

# *Graduate Courses*

*Fall 2008*



*Department of English*

*University of Miami*

**ENG 504**

**Forms in Poetry: Poetry Comics**

**Paolo Javier**

**Section GX, Monday 3:15-5:45**

This course will explore the rich tradition of poetry comics. The presence of the poetic in the modern comic book will foreground our inquiry, and we will experiment with this potential in our writing assignments. Our readings will include a survey of contemporary poetry comics, and collaborations between poets and visual artists throughout the twentieth century. We will pay particular attention to a selection of work by the French surrealists, the New York School, and Canada's concrete poets. In addition to our readings, we will engage in a selection of films and sound recordings. Short analytical papers will be assigned in response to the readings, screenings, and discussion. Collaboration between students will be required for selected assignments, but encouraged throughout the workshop. Students must also submit a final project of chapbook-length (16-24 pages) at the end of the semester.

*Prerequisites: Permission of instructor. Six credits in literature or graduate standing.*

**ENG 505**

**Form in Fiction: Landscape and Character**

**Manette Ansay**

**Section QX, Tues., 12:30-3:00**

This course will focus on the relationship between landscape and character in the stories and novels of writers including Louise Erdrich, Edward P. Jones, Cormac McCarthy, Alice Munro, Michael Ondaatje, Marilynne Robinson and others, with class time divided between craft lecture, discussion, and workshop of new writing generated by springboards and assignments. This course is intended for graduate-level fiction writers admitted to the Master of Fine Arts program, and it is assumed that everyone is already hard at work on a larger creative writing project, such as a novel, a novella or a story collection. The collective challenges, concerns and interests of these projects will shape both the ways in which we approach published texts and the writing exercises I'll assign. Students will write one 5-7 page craft paper and, at the end of the semester, submit a revised story or novel chapter (18-40 pages) that has not been submitted to another class. In addition, each student will also give one in-class presentation introducing, in collaboration with the instructor, one of the assigned texts.

In preparation for our first class meeting, please read Margaret Atwood's story "Death by Landscape" and bring a copy to class. I would also like you to bring to class an opening page or paragraph of a story or novel in which landscape significantly influences (reliably or unreliably) your expectations for a prominent character or group of characters.

Note: Select undergraduate creative writing majors who have completed two advanced prose writing workshops (any combination of ENG 404, ENG 405 and ENG 408) may be admitted to this course *by invitation only* on the basis of a writing sample and the recommendation of another creative writing instructor. If interested, please make an appointment to see Manette Ansay *prior* to the first day of class.

**ENG 601****Creative Writing: Fiction III****Jane Alison****Section OY, Thurs., 9:30-12:00**

An intensive workshop for MFA students writing novels, novellas, linked narratives, or collections of stories. Through writing, discussion, and occasional outside reading—which will include both conventional and experimental fictions, as well as craft and theoretical texts—you'll be pushed to experiment with and rationalize decisions you make in such elements as point of view, motion, and structure in your projects, as you continue to hone voice and style. We will also pay attention to the fine art of the written critique.

Prerequisites: admission to the English Department's MFA program and permission of the Director of Creative Writing.

**ENG 602****Creative Writing: Poetry II****Walter Lew****Section KY, Wed., 6:25-8:55**

The aim of this workshop is to find ways to expand and enrich the scope and functions of one's writing. In-class discussions will be largely devoted to discussion of each others' work, about which students will also write brief, but detailed comments. In consultation with the instructor, each student will develop and present a final project. There will be many opportunities in the course to collaborate with other writers, integrate other arts and schemata of knowledge into one's poetry, both critique and use basic presentation software, and to incorporate philosophical, historical, and archival research into one's praxis. A special focus of this semester's reading and exercises will be documentary poetry, various East Asian poetics and Modernist appropriations of them, and poetry's relationships to cinema.



**ENG 646**

**Nineteenth-Century British Novel:  
The Novel and Empire**

**Tim Watson**

**Section UX, Tues., 6:25-8:55**

We will take as our starting point the claim of Edward Said's (in *Culture and Imperialism*), that the novel was "immensely important in the formation of imperial attitudes, references, and experiences ... it [was] *the* aesthetic object whose connection to the expanding societies of Britain and France is particularly interesting to study" (introduction, p. xii). We will read a selection of mostly nineteenth-century British novels in order to answer several questions. Is there something intrinsic to the novel form itself that produced this intimate connection to British imperial rule? To what extent could novels articulate opposition to or ambivalence about empire in the nineteenth century? To what extent do British novels produce a generalized concept of "empire," and to what extent do they attend to the specifics of different colonial spaces, so that we might think differently about novels of India, of the Caribbean, or of Africa, for example? And when colonies begin producing novelists themselves, to what extent do they reshape the novel form, and/or to what extent does the novel form shape them?

**Texts:**

Texts may include:

Anonymous, *Hamel, the Obeah Man*

Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*

Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*

Bankimchandra Chatterji, *Anandamath, or The Sacred Brotherhood*

Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone*

Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim*

Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*

George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*

Olive Schreiner, *The Story of an African Farm*

In addition, I will post on Blackboard one or two critical essays each week that pertain to the novel we are reading.

**Requirements:**

- Research paper, 15-20 pp. (I would be open to the possibility of two shorter papers, but you would need to discuss this with me early in the semester, and I will decide on a case-by-case basis.)
- Each week three students will post questions and analyses to the Blackboard site before class meets, and will then be responsible for leading the discussion in the first 30 minutes of class.

**ENG 652**

**Studies in Irish Literature**

**Pat McCarthy**

**Section QY, Thursday, 12:30-3:00**

This course focuses on the response of selected writers to the political and cultural climate of modern Ireland, from the Irish Literary Renaissance of the late 19th and early 20th centuries to the present. The poetry of William Butler Yeats will receive extensive consideration, but we will also read poems by Patrick Kavanagh and Seamus Heaney, fiction by Liam O'Flaherty and Flann O'Brien, plays by Lady Gregory, John M. Synge, Sean O'Casey, and Brian Friel, and a memoir by Peig Sayers.

There will be a short paper (7-10 pages) due at midterm and a longer one (12-15 pages) at the end of the course.

Texts:

Modern Irish Drama, ed. John P. Harrington  
William Butler Yeats, Selected Poems and Four Plays  
Liam O'Flaherty, The Informer  
Patrick Kavanagh, Collected Poems  
Peig Sayers, Peig  
Flann O'Brien, The Third Policeman  
Seamus Heaney, Opened Ground

**ENG 662**

**Studies in American Literature: 1865-1914**

**John Funchion**

**Section BZ, Fri., 9:30-12:00**

**Imagining "Culture" in American Literature**

At the end of the nineteenth century, William Dean Howells conceived of American literary realism as a genre that could unite the nation by representing ethnic and regional differences in order to incorporate them into his vision of a pluralistic democracy. Such a project, Howells maintained, held the promise of mollifying the racial and social tensions that had brought about the Civil War at mid-century. At the same time Howells outlined his literary theory of realism, the discipline of anthropology began to take shape in the United States under the auspices of social scientists like Franz Boas. In an attempt to break from earlier racist and Eurocentric forms of ethnography, Boas—along with others—redefined the word "culture" to describe the differences between various social groups along horizontal rather than hierarchical lines. In this way, American literary realism and the nascent discipline of anthropology seemed to share similar social and aesthetic aims: both sought to imagine difference pluralistically and both sought to catalog this difference by adhering to realist forms of description. Accordingly, in this course we will examine the relationship between realism and anthropology by considering the way they both rely on the culture concept. Together we will attempt to answer the following questions: 1.) How do the similarities between anthropology and realism shed light upon the boundaries between the literary and the non-literary? 2.) Does American literary realism have a coherent and uniform aesthetics or is it ultimately an ill-defined genre? 3.) Contrary to Howells's and Boas's claims, did realism and anthropology reproduce the very racist and regressive social structures they sought to displace?

In addition to pursuing answers to these questions, we will consider the place of the culture concept in contemporary literary criticism. For over two decades, the culture concept has defined both the method and the object of study for those working in contemporary literary and cultural studies. In recent years, however, the concept has fallen under increased scrutiny. Just as literary critics and theorists have problematized the transcendental status of other keywords like literature, race, class, and gender, so too have some scholars begun to question “culture’s” conceptual stability. By tracking the development of “culture” in the nineteenth century then, we will also contemplate the future of the culture concept in our own critical approach to literary studies.

To address these questions, we will read nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literary and anthropological works by writers such as Gertrude Atherton, Franz Boas, Abraham Cahan, Charles Chesnutt, W.E.B. DuBois, Sarah Orne Jewett, Bret Harte, Pauline E. Hopkins, William Dean Howells, Henry James, Frank Norris, and Zitkala-Ša. We will also read a few short excerpts from theoretical works by Kwame Anthony Appiah, Seyla Benhabib, Judith Butler, Michel de Certeau, Johannes Fabian, Clifford Geertz, Jacques Rancière, Charles Taylor, and Raymond Williams.

Requirements: In addition to regular class participation, you will have the option of writing either two short papers (10 pages each) or one seminar paper (20 pages).

**ENG 667**

**Caribbean Popular Culture**

**Patricia Saunders**

**Section KX, Mon., 6:245-8:55**

**As Far as the Eye/I Can See: Reading Contemporary Caribbean Art**

This graduate seminar will focus on reading/analyzing contemporary art and popular culture in order to consider how the critical terms for defining and discussing art in the Caribbean region is shifting. We will also examine the degree to which these changes are driven by (or indicative of) choices, materials and technologies artists choose to produce their works and represent their visions. One of the larger critical considerations for the course will be the role that these works of art play in shaping and representing interactions among people from different cultural, economic and social backgrounds in the Caribbean region. 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 and the Caribbean region. Beginning with some of the earliest representations of the period, we will consider how and why visual culture in the Caribbean was so highly stylized and fixated on the landscape. We will then engage more recent exhibit catalogues that suggest contemporary art in the region is being produced from uniquely different social and political vantage points and, as such, require a more subtle interpretation of where and how art and society meet in their representations of the world. To this end we will consider the relationship between the picturesque and more modern conceptualizations of “art” in Caribbean society, particularly the emergence of popular icons and images (or the everyday) as the subject for many artists in the Caribbean and its Diasporas. By the end of the course students should have deeper appreciation and understanding of how cultural critics utilize critical, social and political discourses to represent the new visions and production of art in the Caribbean region.

Possible texts for the course include:

- Infinite Island: Contemporary Caribbean Art – (Tumelo Mosaka, Annie Paul, Nicollette Ramirez) (Brooklyn Museum Bookshop)
- Modernism, the Visual, and Caribbean Literature - (Mary Lou Emery)
- An Eye for the Tropics: Tourism, Photography, and Framing the Caribbean Picturesque (Objects/Histories) –(Krista Thompson)
- Modern Blackness: Nationalism, Globalization, and the politics of Culture in Jamaica (Deborah Thomas)
- Mobilizing India: Women, Music, and Migration Between Indian and Trinidad (Tejaswini Niranjana)
- Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times (Jasbir Puhar)

**ENG 677**

**Studies in Modern Literature**

**Robert Casillo**

**Section BX, Mon., 9:30-12:00**

This course introduces the student to some major modern poets and traditions. Rather than confining itself to the twentieth century, it will show the relation of modern poetry to a number of poetic themes, ideas, values, and tendencies already evident in the Romantic and Victorian periods in England as well as in America and on the Continent. These will include the cult of Nature and its gradual neutralization (Wordsworth, Hopkins, Hardy); the rejection of Nature for the primacy of the imagination (Yeats, Stevens); metrical and rhythmical innovation away from the iambic pentameter (Whitman, Hopkins, Hardy, Pound, Lawrence); the search for a sophisticated, technical, ironic, and truly modern as opposed to "poetic" diction (Hopkins, Hardy, Laforgue, Eliot, Pound, Stevens); the reliance on common speech to introduce texture, tonal complexity, and metrical and rhythmical tension into verse (Whitman, Frost, Pound); the turn towards mythologies personal or extrapersonal (Yeats, Pound, Eliot, Crane, Stevens); the centrality of the dramatic monologue and its formal permutations from Browning onward (Eliot, Pound); the increasing reliance on external objects and landscape to objectify inward states (Tennyson, Yeats, Hardy, Eliot, and Pound); the overall drive toward a poetry of sensation and images rather than abstraction, of verbs rather than nouns.

Text: The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry, Volume One, ed. Jahan Ramazani et al.

**ENG 686**

**Theories of Gender and Sexuality**

**Brenna Munro**

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

**Introduction to Queer Theory**

Queer theory thinks about sexuality as a series of historical and discursive formations, as a place where the body meets culture, as a crucial site of normalization and transgression. How have sexual identities been written and legislated and lived into being? How does sexuality intersect with race, class, nation, and gender? What makes a queer body? What about politics? What cultural styles, structures of feeling, and modes of affect can be read through sexuality? What is queer now? We will try and grapple with these questions through a series of theoretical readings.

**ENG 495/PHI 595**

**Philosophy And Literary Form**

**Frank Palmeri and Simon Evnine**

**Section P, TR, 11:00-12:15**

**Must be taken as PHI 595 for graduate credit.**

This course will consider philosophical thought as it has appeared in a number of literary forms in order to examine how philosophical arguments are related to their mode of expression. To what extent, if any, does the form affect or help constitute the argument? Among the literary forms, philosophers, and works we will read are: dialogues (Plato's Meno and Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*); essays (Montaigne and Bacon); meditations (Descartes's *Meditations* and Pascal's *Pensées*); aphorisms (La Rochefoucauld's Maxims and Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*, pt. 4); footnotes (Bayle's *Historical and Critical Dictionary* and Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*); geometric exposition (Spinoza, Ethics); fragments (the pre-Socratic philosophers); and possibly others. We will also read some theorists of form such as Fredric Jameson on the ideology of form and Theodor Adorno on the essay.