

Graduate Courses

Spring 2011



Department of English

University of Miami

ENG 504 Forms of Expansion and the Transliminal in Contemporary Women's Poetry

Maureen Seaton

Section QY, Thurs., 12:30-3:00

Writing poetry concerns itself with, among other fascinating pursuits, authenticity and risk-taking. Poets often move (sometimes balking) into uncharted territories, learn to navigate them, write from them, and move on. How and how long they inhabit a new space is part of the individual poet's journey. In this course we will "travel" with more than a dozen poets, reading their work carefully and considering our own. We will have the opportunity to experience, first-hand, both the expansiveness and the transliminality of form as it thrives in contemporary women's poetry. Poets will include Gloria Anzaldúa, Olga Broumas, Anne Carson, Marilyn Hacker, Kimiko Hahn, Jane Miller, Harryette Mullen, M. Nourbese Philip, Cecilia Vicuna, and others.

ENG 505 Forms of Fiction: From Vox to Nox: Excursions in Narrative

Jane Alison

Section EY, Wed., 12:30-3:00

A course exploring ideas about narrative by looking at some of the more unusual or extravagant forms it has taken in contemporary literature. Among the texts we examine will be Nicholson Baker's *Vox*, David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas*, W. G. Sebald's *Emigrants*, David Markson's *Wittgenstein's Mistress*, Jamaica Kincaid's *Mr. Potter*, Anne Carson's *Nox*, Murray Bail's *Eucalyptus*, and others. We'll also consult secondary texts such as Scholes and Kellogg's *The Nature of Narrative* and Keen's *Narrative Form*. In exploring these works we will look particularly at technique, structure, systems of forward motion, and scope of vision.

Please note that the class is designed for fiction writers admitted to the MFA program and will approach texts as a way of exploring our own systems of generating narrative. The course will include frequent writing exercises and workshopping.

**ENG 601 Graduate Fiction Workshop:
In the Beginning: Opening sequences of long and short narratives**

M. Evelina Galang

Section GX, Mon., 3:15-5:45

This workshop will look at the construction of effective first chapters, stories and opening sequences. In addition to workshopping student works, we will ground our discussions in the text of novels and story collections such as Cristina Garcia's *The Lady Matador's Hotel*, Jessica Hagedorn's *Dogeaters*, Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, Ray Carver's *Where I'm Calling From*, Junot Diaz's *Drown*, Rattawut Lapcharoensap's *Sightseeing* and others. This seminar will encourage writers to explore the possibilities of effective beginnings through reading published and peer narratives; writing creative and critical text; workshopping their own stories/chapters; and mimicking published works.

ENG 602 Creative Writing: Poetry II

Mia Leonin

Section KY, Wed., 6:25-8:55

This is a graduate course in poetry writing. The primary goal is to produce new poems and to develop and revise works-in-progress. While creative production will be emphasized, students will also read, discuss, and respond to a selection of poets who come from a diverse set of cultures and aesthetic tendencies. The course will run on a workshop format.

ENG 592 Teaching Practicum: Sophomore Literature Surveys

Mihoko Suzuki

Section EX, Mon., 12:30-3:00

The aim of the second semester of the teaching practicum is to introduce students to the pedagogy of the sophomore-level literature courses, i.e., surveys of national, world, ethnic, and women's literatures, as well as thematically or generically-based courses. We will discuss the challenges and opportunities offered by the different sequences and by the thematic as opposed to the historical approach.

The goals of the sophomore-level courses include developing critical thought; practice in interpretive analysis; increased knowledge of the literature of a period, culture, or form; writing effective analytical prose, and using quotations and examples to develop a persuasive argument.

We will discuss different syllabi, with particular attention to how canons are established and transformed especially through the teaching of historical surveys. We will then explore ways of integrating canonical and previously non-canonical, emerging texts. To this end, we will examine and compare anthologies, and consider supplementing the anthologies with other published and unpublished materials. We will discuss ways of incorporating films, as well as visual and popular materials.

Another focus of the seminar will be the effectiveness of such teaching strategies as using discussion questions, quizzes, and Blackboard discussions. We will also consider ways of combining lecture with discussion to provide information and historical context. In addition, we will explore different frameworks for formulating writing assignments: e.g., reading journals; a sequence of papers leading from short to long; research papers. We will also discuss ways of constructing suggested paper topics that encourage comparative analysis and discourage plagiarism, as well as strategies of grading and providing commentary on papers. Finally, we will explore different ways in which the examinations can be constructed.

The seminar will invite participation by faculty and senior lecturers with particular expertise in the different courses, as well as those who have developed distinctive and effective pedagogical strategies. Students will be required to construct a syllabus for one course, justifying the readings, the choice of the anthology, and any supplementary material. They will observe two sections of a 200-level course, and will write assessments of the pedagogical approaches. Finally, they will grade and write evaluations of sample papers to be discussed by the seminar.

ENG 624

**Studies in Seventeenth Century Literature:
Torture and Cruelty in English Popular Culture**

Anthony Barthelemy

Section SX, Tues., 3:30-6:00

Literary scholars, historians and bibliophiles all agree that one of, if not the most important book in forging early modern English national identity is John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (1563). Thus even though our primary focus this semester will be the popular stage in the seventeenth century, we will commence our journey with Foxe's book. The narratives and testimonials of those who would suffer death rather than submit to a foreign power in the person of the Pope solidified for many what it meant to be English. Accompanying the testimonials were woodcuts that represented the scenes of death. Using online sources we will read a few testimonials and study the woodcuts. Almost simultaneous with the publication of Foxe's *Book* was the publication of Arthur Golding's *Metamorphoses* (1567), the first English translation of Ovid's famous poem. We will read Book Six of Golding's translation which details the "cruel joy" experienced by those who inflict pain on others. We will explore the cultural moment that produced a

troubled and ambivalent appreciation of inflicting pain. Having established this cultural framework we will then explore the staging of pain on the popular stage. Plays read will include Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*; Marlowe's *Edward II* and *The Jew of Malta*; Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *King Lear*; Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy*; Webster's *The Dutchess of Malfi* and *The White Devil*; Middleton's *Women Beware Women*; and Ford's *'Tis a Pity She's a Whore*.

Each student will make a 20 minute oral report. A research paper including an annotated bibliography will be submitted at the end of the semester.

ENG 633 Things, Characters, and Minds in the Eighteenth-Century British Novel

Tassie Gwilliam

Section UY, Thurs., 6:25-8:55

A period of experimentation and ferment in fiction, the eighteenth century produced novels that are highly responsive both to literary antecedents and to the world around them. In this course we will read a number of works that transformed the genre and, in some cases, altered the way the world was perceived. While our primary focus will be on consuming and engaging with these texts, we will also explore some new avenues for understanding narrative in general and eighteenth-century fiction in particular: for example, "thing" theory (Cynthia Wall's *The Prose of Things* and Julie Park's *The Self and It*); concepts of character (Deidre Lynch's *Economy of Character* and Blakey Vermeule's *Why do we Care about Literary Characters?*); and theories of cognition (Lisa Zunshine's *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel*).

Novels: Aphra Behn, *The History of the Nun*
 Eliza Haywood, *Fantomina & The City Jilt*
 Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders*
 Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa* (abridged and ed. John Richetti and Toni Bowers)
 Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones*
 Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*
 Frances Burney, *Evelina*

Requirements: Students will be asked to participate in seminar discussions, to do short weekly assignments of various kinds, to prepare part of a class session, and to write a 15-20 page seminar paper.

Note: Students should read Aphra Behn's short novel *The History of the Nun* for the first class: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~ayadav/Behn%20The%20History%20of%20the%20Nun.pdf> (or go to the Wikipedia stub under "The History of the Nun" and click on "etext" to get the pdf).

ENG 663 Other Modernisms

Joel Nickels

Section BY, Wed., 9:30-12:00

This class focuses on the work of neglected, decanonized, marginal, and late modernist authors. The world of modernism is much larger, stranger and more stylistically and ideologically varied than the one we typically have time to explore as undergraduates. The purpose of this class is to explore the "other" modernists who help make up this world and to mobilize the innovative critical methodologies that will help us account for their peculiarities and contradictions. The kinds of authors we will be examining belong to several different categories, which sometimes overlap: women modernists who have been

decanonized or chronically ignored—figures such as Kay Boyle, Laura Riding, Mina Loy, Edith Sitwell, Amy Lowell, and Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven; African-American modernists such as Sterling Brown, Melvin Tolson and Jean Toomer, who were never mainstreamed, or who have only recently been popularized; Objectivist poets such as Louis Zukofsky, George Oppen and Lorine Niedecker, who had a profound influence on the development of twentieth-century poetics, but who are rarely taught in large survey courses; and radical modernists such as Thomas McGrath, John Wheelwright, Muriel Rukeyser and Tillie Olson, who are often located outside high modernism for reasons involving technique, ideology and periodization. There are also major modernist authors whose most important works have been lost to history, or only recently rediscovered. Djuna Barnes' *Nightwood*, Wyndham Lewis' *The Childermass* and Claude McKay's *Banjo* all belong to this category. Finally, there is the host of modernists outside of England and America who invite us to consider alternative models of modernity, modernization and modernism. From this massive international corpus, we will sample works by authors such as Nigeria's Christopher Okigbo and the Middle Eastern Tammuzi poets, Ali Ahmed Said and Yusuf Al-Khal. In this course, students have the choice of writing either two conference-length papers (8-10 pages), or writing one conference-length paper and then revising it into a seminar paper of 20 pages.

ENG 667

Reading Contemporary Caribbean Popular Culture

Patricia Saunders

Section KY, Wed., 6:25-8:55

This graduate seminar will focus on reading/analyzing contemporary popular culture in order to consider how the critical terms that define art and culture in the Caribbean region are shifting. We will also examine the degree to which these changes are driven by (or indicative of) the materials and technologies with which artists choose to produce their works and represent their visions. One of the larger critical considerations for the course will be what role these works of art play in shaping and representing interactions and perspectives among people from different cultural, economic, social, cultural and political backgrounds. Our readings will include texts from a number of different disciplines including art history, cultural studies, media studies, literary studies and will also include catalogues from exhibits in the United States, Britain, and the Caribbean region. Beginning with some of the earliest representations we will consider how and why visual culture in the Caribbean was so highly stylized and fixated on the landscape and on performances of (sexual, national, and cultural) identity. We will also consider how experiences of migration, exile, creolization and alienation require more subtle interpretations of where and how art and society interact, on what conditions and to what ends. By the end of the course students should have deeper appreciation and understanding of how cultural critics and artists engage issues of poetics, aesthetics, social and political discourses, and modes of representation to shape a tradition of critical discourse about art, identity, and representation in popular cultures in the African Diaspora.

Readings will include:

Michaeline Crichlow, *Globalization and the Post-Creole Imagination: Notes on Fleeing the Plantation*

Curwen Best, *Culture @ the Cutting Edge: Tracking Caribbean Popular Music*

Michael Thelwell, *The Harder They Come*

Perry Henzel, *The Harder They Come*

Garfield Ellis, *Til I'm Laid to Rest*

Belinda Edmondson, *Caribbean Middlebrow: Leisure Culture and the Middle Class*

ENG 677

Studies in Modern Literature: Samuel Beckett

P. A. McCarthy

Section OX, Tues., 9:30-12:00

This seminar focuses on the fiction and drama of Samuel Beckett, one of the most intriguing and innovative writers of the 20th century. The class is open to discussion of any aspect of the works and to any theoretical approach, but our main purpose is to consider the novels, short fiction, and plays, as much as possible, on their own terms. Toward that end, we will trace continuities and discontinuities in the development of Beckett's art, including such recurrent dichotomies as art and life, mind and body, form and content, language and silence, self and other, subject and object, the real and what Beckett calls its "counter-poison." As Hamm says in *Endgame*, "Ah the old questions, the old answers, there's nothing like them!"

Basic requirements: (a) weekly discussion questions, starting the second week of class, (b) a 15 minute class report on one or more recent critical studies of Beckett, which will also be submitted in written form (7 pages typed), and (c) a 15-20 page paper.

Texts (all published by Grove Press):

Murphy

Watt

Three Novels: Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable

Waiting for Godot

Endgame

Happy Days

The Complete Short Prose, 1929-1989

Collected Shorter Plays

Nohow On: Company, Ill Seen Ill Said, Worstward Ho

ENG 687 Studies in Literature and Culture since 1950—Literature and Anthropology

Tim Watson

Section KX, Mon., 6:25-8:55 p.m.

Description:

Jed Esty (in his book *A Shrinking Island*) has identified a move towards "home anthropology" among British writers in the period following World War II. As the Empire unravelled, writers and artists increasingly turned to the tools of anthropology—honed in the colonies, of course—to anatomize, analyze, and sometimes mythologize the cultures of the British Isles. In some ways, British writers were belatedly catching up to an earlier American development, since Boasian anthropology's focus on what we might call the internally colonized peoples of the United States had already led to the ethnographic writings of Zora Neale Hurston and Upton Sinclair, among others. After the war, moreover, American writers such as Saul Bellow and Gary Snyder—albeit in very different ways—began to explore a convergence between the anthropology of Asia and Africa and the representation of the contemporary United States. In this class we will read ethnographically inflected literature from around the Atlantic world (Britain, West Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States) in conjunction with some of the key texts of postwar anthropology and cultural studies, exploring the anthropological turn in the moment of late modernism, and asking whether there was already a "literary turn" in anthropology long before the moment in the 1970s and 80s when Clifford Geertz and James Clifford turned the discipline toward a self-reflexive interest in narrative form. We will end with a turn of our own towards the postcolonial

period with a week on Amitav Ghosh, who used his PhD fieldwork in Egypt to produce an intriguing work of literary nonfiction, *In an Antique Land*, and a subsequent successful career as a novelist.

Note: students will be required to attend at least some of the Center for the Humanities conference, “Imagining Culture(s), Rethinking Disciplines,” taking place on the UM campus on April 1-2. Details can be found at:

<http://humanities.miami.edu/symposia/anthropology>

Texts:

- Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*
- Saul Bellow, *Henderson the Rain King*
- Laura Bohannon [writing as Elenore Smith Bowen], *Return to Laughter: An Anthropological Novel*
- Amitav Ghosh, *In an Antique Land*
- Edouard Glissant, *La Lézarde* [The Ripening]
- Zora Neale Hurston, *Mules and Men*
- Elena Padilla, *Up from Puerto Rico*
- Barbara Pym, *Excellent Women*
- Gary Snyder, *Myths and Texts and Riprap*
- Michael Young and Peter Willmott, *Family and Kinship in East London*

Selections from Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, Mary Douglas, T. S. Eliot, E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Stuart Hall, Melville Herskovits, Richard Hoggart, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Carolyn Steedman, and Raymond Williams

ENG 695 Critical Perspectives on 20th-century Jewish American Literature

Ranen Omer-Sherman

Section OY, Thurs., 9:30-12:00

This course is designed to introduce you to the works of major Jewish-American writers, ranging from Anzia Yeziarska’s urban tenement stories to Philip Roth’s postmodernism and beyond. Our explorations will range across a broad spectrum of genres, writers and Jewish-American experiences, from fading memories of the Old World and issues surrounding the Depression to issues of immigration/assimilation, the Holocaust, contemporary feminism and other later developments. In the first weeks we will examine the decades in which Jewish-Americans by and large considered assimilation as a valid and self-evident goal. For early generations of Jewish-Americans it seemed obvious that too rigid an insistence on Jewish particularity would hinder the immigrant’s pursuit of broader cultural and economic opportunities in the spacious realm of undifferentiated Americanism. Later we will consider writers for whom assimilation is no longer a goal to be pursued, but an ambiguous achievement to be evaluated, interrogated, and creatively reimagined. Our readings will focus primarily on developments in the novel but will include exemplars from short-fiction, poetry, and graphic novels.