

2015 Summer I (4 weeks, June 1 to 24)
English Graduate Course Descriptions

ENGL 729: The Wild Ones: The Poetries of the American Underground, 1945-1970

M. Seth Stewart

Class no. 9258; Mon/Tue/Wed/Thu 6:45–8:25pm; KY 418

Contrary to conventional literary history, the experimentation and political commitment of the Modernist and Depression-era poets did not die out after the Second World War. The work continued uninterrupted in the decades after, in the work of many different underground poetry communities. These communities were geographic – nodes of poetry in cities like San Francisco and New York – as well as virtual, through the independent and mimeographed magazines connecting them. They sought innovation and enlightenment, ways of doing poetry that could change the world; as such, they made room for – and were led by – poets who were indigestible to official verse culture: poets of color, gays and lesbians, the children of the working class, the Bohemians.

Our seminar will explore this post-war poetry through an alternate itinerary, from Black Mountain College through San Francisco to New York. In our own city we will pay close attention to the Beats, “the New York School” of poets among painters, and two overlapping groups of Black poets: the Umbra Workshop and the Black Arts Movement. We will read their poetry alongside extra-textual material like letters and journals, examining their political and aesthetic concerns as well as their networks of friendship and influence. What did it mean to write political verse in McCarthy’s America? How did these various and far-flung outsiders use poetry to articulate their identity and desire, to provoke personal and cultural revolution?

Poets covered will include Amiri Baraka, Diane di Prima, Bob Kaufman, Allen Ginsberg, Philip Whalen, Charles Olson, Robert Creeley, Ed Dorn, Helen Adam, Jack Spicer, Robert Duncan, John Wieners, Denise Levertov, Frank O’Hara, Barbara Guest, Anne Waldman, Lorenzo Thomas, Askia Touré, and Sonia Sanchez. Students will be expected to do one class presentation, with an accompanying report and annotated bibliography, and a final paper.

ENGL 781: The Global Novel

Pamela Burger

Class no. 8527; Mon/Tue/Wed/Thu 6:45–8:25pm; KY 412

In this course, we will reconsider the concept of "world literature" by investigating the novel's current status as a global form. Our starting point will be the development of the Anglophone novel as it emerged alongside (and perhaps in conjunction with) globalization, a term we will take to include economic and cultural imperialism as well as transnational migrations. We will then look at how this history shaped the current debates regarding the role of the English-language novel in the international literary market. Questions of interest will include: how does literature circulate in the twenty-first century? Can we read the novel, in English or otherwise, as a "global form" that extends beyond nationalization, that de-territorializes literary study? Finally, how might such reading shift our understanding of established literary critical fields, including post-coloniality, translation studies, and cosmopolitanism? Novelists we might examine include Conrad, Adichie, Coetzee and Diaz. Critical readings will include works by Arjun Appadurai, Rebecca Walkowitz, Pascale Casanova, and Franco Moretti, among others.

2015 Summer II (6 weeks, June 29 to August 6)
English Graduate Course Descriptions

ENGL 720: Studies in Milton's *Paradise Lost*

Richard Marotta

Class no. 9261; Mon/Wed 6:00-8:05pm; KP 708

This course will focus on Milton's *Paradise Lost* as a complex example of the visionary epic. We will examine the intellectual, theological and mythical contexts of the poem and then move on to such issues as sexual politics, the emergence of gender identity, the authority of the Divine voice, the rhetoric of the Satanic voice, the birth of the human voice and the various configurations of Adam and Eve. Milton made a number of poetic choices that have endeared him to some readers and alienated him from others. We will look at these choices in the context of an epic poem that is very much the heir to non-Christian classical epic traditions and, at the same time, the recipient of a very specific Christian theological position. This tension engenders some of the more problematical elements in *Paradise Lost*, including the possible rejection of faith in the presence of more intellectual realities. Active participation and a 15 page paper are required.

ENGL 781: Wild Spaces in Early Modern Drama

Myra Wright

Class no. 9262; Tue/Thu 6:00–8:05pm; KP 708

This course invites students to explore the great early modern outdoors through readings of popular plays by Shakespeare and his contemporaries. We study the wild spaces that are figured forth in the drama of Marlowe, Jonson, Webster, Middleton, and others. As we read our way into forests and caves, across seas, and down rivers, we will ponder the special challenges that playwrights and their companies faced when they decided to take the action outside, and we will consider the range of dramatic opportunities that were presented by these radical changes of scenery. Our program of reading situates the plays among other contemporary genres that represent the natural world: bestiaries, herbals, sporting manuals, almanacs, maps, and news pamphlets. Students will examine the primary texts in relation to recent ecocritical scholarship and make their own contributions to the cultivated wilderness of early modern studies.