

Graduate Courses

Spring 2010



Department of English

University of Miami

ENG 504

Poets Write Memoir: Impulse and Practice

Maureen Seaton

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

This is an opportunity to explore memoir as it has been experienced and executed by poets from Japan's Sei Shonagon to Portugal's Fernando Pessoa to Miami's own Mia Leonin; and to experiment with a myriad of styles and impulses: diaries, blogs, the autobiographical persona, the "factless autobiography," as well as short and long narratives in both prose and verse. We will contemplate the roles of memory and imagination in accessing and building memoir. We will consider the theories of others while voicing and embodying our own. Contemporary writers to inspire will include Kimiko Hahn, Samuel Ace (né Linda Smukler), Oliver de la Paz, Michael Klein, David Trinidad, Lyn Hejinian, Audre Lorde, and Terese Svoboda.

ENG 505

**Form in Fiction:
The Shape and Substance of the Book**

M. Evelina Galang

Section GY, Wed., 3:15-5:45

The Shape and Substance of Books will study the structure of novels, short story collections, and books of nonfiction. The course will focus on how structure reflects and deepens content, and how shape pushes story and theme forward. Similarly, the course will look at how substance shapes the body of the book, gives direction and order to chapters and stories. In addition to the study of books already published, students will consider their own works, explore the obsessions in their works and how to build a structure for their stories, poems, and narratives that reflects a relationship between the shape and substance of their works – or more immediately – their thesis. This is a valuable exploration for students in the final stages of their long projects.

Texts: *A Pale View of Hills*, Ishiguro; *Mariette in Ecstasy*, Hansen; *Mrs. Bridge*, Connell; *Love Medicine*, Erdrich; *Feast of Love*, Baxter; *Unaccustomed Earth*, Lahiri; *Running in the Family*, Ondaatje; *Twilight Los Angeles, 1992*, Devere Smith.

Prerequisite: Graduate students: permission of instructor, Undergraduates: six credits in literature and permission of instructor.

ENG 601

Creative Writing: Fiction III

Lester Goran

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

Description: This course is based on student progress in developing individual voice in creation of fiction. Works of fiction in the short story or novels in preparation, with permission of the instructor, will be accepted as class requirements.

M.F.A. students do not need permission from the instructor to take this course. Advising with the director of the M.F.A. program is mandatory. Others wishing to take this course obtain permission from the instructor.

ENG 602

Creative Writing: Poetry II

Walter K. Lew

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

The aim of this workshop is to find ways to expand the scope and deepen the impact 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 opportunities in the course to collaborate with other writers, integrate other arts and schemata of knowledge into one's poetry, and to incorporate scientific, historical, and archival research into one's praxis. A special focus of this semester's reading and exercises will be eco-poetics, East Asian poetry, Pack Observation and Modernology, and poetry's relationships with cinema.

ENG 592 Teaching Practicum: Sophomore Literature Surveys

Mihoko Suzuki

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

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 Poetry and Prose:
Gender, Sexuality, and Material Objects**

Pamela Hammons

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

In seventeenth-century England, gender profoundly marked a person's manner of relating to the things making up her or his world. Perhaps in less immediately obvious ways, sexuality, too, was central to the intertwined lives of people and things. In this course, we will explore the complex, shifting relations among gender, sexuality, and material objects as represented by a wide variety of early modern texts by men and women. In doing so, we will have occasion to ponder questions such as these: What is at stake in the cultural logic assuming that female sexuality counts as patriarchal property? What bearing does this logic have on notions of women as agents of possession? What cultural function does the frequent gap between literary representation and legal theory pertaining to women and property serve? When male authors produce literary fantasies about wives as goods, what desires do they address (or stimulate)? What are some differences between male- and female-authored portraits of real and personal property? What are we to make of discontinuities between fictions that women writers create about female ownership and the socioeconomic circumstances of those writers? How does the language of gift giving or economic exchange bear on discourses of hetero- and homoerotic love? How do race and class inflect the gendering of possession?

This course should be especially helpful to students seeking greater familiarity with Renaissance literature; feminisms and theories of gender and sexuality; and the theoretical stakes underpinning the writing of literary histories (particularly the difference it makes to attend to women's writing, in addition to men's). Likely primary authors include Whitney, Shakespeare, Lanyer, Jonson, Donne, Herrick, Cavendish, Hutchinson, and Behn. Course requirements will include leading class discussion about a primary text and writing a brief close analysis (2-3 pages) of part of that same text; giving a mini-lecture on a critical or theoretical text and writing a short critical response to some specific aspect of that text (2-3 pages); and completing a major writing project of approximately 15-20 pages. Students may choose one of two options for the major writing project: they may either write a traditional seminar paper, turned in first as a short draft (i.e., 8-10 pages) and then in a refined, longer (i.e., 15-20 pages) version; or they may compose two conference-length papers (i.e., 8-10 pages each) on two different topics.

ENG 631

Studies in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature

John Paul Russo

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

The course focuses on main concepts, themes, styles, and artistic forms in the "greater eighteenth-century" literature, chiefly in Britain, but also with reference to the literature, religion, politics, society, and cultural history of the Atlantic world.

Ideas and issues to be examined are the birth of consumer society; travel literature; the "new" biography and biographical criticism; nature and reason in late neoclassicism; science and empirical philosophy; cosmic optimism and the idea of progress; the noble savage and the gothic revival; feeling and the landscape sublime. Theories of neoclassicism and its decline, developments in rhetoric, and the origins of romanticism will be the object of special study in the final weeks of the course. Authors to be studied will include Samuel Johnson, Pope, Thrall, Burke, Radcliffe, Swift, the Warton, Goldsmith, Gray, Collins, and Burney.

ENG 662

**American Literature: 1865-1914
U.S. Cosmopolitanisms**

John Funchion

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

This graduate course will explore the various ways U.S. writers defined, contested, and promoted ideas associated with *cosmopolitanism* in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To this end, we will discuss the philosophical genealogy of cosmopolitanism, period essays debating forms of U.S. internationalism, and a variety of literary works. We will also consider the relationship between nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century understandings of cosmopolitanism to contemporary theoretical discussions of this term. Readings may include literary work by Adams, Cable, Cather, Davis, James, Johnson, Larsen, Ruiz de Burton, Twain, or Wharton. Theoretical and philosophical material may consist of essays by Appiah, Arendt, Brennan, Cheah, Gilroy, Kant, Kaplan, Marx, Nussbaum, or Robbins. Students will also continue to work toward becoming professional literary scholars by compiling an annotated bibliography, leading one class discussion, and writing and presenting a conference paper.

ENG 666 Caribbean Women Writers: Displacement, Diaspora, and the Family Romance

Sandra Paquet

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

Description: This course explores issues of displacement, diaspora, and the Creole family romance in relation to slavery and indenture, colonialism, nationalism, transnationalism, migration, race and ethnicity in the literature of the Caribbean and the Caribbean Diaspora. We will focus on hybrid cosmopolitan experiences in tension with rooted ones, and the cultural complexities of race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality in the differing contexts of colonialism, postcolonialism or neocolonialism, and independence. Primary texts include Anglophone, Francophone, and Hispanic Caribbean women's writing, with particular attention to the Chinese and Indian experience in the Caribbean. Prior to the first class meeting, students should have read *The History of Mary Prince a West Indian Slave Related by Herself*.

Primary Texts:

Dionne Brand, *At the Full and Change of the Moon*

Edwidge Danticat, *Brother, I'm Dying*

Rosario Ferre, *The House on the Lagoon*

Cristina Garcia, *Dreaming in Cuban*

Lorna Goodison, *Harvey River*

Jamaica Kincaid, *My Brother*

Shani Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night*

Elizabeth Nunez, *Prospero's Daughter*

The History of Mary Prince a West Indian Slave as Related by Herself.

Lakshmi Persaud, *Raise the Lanterns High*

Patricia Powell, *The Pagoda*

Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Smile Please*

Erna Brodber, *Louisiana*

ENG 682

Contemporary Criticism and Theory

Tim Watson

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

In David Lodge's novel *Changing Places*, we learn of a charming game for literary academics called "Humiliation." In this game you score points by naming a famous literary work you have never read that the other players have. *Hamlet*, for example, would usually guarantee a high score. After taking ENG 682, however, you may be a poor player of the theory version of the game. We will read ten books that shook the academic world of literary studies, and which are referred to repeatedly in contemporary criticism and theory. These are ten (but of course not the only ten) key texts in the genealogy of the current state of the discipline, but the custom of actually reading them is more honoured in the breach than the observance, as a famous literary character once said. We will read them closely and analyze them carefully over the course of the semester in order to understand how and why they shifted the terms of the discussion. Please note that one of our authors, Ian Baucom, will be visiting UM to give a talk on Tuesday February 9.

Requirements:

Weekly Blackboard posting on the readings. One in-class presentation. 15-20 page end-of-semester research paper. (Other written work arrangements are possible – e.g., two shorter papers – with instructor's permission.)

Texts:

Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*
Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic*
Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*
Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality, Vol. I*
Stephen Greenblatt and Catherine Gallagher, *Practicing New Historicism*
Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*
Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*
Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*
Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*

ENG 695

The African Novel

Brenna Munro

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

In this class, we will look at the development of the modern African novel, examining a variety of historical moments, national locations, and political concerns. We will be focusing on generic appropriation and invention, the literary traditions and cultural forms that have shaped novels from Africa, and what writers and critics have had to say about the politics of form, and the role of the writer. Texts may include Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Ferdinand Oyono's *Houseboy*, Ousmane Sembene's *God's Bits of Wood*, Amos Tutuola's *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*, Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *The River Between*, Nuruddin Farah's *Maps*, Mariama Ba's *So Long A Letter*, Ben Okri's *The Famished Road*, Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to our Hillbrow*, Yvonne Vera's *The Stone Virgins*, Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*, and a selection of contemporary short stories, a genre that is feeding the current global vogue for African writing.