

Department of English

Graduate Courses

Fall 2008

**6000 Colloquium for Entering Students** **M 4:30-6:25** **Galloway, A.**  
**2 credits.** **2940**

An introduction to practical and theoretical aspects of graduate English studies, conducted with the help of weekly visitors from the English department. There will be regular short readings and brief presentations, but no formal papers. The colloquium is required for all entering PhD students; MFA students are welcome to attend any sessions that interest them.

**6020 Literature and Theory** **MWF 9:05-9:55** **Culler, J.**  
**4 credits.** **(also ENGL 3020, COML 3020/6020)** **8771**

Study of issues in contemporary theoretical debates, with particular attention to structuralism, deconstruction, psychoanalysis, and feminism. Readings by Roland Barthes, Judith Butler, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Barbara Johnson, Jacques Lacan and others.

No previous knowledge of literary theory is assumed.

**6110 Old English** **MWF 10:10-11:00** **Hill, T.**  
**4 credits.** **(also ENGL 3110)** **8985**

The course is intended as an introduction to the Old English language. We will begin with simple prose texts and proceed to poetic texts such as Maldon, *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer* and *The Dream of the Rood*. The primary aim of the course is to learn Old English, but we will discuss the literary issues the texts we cover present. There will be a mid-term and a final exam.

**6171 The Archaeology of the Text from Chaucer Through the Renaissance** **Galloway, A.**  
**4 credits.** **TR 2:55-4:10** **9015**  
**(also ENGL 4170)**

This seminar will explore and write about manuscripts, handwriting, books, printers, and more general issues impinging on these during the formative period of modern English culture—from Chaucer’s period through the Renaissance. You will study and transcribe old handwriting, learn to describe manuscripts and incunables, and explore how these things matter to literary and cultural history. As talking points for the class we will use the textual evidence and history of Chaucer’s *Wife of Bath’s Prologue*, and the textual evidence and history of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*; around those, we will do regular exercises while working on independent projects. The final paper will be a 15-20 page discussion of and partial critical edition of a particular work.

**6205 Democracy/Limits of Citizenship** **T 10:10-12:35** **Farred, G.**  
**4 credits.** **(Also ASRC 6205)** **12801**

This course is an investigation of the kinds of work – political, philosophical, theoretical, ethical – that the discourse of democracy and citizenship does in our historical moment. At a juncture when “democracy” is offered, everywhere it seems, as an elixir, the cure-all for political problems in every corner of the globe, this course intends to think democracy as, at once, an unfulfillable and constitutively necessary project – borrowing here, in considerable measure, from the work of Jacques Ranciere. Democracy is employed here as much as a critique of the violence done to human communities as it provides a way of interrogating how hegemonic the discourse – if not always the practice – of democracy – in its many guises: human rights, “free and fair elections,” the franchise, and so – has become. Is human rights discourse simply represent strategies of authorization for the UN or the USA to intervene in the affairs of “sovereign” nations? Do events in the Darfur region in Southern Sudan or the ethnic cleansing practiced by Serbs in the 1990s constitute so gross a violation against vulnerable constituencies as to merit invasion by foreign nations or entities (such as the UN or NATO)? What violence does human rights discourse sanction, what attacks on sovereignty does it authorize? What does “democracy” mean in those, and other, specific instances?

This course, through a series of readings, from Heidegger to Arendt, from Giorgio Agamben to Elizabeth Jelin, from Derrida’s notion of the “rogue state” to Ranciere’s difficult belief in democracy, what I will offer as “disorderly democracy,” authors with distinct conceptions of the politics of human rights, thinkers who write from very different historical moments, addressing themselves to very different constituencies, seeks to explore how we might think critically – and always ethically – about any notion of “democracy,” citizenship and political belonging.

By reading “philosophically” or theoretically, the intent here is to open “democracy” and citizenship up to the kind of scrutiny that it rarely receives in our vernacular deployments of the term. How, in other words, do we think “democracy” and citizenship in and for our moment? Or, more provocatively, should we be thinking these notions at all? Should we be thinking beyond the limits of both “democracy” and citizenship? What should such a thinking look like? Or, is it the only discourse that will allow us to redress, as some might argue, the violations and the political hopes of our day?

**6220 Renaissance Poetry**  
**4 credits.**

**W 2:30-4:25**  
**(also COML 4500/6500, ITAL 4500/6500)**

**Kennedy, W.**  
**11732**

A reading and discussion of key texts in lyric poetry from Italian, French, English, and other European literatures of the Renaissance. Topic for Fall 2008: Economic transactions and exchanges in the poetry of Petrarch, Michelangelo, Labe, Ronsard, Shakespeare, Mary Wroth, and others.

**6222 Rhetoric in Early Modern England**  
**4 credits.**

**M 1:25-3:20**

**Mann, J.**  
**9067**

Rhetoric ruled in early modern England, a pursuit at the center of education, courtiership, religious practice, and literary production. In addition to providing a mode of contact with the classical world, rhetorical training also supplied English writers with the means to negotiate radical shifts in politics, religion, and family structure. This course will explore how early modern writers imagine rhetoric’s power and its limits, its value to the individual and to society, and its relationship to poetic composition. We will focus our reading on rhetorical handbooks and theories of poesy, concluding with the critique of rhetoric made by proponents of the “new science” at the end of the seventeenth century. Readings will include Plato, Cicero, Quintilian, Erasmus, Wilson, Puttenham, Bacon, Glanvill, Sprat, and Wilkins.

**6300 Aesthetics in the Eighteenth Century**  
**4 credits.**

**W 3:35-5:30**  
**(also COML 6300)**

**Saccamano, N.**  
**8153**

A study of the emergence and development of aesthetics as a theoretical discipline specifying the genetic process, forms, effects, and judgments peculiar to art. Through readings of primarily British and French criticism and philosophy, we will examine the empirical and psychological basis of aesthetics as indicative of the progress or crisis of modernity in the period; but we will also investigate Kant’s attempt to supply a transcendental foundation for aesthetics in a self-reflexive subject toward the end of the century. Some topics that will orient our discussion: the relation of empirical epistemology and linguistic theory to neoclassical conceptions of figurative language; the consequences of an aesthetics of the sublime for formal and generic theories of literature and art; mimesis as resemblance and mimesis as the work of nature and genius; tragedy and the pleasures of pain; taste, ideology, and the socio-historical conditions of aesthetic production and reception. Of particular concern will be the complex relation of aesthetics to ethics throughout the period. Authors may include: Longinus, Boileau, Du Bos, Locke, Pope, Shaftesbury, Hume, Burke, Lessing, Rousseau, and Kant. Time and interest permitting, we might also discuss some recent work on Enlightenment aesthetics, ethics, and politics.

**6310 Melodrama, Modernism and Modernity**  
**4 credits.**

**T 2:30-4:25**  
**(also THETR 6300)**

**Salvato, N.**  
**11729**

This course examines the history of melodrama and the various theories, often sharply divergent, that have developed about and around it. Along with the practitioners and critics of melodrama, we ask: Should melodrama be understood as a specific genre, a set of related genres, or as a mode of expression (typically characterized as excessive) that crosses media and periods? Why might melodrama be distinctively modern, and how ought we to define modernity? Is there a pre-modern or early modern melodrama? At the same time that we seek answers to these questions, we will trouble the commonly held assumption that melodrama is incompatible with literary and theatrical modernism(s) and will rather identify the complex ways in which modernist and melodramatic expressions are imbricated with and implicated by each other. Key authors may include playwrights Euripides, Pixerecourt, Colman, Aiken, Shaw, Artaud, Brecht, Stein, Williams, Shepard, and Ludlam; novelists Dickens, Balzac, and James; and theorists Bentley, Booth, Brooks, Elsaesser, Lowe, Singer, and Williams.

**6390 Studies in Romantic Literature: (Wordsworth) Byron, Hazlitt, Keats, Clare, and the Issues of Second Generation Romanticism** T 1:25-3:20 Parker, R. 9068  
4 credits.

Readings chiefly in lyric and narrative verse by younger writers of second decade of the nineteenth century—but with some attention to the issues raised in response to the course of Wordsworth’s career—and in dramatic works (chiefly by Shelley and Byron) and fiction, all partly in the context of political upheaval and repression in the aftermath both of the French Revolution and the succeeding Napoleonic empire. Some attention to issues posed in recent critical works. Also considered will be Coleridge’s recently published translation of *Faustus, from the German of Goethe*.

**6450 England and Empire** R 1:25-3:20 Sawyer, P. 9017  
4 credits.

Beginning with the construction of nation and difference in the poetry of Tennyson and the fiction of Charlotte Bronte, we will move on to consider Arabia, India, Africa, the Far East, and the Caribbean, as a brief survey of how the British empire looked from the centers of Victorian culture. Three specific areas of focus will be the link between domestic disorder and colonized populations; the theory and practice of travel writing; and the gendering of empire. The course will also function as an introduction to archival research and to the work of such recent theorists of nationalism and colonialism as Edward Said, Benedict Anderson, Mary Louise Pratt, Sara Suleri, and others. Readings will include *Heart of Darkness*, *King Solomon’s Mines*, *Kim*, and Kipling’s Indian stories; and travel writings and other narratives by Harriet Martineau, Richard and Isabel Burton, Mary Kingsley, G. M. Trevelyan, and Isabella Bird.

**6741 Collaboration in Modernist Literature and Culture** R 1:25-3:20 Braddock, J. 12539  
4 credits.

This class studies modernist literature from the perspective of its collective forms. We will look at how many of the signal texts of modernism were produced, circulated, and promoted collaboratively; but we will also work to define the character of such collective forms of cultural production as the coterie, the literary movement or renaissance, the school of thought. More, perhaps, than any other period in literary history, the early twentieth century has been identified with factional or cooperative literary “schools”: Imagism, Vorticism, the New Negro movement, Objectivism. The project of this seminar is to explore how these movements were brought into being and what kind of collaborative (and also antagonistic) work they enabled. We will consider literary forms that are particular to these kinds of literary formations (the manifesto, the occasional anthology, the roman-à-clef). We will also be asking about the relationship of larger literary and cultural institutions to these movements and writers. And we will ask how editing practices or the promotion of these “little renaissances” (in Pound’s phrase) qualify or complicate those categories of individual authorship that once seemed so central to modernism’s institutionalization.

**6811 James Baldwin** T 7:30-9:30 p.m. Woubshet, D. 9083  
4 credits. (also FGSS 6811, AMST 6811)

James Baldwin is one of the most discerning interpreters of the English language and among the shrewdest interlocutors of American life. This course will examine his writings (novels, essays, plays, screenplays, and poems) against a variegated historical backdrop. We will take an in-depth look at his oeuvre, paying careful attention to style and form, and also how his work pries open America’s literary, cultural and political imagination. Among the themes for consideration are: familial and broader kinship ties; the politics of racial and sexual difference; individual and collective death; and, love. Readings will include: *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, *Giovanni’s Room*, *the Amen Corner*, *Another Country*, *Just Above My Head*, and *the Price of the Ticket*.

**6850 Postcolonial Poetry and the Poetics of Relation** W 12:20-2:15 Monroe, J. 11309  
4 credits. (also ENGL 4840, COML 4290/6350, FREN 4350/6350, SPAN 4350/6350)

What kinds of poetry might be usefully characterized as “postcolonial” and what are the stakes of such a designation? What relation do specific poetic features have to geopolitical, cultural, historical, economic circumstances, and to the condition(s) of what has come to be called the a “poetics of relation,” attending as well to our own situatedness as readers—perhaps also, though not necessarily, as writers—of poetry within U.S. (and) academic context(s), this seminar will focus on Caribbean and U.S. poetry as especially fruitful sites for exploring a diversity of approaches to these and related questions concerning postcoloniality, poetry, community, language, culture, and identity.

**6971 The City in Ruins**  
**4 credits.**

**M 1:25-3:20**  
**(also COML 6760, FREN 6970)**

**Hertz, N.**  
**10836**

As long as there have been cities, people have been fascinated by their destruction. We shall examine that fascination, beginning with the earliest Mesopotamian city-lament poems and concluding with contemporary responses to the ruins of the World Trade Center, of Baghdad (back to Mesopotamia, still lamentable after all these years!), and of the decay of inner-city neighborhoods. Topics will include: medieval iconography of ruins, the Renaissance rediscovery of Rome, eighteenth-century and Romantic painting and poetry, the combination of forces (urban renewal, urban warfare) that demolished sections of central Paris (1848-1871), and some recent speculative writing on ruins by Benjamin, Derrida and Sebald.

**6995 Race and Time**  
**4 credits.**

**R 10:10-12:05**

**Wong, S.**  
**10839**

This course will turn on three key terms: race, comparison, and time. What do these terms have to do with each other? What does it mean to be in time, or out of time? What are some other ways of inhabiting time, or of being inhabited by time? What is the time of the racialized subject? How might such a temporality be represented in literature? We'll take up these questions by drawing on a range of writings: literary, anthropological, philosophical, linguistic, psychoanalytical and sociological. These may include (but not be limited to) selections from Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other*; Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*; Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*; Thomas Bender and David Wellbery, *Chronotypes: The Construction of Time*; Langston Hughes, *I Wonder As I Wander*; Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*; Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other*; and Carlos Bulosan, *America Is In the Heart*.

**7800 MFA Seminar: Poetry**  
**5 credits.**

**T 3:35-5:30**

**Morgan, R.**  
**5646**

**7801 MFA Seminar: Fiction**  
**5 credits.**

**T 3:35-5:30**

**Viramontes, H.**  
**5648**

**7850 Close Reading for Writers: The Perceptive I**  
**4 credits.**

**W 1:25-3:20**

**McClane, K.**  
**2971**

Many of our finest poets and fiction writers have become seduced for good reason by creative non-fiction. These include James Baldwin, Mark Doty, Annie Dillard, Edwidge Danticat, Jamaica Kincaid, and James Carroll, to name but a few. In this seminar we'll read some of the best works of contemporary creative non-fiction, examining how the author's previous genre has influenced his or her work, and why, in this time and place, creative non-fiction has become so important to many of our best writers. Participants will be encouraged to produce their own creative non-fiction—either memoir or the interpretive essay—and to have fun with a form that, like all good art, permits one to instruct, discover, and delight. Reading will include works by the authors mentioned above and by some excellent writers closer to home, including our own Maureen McCoy and Helena Viramontes. This class is limited to MFA and PhD students. It is not open to undergraduates. No exceptions.

**7920 Prospectus Seminar**  
**1 credit.**

**T 1:30-3:00**

**Gilbert, R.**  
**11540**

Since the graduate field of English has instituted the requirement that within the six months following the A exam students write a prospectus, to be approved by their special committee and filed in the graduate office, we last year instituted a prospectus seminar to provide a venue for students to reflect collectively on conceiving a thesis and writing a prospectus. As a result of this successful experiment, the department strongly recommends participation in the seminar by all candidates who have passed their A exams and have not yet completed a prospectus.

We will survey abstracts of recent dissertations in their fields to get a sense of the kinds of theses being written and will bring in for discussion both strong and weak examples. We will also discuss a number of aspects of the conception and organization of theses. In the latter part of the semester, we will discuss the draft prospectus of each participant.

The seminar will be led by Roger Gilbert, with, we hope, the participation of other faculty for particular topics.

**7940 Directed Study**

**5651**

This course title should be used for an independent study in which one student works with the supervision of a member of the graduate faculty.

**7950 Group Study**

**5653**

This course title should be used for an independent study in which a small group of students works with the supervision of a member of the graduate faculty.

**7960 Teaching and Research**

**5654**

This course should be used for an independent study that combines a program of reading, supervised by a professor, with participation (including some teaching) in an undergraduate course.

Graduate students who wish to enroll in undergraduate courses at 300-level or above for graduate credit should consult with their committee chairs, and must have the permission of the course instructor.