

## 2019 Fall

### AML6507 Studies in Early American Literature

Dr. Jason Mauro, T 6:00-8:45

(American, pre-1800)

We will look at two groups of writers, separated by over a century, but treading on some of the same physical ground. First we will read the work of some of the American Puritans, who left England, settled in Massachusetts, and spread out to form New England. And then we will read the work of a few of the canonical writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century “New England Renaissance.” While they differ dramatically in terms of subject matter, style, genre and world view I would like to read them closely enough to see if there are any echo effects that have traveled across the gulf of time which separates them. Are there any important similarities between Ralph Waldo Emerson and John Cotton? Or between Henry David Thoreau and John Winthrop? Are New England’s Puritan roots still feeding the literary fruits that emerge two centuries later? Can such nourishment be detected in writers like Emerson and Thoreau who quite self-consciously distance themselves from the specific theological, moral, and social visions of their region’s first settlers? My hope is that asking the questions, even if they are answered in the negative, will prompt us to get closer to these writers, and allow us to get underneath some of the assumptions and biases that they are often shrouded within.

Be warned, that the Puritan writers are often a bit off-putting for some students—at first we will be reading through sermons, letters, transcripts and journals, but no fiction, poetry or drama. And we will often be reading through mere fragments of massive works, with all of the difficulties associated with that gesture—references that are obscure or unknown, and pieces of correspondence whose entire context is not available to our eyes. Yet I must encourage us to read closely when we might be tempted to just run our eyes down the page.

Be further warned that the Bible is the principle subject of the Puritan writers, and I will refer you to certain passages from it that might help make sense of what we are reading. ***We will, however, regard the Bible as simply a text among other equally important texts. The Bible has no more moral or religious authority than the Greek myths would have in a class on Greek epic poetry.***

Please consider *carefully* whether or not this class will be of interest and value to you.

#### Required Texts:

*The Puritans in America*, edited by Heimert and Delbanco

*Nature and Selected Essays*, by Ralph Waldo Emerson, edited by Larzer Ziff

*The Portable Thoreau*, edited by Carl Bode

*Walt Whitman’s “Song of Myself,”* edited by Ezra Greenspan

*The Bible*, any revised standard version

#### Course Requirements:

You will be evaluated on your performance on daily quizzes, a presentation, a book review, and a note length paper of publishable quality the precise shape and nature of which will emerge over the course of our term.

## ENC 6700 Studies in Composition Theory

Dr. James Beasley, W, 6:00-8:45

(Concentration in Composition in Rhetoric, required, or elective)

is one of the courses in the Composition and Rhetoric concentration within the M.A. in English. In this class we will explore some of the most influential theories of rhetoric by reading primary and secondary texts and apply them to contemporary problems in the teaching of composition. Students completing this course will be able to

- identify how definitions of rhetoric have changed over time;
- demonstrate that they can critically examine how classical, modern, and postmodern theories of rhetoric have shaped the field of composition;
- and demonstrate that they can utilize rhetorical theory to solve contemporary problems in composition.

### **ENG 6019 Contemporary Literary Theory**

Dr. Sam Kimball, R 6:00-8:45

(required)

Going back to the 1920s, the field of literary theory—influenced by and in conversation with other disciplines in the arts, humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and, more recently, computer and cognitive sciences—has produced an astonishing array of “approaches” to thinking critically about the nature of literature and of interpretation. These approaches have led to magnificent readings not only of canonical British and American literature but of literary works from around the world as well as of an expanding horizon of non-literary endeavors, including the narratives in advertising, anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, sociology, medicine, and other disciplines.

These theoretical approaches are often cross- or multi-disciplinary. Some overlap and converge, others diverge radically from or are antithetical to one another. Across their dissimilarities and disputes as well as their affiliations and agreements, the multiplicity of approaches can be used to analyze any number of “cultural formations”— literature, myth, sacred narrative, film, art, architecture, multi-media “texts,” the history of social institutions (prisons, for example), the history of madness, the sociology of mental illness, the modes of economic production, political structures, administrative procedures, and countless other “discourses” and “domains of knowledge.” These various theoretical approaches often differ widely in the questions they ask, in the analytic procedures they employ, in the information they draw on from other disciplines, in the way they situate themselves in relation to larger historical and cultural movements, and in how useful they are outside of the graduate classroom. Some theory-based approaches are readily accessible; others are quite difficult. Although many rely on the techniques of close reading that are the hallmark of New Criticism, nevertheless the voluminous theory-oriented scholarship of the last 100 years has produced no common methodology that would overarch either the affinities among them or the disparateness of the projects included under the rubric of “theory.”

Because there is to my knowledge no unifying principle for theory-based approaches to literary studies, in this course we will not attempt to survey the complex intellectual history of modern theory. Rather, we will sample a number of studies that to my mind demonstrate the analytic power, explanatory value, and existential urgency of theory. In particular, we will read selections from works that together reflect the diversity and reach of theory and that also include instructions on how to do theory, how to theorize. We will read these works with recurring attention to how theory can provide greater access to literature’s mysterious capacity for saying what cannot otherwise be said, especially about the nature of the experiences an “I” has of its self-awareness, including its use of language, ordinary as well as literary; about the limits an “I” encounters in understanding these experiences; and about how the mortal subject, in its linguistic-mediated self-immersion, is affected by the beckoning allure of a wished-for transcendence. We will likewise attend to how theory helps specify the costs of human consciousness and what this economy implies for the many different visions of community and social order, of the Anthropocene future, and of the sacred that are central to western literature in particular.

Please contact me ([skimball@unf.edu](mailto:skimball@unf.edu)) if you would like to see the tentative readings and course requirements.

**LIT 5934 (83925) Literary Frauds** (crosslisted)

Dr. Michael Wiley, T/R 1:40-2:55

(elective)

One of the uncomfortable secrets of literary studies is that some of the writers whom we praise as the most original and imaginative also have been accused of stealing others' work or misrepresenting their own roles as authors. S.T. Coleridge, Thomas DeQuincey, and Edgar Allan Poe, for instance, were all notorious plagiarists. In recent years, such widely divergent writers as James Frey (*A Million Little Pieces*), Dan Brown (*The Da Vinci Code*), and Stetson Kennedy (*The Klan Unmasked*) also have been accused of committing literary fraud.

This course will ask, what is literary fraud? What is plagiarism, what is forgery, and what is authorial misrepresentation or inauthentic self-representation? We will consider what works by writers such as Aeschylus, Sophocles, William Shakespeare, William Wordsworth, Coleridge, Poe, Heiner Müller and others tell us about our ideas of literary dishonesty and about now standard literary values, such as originality, imagination, authority, authenticity, genius, and personal voice. We also will consider how these values have evolved over time, and how the idea of authorship has come to have the various meanings that it has today. We will do so by reading literary texts and also literary theory and criticism. We will consider and put into practice methods of *intertextual* and *metatextual* reading. We will analyze the historical dominance of such literary values as *mimesis*, *expressivity*, *objectivism*, and *reproduction*, along with the interplay of such values.

The literature we read will cover an immense geographical expanse (from Greece to Northern Europe to the United States) and an equally immense historical expanse (from about 500 BCE to the present moment). To give meaning to this enormous survey, we will read with a close focus on questions of authorship

Note: If you have already taken this seminar as an undergraduate, you should not take it as a graduate student.

**LIT 5934 (83907) Indigenous and Chicana Literature**

Dr. Betsy Nies, T/R 6:00-7:15

(post-1800, American)

This course exposes students to two traditions that profoundly intersect in terms of the influence of issues pertaining to indigeneity and colonization. The 1960s brought not only hippies and a powerful counterculture, but also a revolution in literary studies, namely the recognition of both Native American and Mexican-American literary traditions. Suddenly scholars discovered that there were writers all along who were interweaving oral traditions with writing, creating literary hybrids that invited readers to consider the limitations and strengths of the written word. This course will explore the work of writers from both ethnic traditions—N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, Sherman Alexie, Gloria Anzaldúa, Anna Castillo, and Luis Valdez among others who broke literary ground with their innovative works. If you have ever wondered if popular culture can serve as a catalyst for change, then check out Alexie's *The Long Ranger Fistfights in Heaven* (1993). If words can write borders—cross and re-cross them visually on a page—then check out Anzaldúa's *Borderlands / La Frontera* (1987) where she journeys through feminist,

Mexican, American, and queer territories in startling ways. Works will also include Silko's autobiographical and visual text *Storyteller* (1981), Momaday's *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (1969), Corky Gonzales' poem "I am Joaquin," *corridos* (Mexican American border ballads), Chicano rap, and other interesting genres. No Spanish is required.

Students will complete a final project mimicking the creative structure of the texts, weaving together poetry, theory, fiction, and visual texts to convey their own experiential argument about a critical issue.

### **LIT 6934: New York Schools: The Poetry and Painting of a City**

Dr. Clark Lunberry, M 6:00-8:45

(post-1800, American)

“One need never leave the confines of New York to get all the greenery one wishes—I can’t even enjoy a blade of grass unless I know there’s a subway handy, or a record store or some other sign that people do not totally regret life.”

—Frank O’Hara, “Meditations in an Emergency”

In this graduate seminar, we will be looking at the rich and varied cultural scene of New York City that emerged after WW II, when the city was to become (supplanting Paris...or so they say) the “cultural capital of the world.” To this day, New York remains a kind of magnet for poets and artists from all over the globe, as they come, still, to participate in and be enlivened by the particular energies found in America’s great metropolis.

Our initial focus will be upon the first generation of “New York School Poets,” such as Frank O’Hara, John Ashbery, Kenneth Koch, James Schuyler, and Barbara Guest, while also looking at later groups of writers, the “second generation New York School,” such as Ron Padgett, Joe Brainard, Alice Notley and Eileen Myles.

Along with these poets, though, we will broaden our focus to include examples of New York School visual artists (such as, Jackson Pollock & Mark Rothko; and, later, Joan Mitchell & Helen Frankenthaler). New York was (and is) a rich multidisciplinary & interdisciplinary & cross-disciplinary environment in which the poets influenced the painters, while the painters influenced the poets...not to mention the dancers & composers who were also integral parts of the cultural scene.

Over the course of the semester, we will focus upon the city in all of its dynamically cultural entanglements, while also examining the theoretical backdrop to New York’s cultural scene, the theorists and critics of that period who helped to shape and influence its impact and reception, as well as its widespread influence.

### **ENC6942 Teaching Practicum: Writing Classroom, LIT 6941 Practicum: Teaching Literature, LIT 6905: Directed Independent Study**

You must have completed six courses to enroll in a teaching practicum or independent study. Both require the consent of a faculty member to work with you and an extended enrollment process. For practica, you teach alongside a graduate faculty member in an undergraduate classroom; if you want credit for the Concentration in Composition and Rhetoric, you must teach in an undergraduate ENC or CRW classroom. Contact Dr. Betsy Nies (bnies@unf.edu) for more information on registering for a teaching practicum or independent study for this coming fall.