

English Department
Graduate Course Descriptions
Spring 2012

ENGL 539-01 (26350) MW 4:30-5:45

Romantic Novels

Howard, S.

This course explores novels written during the Romantic period in Britain, beginning with Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, published in 1764 and ending with Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, first published in 1847. We will also read novels by Austen, Edgeworth, Hogg, Radcliffe, Scott, Shelley, Godwin, and Opie. The level of experimentation with generic boundaries varies in these texts: some follow in the line of the realistic, often domestic 18th c. novel of Defoe or Richardson, while others make what Robert Kiely calls "deeply serious efforts to stretch or break through old conventions and to probe areas of experience not approached" by earlier novelists. We will read these novels within their cultural, historical, literary, and national contexts, and we will consider them from a variety of perspectives, using any methodologies which seem appropriate and helpful.

Course Requirements: Active class participation, oral presentations, short paper, long paper, and a comprehensive final exam.

ENGL 549-61 (25544) W 6:00-8:40

19th Century American Women Fiction

Newberry, F.

The course will focus on major novels and stories by significant American women writers published throughout the nineteenth century. The texts will be considered from several perspectives: declarations of (women's) independence; cultural studies; history of the marketplace and strategies of the best seller in relation to feminist issues; domesticity versus professionalism; ideology and ideals of masculinity and femininity; "true" womanhood; and the subversive strategies and "sensational designs" of feminist rhetoric.

Probable Texts: Catherine Maria Sedgwick, Hope Leslie (Rutgers UP); Fanny Fern, Ruth Hall (Rutgers UP); Harriet Beecher Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin (Penguin); Maria Susanna Cummins, The Lamplighter (Rutgers UP); E.D.E.N. Southworth, The Hidden Hand; or Capitola the Madcap (Rutgers UP); Elizabeth Drew Stoddard, The Morgesons (U Pennsylvania P); Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, Selected Stories (Norton); Frances E. W. Harper, Iola Leroy; or, Shadows Uplifted (Oxford UP); Kate Chopin, The Awakening (St. Martin's)

ENGL 556-61 (26352) R 6:00-8:40

Modernism & Feminist Context

Kinnahan, L.

In both Britain and America, the early decades of the twentieth century were marked by a vigorous and often radical movement to advance women's equality in political rights, educational opportunities, labor practices, sexual expression, and medical/reproductive choice and treatment. Gaining a degree of economic and social independence in the late nineteenth century, the "New Woman" was a matter of public attention and debate at the turn of the century, transfiguring into the image of the "feministe" by 1910. How did First Wave Feminism both shape and draw upon ideas of the "modern" that involved writers and artists of the period? How does the literature register the challenges to gender structures wrought by this multi-faceted and often conflicted movement, and how might these very challenges be said to contribute to the experiments in form and subject

matter characterizing Anglo-American "modernisms"? Addressing these questions, we will look at works of fiction, poetry, and non-fiction prose written by American and British writers during the years of 1900-1945 (tentatively including May Sinclair, Gertrude Stein, Sylvia Townsend Warner, Nella Larsen, Mina Loy, Lola Ridge, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Virginia Woolf; short pieces by T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and William Carlos Williams may be included). We will also explore little magazines of the Modernist era, such as *The Freewoman* & *The New Freewoman*, *The Woman Rebel*, *The Egoist*, *Others*, *The New Age*, *Poetry Review*, *Poetry*, *The Little Review*, *Clarion*, and *The Masses* as sites for intersections of feminist and modernist thought, debate, and activity.

ENGL 558-01 (25546) TR 3:05-4:20

Irish Literature

Brannen, A.

This course provides an overview of Irish literature, from 1892 to 2000; that is, from the Irish Revival, through the Counter-Revival, and on into the Non-Revival. We will pay particular attention to politics, religion, and historical context. Much of what we read will originally have been written in Irish; we will, naturally, be reading such works in translation. Authors range from naGopaleen to Joyce, from Yeats to O'Casey.

ENGL 559-61 (25671) T 6:00-8:40

The African Novel

Mirmotahari, E.

Fiction was the preferred medium of most African writers on the eve of—and in the two decades after—"independence" for reconstructing the narratives of Africa's histories. This class will explore those formative Anglophone African novels as they emerged between 1950 and 1980.

We will engage the following formal and epistemological questions; why fiction? How do African novels re-experience history? What sort of relationship do African novels produce between fiction and historical knowledge? How do African novels participate in the terms of their reading and their fate in the western academy? What is the varied genealogy of the novel, as a genre, in sub-Saharan Africa? Writers will include Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Cyprian Ekwesi, Nuruddin Farah, Ken Saro-Wiwa, Bessie Head, Ngugi, and Peter Nazareth.

ENGL 562-61 (21926) M 6:00-8:40

Introduction to Linguistics

Sowards, R.

Why can you say "I am sleepy" and "I'm sleepy" but not "Donna is sleepier than I'm"? Why is "thirteen" pronounced "thirTEEN" in "I'm thirteen" but "THIRteen" in "I have thirteen goats"? How do we know these facts without having been taught them? In this course, we will answer such questions about language through an introductory exploration of linguistics, the science of language. Our topics will include the structure of sentences and words, the sounds of language, and linguistic meaning, with an emphasis on fundamental theoretical issues. Time permitting, we may also explore the distinctive properties of literary language, the mechanisms of language learning, and the role of language in society. **This course fulfills the linguistics/grammar requirement for English Education students.**

ENGL 566-01 (21927) TR 4:30-5:45

Literary Theory

Suh, J.

This course will familiarize you with key terms and works of literary theory. We will consistently and actively engage debates concerning the role of the intellectual, the place of literary studies in society, and the boundaries between literary studies and other disciplines. To these ends, questions for the course include the following: What does cultural production do? What should it do? How does literature shape perception? What is the relationship between literature and human experience, individual or collective? What discoveries in other disciplines have contributed to the modern study of cultural production?

ENGL 691-61 (26342) M 6:00-8:40

Spenser

St. Hilaire, D.

In a survey of American professors of English literature, participants were asked what work of literature they were most ashamed of never having read. The work that won this ignominious distinction was Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. To be sure, it is a daunting work: six books of densely-packed allegory written in a pseudo-archaic idiom. But it is also one of the strangest, wildest pieces of poetry our tradition has to offer. One part religious allegory, one part national epic, and three parts fantasy, *The Faerie Queene* is a thought experiment gone mad, joining a tale of knights and (sometimes cross-dressing) damsels with a world full of monsters, group sex, and one man made of iron wielding a giant flail. In this course, we will be doing our part to move Spenser's epic—along with some of his shorter work—out of the “to read” pile and into a living discourse about nationhood, religion, gender, justice, and literary form.