

Queens College Department of English
Fall 2013

Graduate English Courses with Open Seats

I. Required Foundation Courses

701: Seminar in Graduate Methodology

Required for students pursuing the MA English degree

Richter	David	Wed	4:30pm-6:20pm	KY 148
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We will investigate the aims and methods of graduate research, culminating in a major project that can be used as the seed for the master's thesis. Students will work at individual projects involving frequent library assignments, which will include the location and evaluation of materials, documentation, textual editing, palaeography, and lexicography. We will also be learning how to understand the relationship between the critical articles we read in learned journals and the literary and cultural theories taught in English 636. (Students need internet access for this course, as many assignments require research tools available on the World Wide Web. Queens College provides free internet access through student accounts at computer labs around the campus but a home computer with a fast connection will of course make working on the assignments much more convenient.)

702: Methodology for English/Education Students

Required for students pursuing the MS.Ed with a specialization in English who were admitted *before fall 2012*. Satisfies the methodology requirement for students pursuing the MS.Ed with a specialization in English who were admitted *fall 2012 and following*. Satisfies an elective requirement for MA English students.

Nysenholz	Judith	Th	6:30pm-8:20pm	KY 148
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This course provides current and future secondary-school teachers with an opportunity to study literary criticism from a pedagogical perspective. Besides reflecting on the selection process of a text appropriate for a secondary-school curriculum, we will examine research methods and theoretical perspectives currently used in the field of literature. We will focus on two novels, *Heart of Darkness* and *Things Fall Apart*, examine them through a variety of critical approaches, and discuss how these reading strategies could be incorporated in a high school literature classroom. Independently, you will also research and synthesize existing interpretations of a novel of your choice. The ultimate goal of the course is to enrich and deepen your understanding of literary study, as well as to broaden your pedagogical content knowledge. The shift to the Common Core Standards, with its renewed emphasis on complex texts, is meant to develop students' higher order thinking skills. This course equips you with essential tools to address these new standards in your teaching.

II. Elective Courses

724: Victorian Poetry and Poetics

Drury	Annmarie	Thu	4:30pm-6:20pm	KP 708
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We examine poetry of the period from 1830 to around 1900, considering especially its spectacular formal innovation (and formal uncertainties). We give particular attention to Alfred Tennyson, Robert Browning, and Matthew Arnold. And we read influential works of Christina Rossetti, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, George Meredith, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Edward FitzGerald, and Thomas Hardy.

The sense many Victorian poets had that they were writing too late, *after* the great age of poetry, during a time when the poet was increasingly irrelevant as a figure in society, generated complex meditations on the role and meaning of poetry (and of the artist) in the world. We will look at writers on this question, including Arthur Henry Hallam, Arnold, and Thomas Carlyle, and think about how Victorian notions of what a poet should be and do connected to – and, sometimes, conflicted with – the choices poets make in their poems. We’ll ask how Victorian poetics influenced the modernist writers of the twentieth century, we’ll devote attention to the role of literary translation as a source of poetic innovation, and we’ll think about the concept of poetic voice in this era when literary parody and the newly invented phonograph became popular means of playing around with voices.

726: Specters of The Black Atlantic: Antebellum African American Literature

Faherty	Duncan	Mon	6:30pm-8:20pm	KY 248
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Building on the work of Paul Gilroy’s landmark volume, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993), this course seeks to map the “Africanist” presence in the formation of antebellum U.S. culture. In so doing, we will consider the ways in which issues of race, freedom, unfreedom, and personal sovereignty have been and still are the fundamental concerns of the U.S. literary imagination. In essence, we will sound out the contours of how the themes of *freedom and individualism* which have been proffered as the emblematic themes of “American literature” are in fact dependent on a manifestly unfree black population, a population which “came to serve white authors as embodiments of their own fears and desires.” In so doing, we will also explore the ways in which African American writers responded to this concept of unfreedom as well to questions of diaspora and hybridity. Our readings will be drawn from a variety of genres and periods, and possible authors include: Venture Smith, Olaudah Equiano, Mary Prince, Phillis Wheatley, Jupiter Hammon, Charles Brockden Brown, Leonora Sansay, Herman Melville, Edgar Allan Poe, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Wilson, Martin Delany and Toni Morrison. In addition to the range of primary material, we also be engaging with a variety of theoretical readings including work by: Paul Gilroy, C.L.R James, Ian Baucom, Robert Reid-Pharr, Kenneth Warren, Fred Moten, Daphne Brooks, Ivy Wilson, and Tavia Nyong’o.

781: The Underside of Paradise

Leger	Natalie	Tue	4:30pm-6:20pm	KP 708
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All too often the Caribbean conjures thoughts of paradise, calling to mind isles of hedonistic pleasure and islands of uncomplicated tropical bliss. But for writers of the Caribbean, the region’s warmth, beauty and seemingly immeasurable decadence overwhelmingly conceals the violence of the Caribbean’s modern origin. In this course, we will closely examine how Caribbean writers have dealt with the history of violence that was the conquest, slavery and colonialism. We will closely consider how Caribbean writers of the twentieth and twenty-first century explore the residual effects of this history, specifically, its influence on social, political and interpersonal relations among races, classes, and cultures as well as its impact on persons struggling to love themselves and others. In reading various Caribbean novels, poems and plays, we will ultimately explore how the weight of the past shapes for Caribbean writers the possibilities of the present. In addition to the fiction read, we will further explore the enduring salience of the past to the present through Caribbean cultural theory. In so doing, we will gain greater insight into the cultural philosophy emanating from the Caribbean as well as the key ideas and points of contention that continue to fire the philosophical imaginary of the region. In the end, we will collectively explore how the Caribbean writer and theorist has sought to reinterpret a history of violence in ways that both demand and call attention to the pressing need for an improved regional future free from the racial, cultural and gender divisions of the past.

781: Nineteenth-Century British Children's Literature

The nineteenth century saw a sea-change in how childhood was constructed: While the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries understood children to be wicked or sinful, and some have argued that prior to that, children were understood merely as "miniature adults," the Romantics and the Victorians developed the models of childhood that persist today: the child as innocent, natural, and vulnerable. Nonetheless, the nineteenth century was a time of misery for many children, as child labor powered the rapidly industrializing society in the form of child miners, child factory workers, and child chimney sweeps. This class will use nineteenth-century children's literature to explore the changing conception of childhood, tracing a development from Maria Edgworth's *The Purple Jar* to E. Nesbit's *The Story of the Treasure-Seekers*; along the way we'll discuss the rise of the British Empire, and how we can its changing ideologies of race and gender being developed in the literature that was meant to develop young British subjects. Authors may include Maria Edgworth, E. Nesbit, Maria Martha Sherwood, Charles Kingsley, Lewis Carroll, R. M. Ballantyne, and Mrs. Molesworth.