed; and why both bodies of legend are still widely productive today.

We will study medieval texts not only through recent printed editions but also through the archival record of manuscripts, often in facsimile. The course will include workshop opportunities for practice in palaeography, the reading of medieval handwriting. Prior experience with manuscripts or with Middle English is not necessary.

**Course expectations:** Class participation, including brief exercises or responsibility for leading discussion (30%); a project to be proposed as a one-page abstract and then presented orally as if it were a short conference paper (30%); a final paper or project written in the format of a journal article (40%).

**543**

**Early 17<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Marcy North**

**F 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 7 Burrowes Building**

For readers in early seventeenth-century England, anonymity was a commonplace authorial pose and textual condition. The rise of print and the emergence of modern authorship do not seem to have quelled either the practice of hiding an author or the interest in hidden authorship. Thus, to fully understand the dynamic and complex experiences of early authors and readers, we need to find a way to reincorporate anonymity into the history of authorship. Unfortunately, there is not yet a methodology in place for the study of anonymity. What anonymity is and was is open to debate. Is anonymity one practice? Is it a definable quality of a text or simply the perspective of an outsider looking in? Does the practice slowly die in the Gutenberg era? Can and should modern editors preserve the anonymity of an early author? How does the study of anonymity overlap with studies of intellectual property and copyright history, the study of political debate, and the history of the author? This graduate seminar puts these questions on the table along with a wide array of early anonymous works, including the pamphlets of the Jacobean antifeminist controversy such as Constantia Munda's *Worming of a Mad Dog*, the dramatic *Parnassus* trilogy written by university students, popular satires such as *News from Graves End*, Stuart libels and anti-libels, manuscript poetry and printed miscellanies such as *Wit's Recreation*, Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Milton's *Comus*, Denham's *Cooper's Hill*, and a 1657 comment on anonymous satire, *Life of a Satirical Puppy*. Students will have the chance to study both canonical and non-canonical authors, from John Donne to Mary Tattle-well and Joan Hit-him-home, to develop skills in archival research, and to complete an extended archival/research project. The focus of our reading will be in the genres of satire, parody, libel, and lyric poetry, but students will be able to explore other genres in their individual research. I welcome students working in other periods, and, whenever possible, I allow students to connect the course themes to their specialty in their individual projects.

**546**

**Milton**

**Laura Knoppers**

**T 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 47 Burrowes Building**

This class introduces John Milton's major poetry in the context of his life and times and with attention to current critical issues. Much of the course will be focused on Milton's major poems: his early masque, *Comus*, his grand epic, *Paradise Lost*, his brief epic, *Paradise Regained*, and his late tragedy, *Samson Agonistes*. We will also explore Milton's influence on the Romantics, looking at William Blake's water-color illustrations of Milton's poetry and at Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (concluding with film clips from *Bride of Frankenstein* and *Young Frankenstein*). Requirements: Faithful attendance and spirited participation; oral report and final research paper.

**562**

**Pro-Seminar in Victorian Literature**

**Lisa Sternlieb**

**M 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 47 Burrowes Building**

We will cover as many highlights of the Victorian period as time permits. Authors will include Charlotte Bronte, Robert & Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Wilkie Collins, Charles Darwin, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, George Meredith, John Stuart Mill, Florence Nightingale, Christina and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Ruskin, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Alfred, Lord Tennyson, & Oscar Wilde.

**564**

**19<sup>th</sup> Century American Literature**

**Beyond Nation: Redrawing the Boundaries of Nineteenth-Century American Literary Studies**

**Sean Goudie**

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

This graduate course will take up a range of paradigms—including the transatlantic, hemispheric, transnational, planetary, and others—testing their possibilities and limitations in the context of select American (broadly understood) authors and texts from the long nineteenth century. Course requirements will include substantial readings (in English) in primary and secondary sources, several response papers, a class presentation, and a formal semester essay (15-20 pp.).

567

**Making and Re-making Meaning in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century African American/Black Atlantic Writing**

**Shirley Moody**

**R 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM: 47 Burrowes Building**

In this seminar we will explore how eighteenth and nineteenth century black writers engaged in the process of making and re-making meanings as related to a number of key concepts and practices informing the complex discourses of slavery, revolution, ownership, emancipation, freedom, fraternity, equality, and democracy. Beginning with eighteenth century memoirs, sermons, travel narratives, speeches and narratives of enslavement and freedom, we will explore how black writers, reeling from the profound cultural dislocation and loss caused by the transatlantic slave trade, created new vocabularies, images and interpretative frames to express and convey alternative perspectives on the “New World” and the place of Africans, African Americans and slavery within that New World. Moving into and through the nineteenth century, we will consider a number of literary forms and genres, exploring how writers negotiated existing conventions, ideologies, marketplace politics and reader expectations to create authority, agency and subjectivity within their literary works. We will consider the multiple forms of intertextuality that emerged as writers variously engaged African, African American and Western literary and oral traditions. Our readings will be attentive to the intersectional politics of race, class, gender, and sexuality, and may include works by authors such as Olaudah Equiano, Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, Briton Hammon, Nancy Prince, Lucy Terry, Phillis Wheatley, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, William Wells Brown, Anna Julia Cooper, Pauline Hopkins, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Charles Chesnutt and others. Course requirements include five written responses to course readings, an abstract, and an in-class conference-style presentation that students will then expand into a seminar paper.

570

**The Writer as Critic: Reviewing Literary Fiction, Non-Fiction and Poetry**

**Robin Becker**

**W 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM: 47 Burrowes Building**

In this class, students will learn to write and revise for publication seven book reviews and review-essays. We begin with the 200-word Publishers Weekly-style review and conclude the semester with two 1,500-word review essays. Throughout the semester, students will research journals and magazines, developing a class Reviewer's Notebook. Simultaneously, students query publishers for review copies and request books. Published book reviews, articles on reviewing and the daily **New York Times** comprise our weekly reading. For each writing project, students revise and re-submit reviews for peer-group "sign off" and professor approval. Finally, the student submits the review to an editor who has expressed a willingness to read the review. Students then work with the editor to make appropriate editorial changes to the piece. All students will read and review work in all three genres.

576

**F. Scott Fitzgerald and the American 1920s**

**James West**

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

In this seminar we will read the major works of the American novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald and will study his life and professional career. We'll read the four completed novels, a fifth unfinished novel, the major short fiction, a selection of the essays, and a selection of the letters (one of his major achievements). We'll read a short biography of FSF and study his famous marriage to Zelda Sayre, who was herself an accomplished writer (we'll read two of her short stories --- students are free to read more, including her novel *Save Me the Waltz*). Fitzgerald was one of the most successful writers of his time, earning over \$300,000 during his twenty-year career, the equivalent of about \$3M in today's dollars. His relationship with his publisher (Charles Scribner's Sons) and his editor there (Maxwell Perkins) will be the subject of one of our meetings; we'll also learn about FSF's complicated relationship to the "slick" magazine market, especially to the *Saturday Evening Post*. Our special project will be to read Fitzgerald's last completed novel, *Tender Is the Night*, in its serial text --- reading it with two- or three-week breaks between installments, as readers would have done in 1934, in the four months before the novel appeared in book form. We'll record our reactions and fashion them into an article for the *F. Scott Fitzgerald Review*.

577

**“More Human than Human”**

**Michael Berube**

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

A tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing: well, that's life. In this course we'll read a fascinating array of narratives that deal with ... narratives, as understood by and sometimes as told by characters with cognitive disabilities. We'll also explore some narratives about "monsters," "aliens," and other experimental subjects, and we'll ask what these narratives might be suggesting about us humans. The course will be one hundred percent free of zombies, however, on the grounds that zombies make for really boring narrators. Texts: Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*; Edgar Rice Burroughs, *Tarzan*; William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (but of course); Philip K. Dick, *Martian Time-Slip*; Paul Park, *Celestis*; Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*; Elizabeth Moon, *The Speed of Dark*; Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*; Atwood, *The Year of the Flood*.

**584**

**Studies in Rhetoric (Burke)**

**Debbie Hawhee/Jack Selzer**

**M 6:35 PM – 9:35 PM; 7 Burrowes Building**

This seminar will examine carefully the work of perhaps the most important, thoughtful, interesting, and original American rhetorical and literary critic/theorist of the twentieth century. It will include a careful consideration of Burke's major theoretical and critical work: *Counter-Statement* (1931), *Permanence and Change* (1935), *Attitudes toward History* (1937), *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941), *A Grammar of Motives* (1945), *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1950), and *The Rhetoric of Religion* (1961). But there will also be an opportunity to explore Burke's relationships with other thinkers and writers, schools of thinkers and writers, and the social, literary, and artistic developments of the last century; thus the course will be relevant to students interested in rhetoric, theory, American literature, and cultural studies. Students will be able to explore the pile of primary materials by Burke--over a thousand notes, letters, and other documents--contained in Pattee Library; and they will investigate a particular subject in detail so that seminar papers might well lead to publications. Our goals are pretty simple, in short: we'll engage in a version of rhetorical criticism in an effort to achieve together a better understanding of Kenneth Burke's work; and we'll work together to get our work published.

**597A**

**Ethnic American Literature**

**Reading Beyond Race**

**Tina Chen**

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

This course examines contemporary Ethnic American literary production by "reading beyond race." Specifically, the course focuses on texts that challenge what critic Gene Andrew Jarrett calls "racial realism" by examining texts and authors that disrupt the conventions—narrative, thematic, ideological, stylistic, and characterological—structuring Ethnic American literatures. We will address issues that have been historically important in the emergence of Ethnic American Studies as a discipline (identity, canonicity, in/authenticity) even as we consider how changing political and social contexts, and the discourse of post-racialism, impact the ways we read and understand contemporary Ethnic American literature.

**597B**

**Afrosurrealist Narrative**

**Kevin Bell**

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

Please email instructor for details [kmb47@psu.edu](mailto:kmb47@psu.edu)

**597C**

**Philip K. Dick Exegesis**

**Rich Doyle**

**F 12:20 PM – 3:20 PM; 7 Burrowes Building**

*This brings me to my frightening premise. I seem to be living in my own novels more and more.* Philip K. Dick  
In scores of novels, hundreds of short stories and thousands of pages of *The Exegesis*, the American writer Philip K. Dick grappled with the nature of reality and life in a world increasingly saturated with the technologies and metaphors of information. While information theory (Shannon), molecular biology (Watson and Crick), and physics (Wheeler) all began to scientifically model reality as fundamentally composed of information through the figures of "entropy", the "genetic code" and "bits" well before the emergence of technologies such as the Web, Dick found himself living in a reality he characterized as "nailed by information." Through rhetorical analysis of Dick's novels, essays and *The Exegesis*, we'll begin to map Dick's rhetorical cosmos where changes in the *logos* effect changes in material reality through the feedback loops of consciousness and information: Perhaps not surprisingly for a writer, PKD found that different scripts yielded, for him, different realities.

So too will we read widely each week in the sources of PKD's cosmology - e.g. popular physics texts of the period, Plotinus, The Pre-Socratics, Maimonides, Spinoza - as referenced in The Exegesis, Dick's nearly nine thousand page mostly hand written and unnumbered manuscript. Thanks to the Estate of Philip K. Dick, students will have access to a secured digital copy of the entirety of The Exegesis for the class as well as the volume of excerpts published in November of 2011. Along the way we will work together to compose a model of rhetorical practice for a world increasingly composed of, and altered by, information.

Texts;

Philip K. Dick, The Exegesis

Philip K. Dick, A Scanner Darkly

Philip K. Dick, The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch

Philip K. Dick, Ubik

Philip K. Dick, Valis

Hussey, Edward. The Pre-Socratics ( PKD's source on the Pre-Socratics)

Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed ( Book 1, <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/gfp/index.htm>)

Plotinus, The Six Enneads ( PKD's source on Plotinus) (<http://classics.mit.edu/Plotinus/enneads.html>)

Requirements:

- Short responses to each week's readings, posted on our class wiki
- A short (1200 word) rhetorical analysis of one of the class texts, posted on our class wiki
- A lengthier (3000-5000 word) analytic essay on one of the class texts, exploring both secondary sources and an original reading of a class text, posted on our class wiki

## **597D**

### **Oddity, Unreason, Modernity**

**Jonathan Eburne**

**W 2:30 PM – 5:00 PM; 430 Burrowes Building & By Appt.**

Do we live in an age of unreason? In an era of global fiscal crisis and the increasing polarization of political, class, and ideological positions, we seem to be hearing more from pseudoscientists and other fringe thinkers than ever before. In spite of decades of well-intentioned efforts to purge contemporary thinking of such “bad” ideas, they seem to be redoubling their influence.

To what extent, though, might such purgative efforts in fact contribute to the restriction and even eradication of good sense? And to what extent might the very history of modernity— and the very promise of Enlightenment reason—be instead bound up with the errancies and excesses of unreason? This course seeks to discern and study forms of oddity and unreason that do not always spring from false consciousness or the politics of hate, but which instead suggest alternative means for processing information, institutions for disclosing meaning, and ways of transmitting knowledge. Not all bad ideas are bad in the same way; this course will study the histories and permutations of what Michel Foucault called “discontinuous knowledges” throughout post-Enlightenment thought. To study the history and resonance of such knowledges is to recognize their pervasive role throughout intellectual history.

Course texts may include literary works by Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Brockden Brown, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, William Blake, Charles Baudelaire, Lady Gregory, William Butler Yeats, Mary Butts, Djuna Barnes, Georges Bataille, Robert Graves, Leonora Carrington, Jorge Luis Borges, Angela Carter, and Ishmael Reed; as well as writings by James George Frazer, Frances Yates, Lewis Spence, George Mead, as well as texts by Giordano Bruno, Helena Blavatsky, G.I.

Gurdjieff, Carl Jung, Joseph Campbell Immanuel Velikovsky, Erich von Daniken, L. Ron Hubbard, Charles Fort, and others. We will also read from critical and philosophical works by Adorno and Horkheimer, Nietzsche, Foucault, Cixous, Derrida, Deleuze and Guattari, Butler, and Zizek; as well as contemporary writings by Susan Jacoby, Richard Wolin, Harry Frankfurt, Alan Sokal, Isabelle Stengers, and Michael Gordin.

## **597E**

### **Gender and Science Reproduction**

**Susan Squier**

**R 9:05 AM – 12:05 PM; 118 Willard**

This course will introduce you to some of the core concepts in the studies of gender and science which you will use as tools as

you explore the specific case of reproduction. Among these are Canguilhem's distinction between the abnormal and the anomalous and his concepts of the normal, norming, and normativity; Fleck's notion of a thought community; Sandra Harding's strong objectivity; Bruno Latour's notions of black boxing, literary inscription as a scientific practice and the laboratory as the site where a fact is constructed, and his Rules of Method and Principles for studying what he calls "science in action"; Adele Clarke's analysis of the disciplining of the reproductive sciences; Hannah Landecker's attention to the infrastructure and the operationalization of biological time; Donna Haraway's notion of co-evolution; Cooper, Waldby and Mitchell's attention to clinical labor, the creation of biovalue, and tissue economies; Lynn Margulis's work on symbiogenesis and Mira Hyrd's work on reproduction as a concept post-symbiogenesis.

We will then turn our attention to reproduction, as one of the prime sites for the production and management of life: as a process, a symbolic object, a set of relationships, a group of technologies used to link and divide species, sexes, and races, a textual trope and theme, and most recently, a site for new theoretical work in feminist new materialism. Feminist science studies—the systematic exploration of gender and science—has provided a powerful lens for exploring how reproduction functions as a tool for cultural analysis and literary production and interpretation. This class will consider the meaning of reproduction at three scales: the animal (including the agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine), the human (including human reproductive medicine, eugenics, and assisted reproduction), and the cellular and subcellular (from tissue culture and genomics to symbiogenesis). Because feminist science studies as currently practiced involves active dialogue with, rather than simply detached study of, bench researchers, a special feature of this class will be its connection to the Center for Reproductive Biology and Health at Penn State, which will provide us the opportunity to meet with and shadow laboratory scientists working in a variety of areas. This will be an opportunity to engage in interview- and ethnography-based observation to complement our readings in the area. Then the final seminar paper will give each student a chance to write about reproduction from one of the perspectives suggested by, or developed in, our readings. Such papers may range from literary critical analyses of a reproductive theme in fiction or poetry or theoretical analyses of reproductive issues (considered from the perspective of cultural studies, women's studies, animal studies, or disability studies, among other perspectives) to science studies analyses of any aspect of reproduction that the seminar has brought to your attention.

Requirements: response papers, book review, laboratory observation, and conference-length final paper.