

SPRING 2020
GRADUATE COURSE OFFERINGS

Department of English ▪ Florida Atlantic University

AML 6938-001 | Professor Taylor Hagood

Faulkner

Wednesdays 7:10pm–10:00pm | CRN 14284

Because of the richness of his work, the breadth of scholarly engagement with his oeuvre, and the extent of his influence on subsequent writers, William Faulkner is a key figure in United States, hemispherical, and even world literature. For creative writers, Faulkner's writing provides tremendous grounds for studying technique in constructing fictional worlds, characters of tremendous depth, descriptions, staging/movement, and philosophical depth. For literary scholars, Faulkner's work remains a foundational touchstone: much like Shakespeare, Faulkner invites disability studies, critical race studies, postcolonial theory, examination of Anthropocene/plantationocene, animal studies, queer theory, thing studies, and whatever critical approaches are yet to come. This course will delve into Faulkner with intense reading and discussion of his work with the result that students will attain a level of expertise in the field.

Historical Period: 1900–present

Concentrations: American Literature

AML 6938-002 | Professor José de la Garza Valenzuela

Queer Writers of Color

Thursdays 4:00pm–6:50pm | CRN 14897

In the U.S., the 21st Century has been defined by an increased mobilization around same-sex marriage, racial inequality, economic injustice, immigration reform, and women's rights. Many of these movements find their precedents in the 20th century's Civil Rights Movement, Chicano Movement, gay liberation movements, and 2nd wave feminism, all of which have since been subject to substantive critique as notably exclusionary of queers of color. Despite their overlapping interests, the refusal of queerness of color made unique solidarities impossible in the 20th Century, a legacy that often lingers in contemporary political and theoretical discourse. This seminar will investigate the histories that made the exclusion of queers of color not only possible, but integral to the narratives of racial, migrant, women's, and gay progress. As Michael Hames García explains, queer studies should "re-member" or "bring together a coalitional body that has been dis-membered by a history of ideological violence. In actively remembering that history of violence we are able not only to remember a history of conflict and coalition but also re-member possibilities for collaboration in the present" (4, *Gay Latino Studies*). Our seminar will attempt to imagine solidarities between current cultural crises by interrogating the histories of violence against queer people of color in the U.S. that have made those solidarities impossible. By design and necessity the course will be intersectional and will consider multiple cultural and literary histories in examining topics like citizenship, urban displacement, migration, refugee policy, disability, and asylum policy as queer issues with implications for communities of color advocates must necessarily consider.

The following texts, our primary reading list, will be supplemented by short stories, poetry selections, and scholarly essays: John Rechy's *City of Night*, James Baldwin's *Another Country*, Arturo Islas's *The Rain God*, Achy Obejas's *Memory Mambo*, Daisy Hernández's *A Cup of Water Under My Bed*, Audre Lorde's *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, Bryan Washington's *Lot*, Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*, and Jewelle Gomez's *The Gilda Stories*.

Historical Period: 1900–present

Concentration: American Literature ▪ Multicultural and World Literatures

ENC 6930-002 | Professor Anthony Stagliano

Bodies and Technology/Bodies in Technology

Thursdays 7:10pm–10:00pm | CRN 14620

This course will study the complicated relationship between bodies and technologies. I say “complicated” because it’s increasingly difficult to draw clear lines between the two terms, and because in their encounter there is a way that they each complicate our understanding of the other. Meanwhile, there are serious sociopolitical stakes in the relationship between bodies and technology, as not all embodied encounters with technology are positive, voluntary, or beneficial and not all bodies are afforded the same agency or legibility in our social and political worlds. At the same time, many have found technologically enriched ways of transforming and extending their own embodiment, undermining authoritarian control over body-technology encounters while also challenging simple appeals to technophobia. That is, the encounter between bodies and technology is at once dangerous *and* a moment of creative and rhetorical invention.

We will read scholarly works that help us think through these complications and their implications, from a range of disciplinary perspectives and fields. Alongside that work, we will study a number of artistic projects—with emphasis on “bio art” and related performance, media, and conceptual practices—whose creative research casts a different light onto the problem. We will study these practices as deeply rhetorical, revealing and enacting the suasive force of interfaces between living things and technological media, with an eye to the inventive possibilities they reveal.

Since we will study creative works as critical interventions, students will have the choice to produce their own course research in a creative-critical medium, in the form of a traditional seminar paper, or even somewhere in between.

Readings: You will need to buy the following books (which are low-priced paperbacks): Natalie Loveless, *How to Make Art at the End of the World*; Kim Tallbear, *Native American DNA*; Ruha Benjamin, *Race after Technology*. All other readings will be provided.

Concentration: Rhetoric and Composition

ENG 5019-001 | Professor Ian MacDonald

Literary Criticism 2

Tuesdays 7:10pm–10:00pm | CRN 14290

ENG 5019 will provide a broad survey of literary theory beginning with Hegel and ending in the present, delineating a broad swath of critical schools including semiotics, psychoanalysis, new criticism, structuralism, Marxism, post-structuralism, deconstruction, race theory, feminist theory, queer theory, postcolonialism, and ecocriticism. Among the major theorists focused upon may include Saussure, Freud, Lacan, Derrida, Kristeva, Butler, Said, Bhabha, Benjamin, Richardson, Leavis, Foucault, Gates, Haraway, and others. The primary focus will be on deciphering what are often very dense texts and applying them effectively to literary exhibits, assessing the use and role of critical theory in the process of making textual claims.

ENG 6009-001 | Professor Julieanne Ulin

Principles & Problems of Literary Study

Mondays 7:10pm–10:00pm | CRN 13994

Research and methodology; problems of textuality and critical assumptions; history of ideas.

ENL 6455-003 | Professor John Leeds

17th-century English Prose: Reason and Revolution

Mondays 4:00pm–6:50pm | CRN 14630

This is a course in the literature of the English Revolution (1640-1660): before, during, and slightly after. As such, it is also a course in the birth of both modern democracy and modern materialism. Through close attention to the works of several writers (Francis Bacon, Robert Burton, John Milton, Thomas Hobbes, among others), we will examine scientific rationalism in its infancy and evangelical Christianity in its revolutionary phase. Students will emerge from this course with an altered view of some basic modern assumptions and with an enhanced appreciation for English prose as an argumentative, imaginative, and experimental medium.

Historical Period: Pre–1700

Concentration: British Literature

ENL 6455-004 | Professor Oliver Buckton

Sensation, Decadents and Detectives in Victorian Fiction

Wednesdays 4:00pm–6:50pm | CRN 15362

The second half of the nineteenth century saw an explosion in the popularity of “Sensation” fiction, a genre that explored the hidden criminal regions of middle-class Victorian society. Using a mixture of professional policemen and amateur detectives, sensation novels such as Mary Elizabeth Braddon’s *Lady Audley’s Secret* and Wilkie Collins’s *The Moonstone* revealed a fascination with the secrets of sexuality, gender, property, and crime that were kept under lock and key by the bourgeois Victorian society. Many of these themes of “sensation” resurfaced in later fiction, in which the “decadent” tendencies of late-Victorian dissidents and criminals became the subject of literary and police investigation. The common theme of crime and its connection to the passion for secrecy, combined with a paradoxical mania for scandal in late-Victorian culture, will form the focus of this course. The course will also consider the influence of the British Empire on the popularity of detective fiction, the sexual scandals of the 1890s, and the rise of the “New Woman.” Other readings will include Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes novel, *The Sign of Four*.

Historical Period: 1700–1900

Concentration: British Literature

LIT 6932-001 | Professor Eric Berlatsky

Superhero Comics

Tuesdays 4:00pm–6:50pm | CRN 14917

Conventional wisdom dates the birth of the superhero to 1938, with the publication of Action Comics #1, and the introduction of the character of Superman. In fact, the archetype of the superhero predates Superman in a variety of iterations. One can turn to mythic figures like Heracles and/or Gilgamesh, to historical figures like Napoleon Bonaparte, to the Byronic Hero in drama or fiction, to the early science-fiction heroes of Wells and Verne, or to characters with dual identities like Stevenson’s Jekyll and Hyde. Most predictive of superheroes, perhaps, were Baroness Orczy’s *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, masked men like Johnson McCulley’s Zorro, and the less well-remembered folkloric Spring-Heeled Jack. Heroes of penny-dreadfuls, dime novels, and pulp magazines all contained heroes that we might retrospectively call superheroes (The Shadow, Tarzan, John Carter of Mars, Doc Savage, The Clansman, etc.). The idea of the “superman” even arises in serious philosophical and political discourse in the work of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche and George Bernard Shaw. Nevertheless, the appearance of Superman spawned an explosion of imitators, particularly in comics, but later in television, film, and prose, of characters with super powers, dual identities, and the strange

propensity to wear their underwear on the outside of their clothes. Recently, superheroes have all but taken over the summer blockbusters released by the Hollywood movie-machine. This course will focus primarily on the medium in which superheroes came into their own as a pop culture phenomenon, comics, while exploring a variety of related questions. What is the mass attraction of superheroes? Why are they so popular, particularly in America, and why have they had such staying power? How are they related to the Cold War and other “current events”? How are they, inexorably, “queer”? What kinds of ideological problems do they present? What are their gender and racial politics? What do they tell us about ourselves and our society? In what ways are they a symptom of modernity? What are the differences between legality, morality, and ethics? In what ways was the comics medium particularly suited for superheroics and how did the medium develop in concert with and around this storytelling genre? These issues and more will direct our discussion and our reading over the course of the semester. Though a class in superhero comics should, by definition, be fun, it will also be rigorous, and include substantial reading of history and theory, in addition to the comics themselves. More than anything, we will attempt to determine what the significance the superhero and superhero comics in American and world culture.

Readings will include: Siegel and Shuster’s Golden Age Superman comics, William Moulton Marston and Harry Peter’s Golden Age Wonder Woman comics, a variety of other Golden Age comics, Silver Age Spider-Man (Stan Lee, Steve Ditko, Gerry Conway, Gil Kane, and John Romita) and Fantastic Four (Stan Lee and Jack Kirby), Bronze Age X-Men (Chris Claremont and John Byrne), 1980’s classics *Watchmen* (Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons), *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* (Frank Miller), and *Animal Man* (Grant Morrison, Chas Truog, and Doug Hazlewood), and a variety of important/interesting comics from the 1990’s through the present day: *Sailor Moon* (Naoko Takeuchi), *Truth: Red, White, and Black* (Robert Morales and Kyle Baker), *The Life and Times of Savior 28* (J. M. DeMatteis and Michael Cavallaro), *Ms. Marvel* (G. Willow Wilson and Adrian Alphona), *Batwoman: Elegy* (Greg Rucka and J. H. Williams III), and *Black Panther* (Ta-Nehisi Coates and Brian Stelfreeze). Students will also acquire and read *The Superhero Reader* and other materials made available on CANVAS.

Most of the above books have been ordered from the bookstore, but can often be acquired much more cheaply elsewhere (including your local public library) as well as digitally (Comixology).

Historical Period: 1900–present

Concentrations: Science Fiction ▪ American Literature