

Spring 2023 Graduate Course List

Course Number	Course Title	Faculty	Time	Room	Period requirement
Engl-GA 1084.001 x-listed with IRISH-GA 1084	Literature of Modern Ireland II: The Irish Gothic	Kelly Sullivan	Tuesday 6:10-8:40PM	Ireland House	18th and/or 19th centuries
Engl-GA 1085.001 x-listed with IRISH-GA 1085	Topics in Irish Literature, "Writing the Troubles"	John Waters	Monday 6:10-8:40PM	Ireland House	20th and/or 21st centuries
Engl-GA 2075.001	MA Thesis Workshop	Dara Regaignon	Tuesday 4:55-6:55PM	Room 805	
Engl-GA 2075.002	MA Thesis Workshop	Jini Watson	Thursday 10:00-12PM	Room 306	
Engl-GA 2270.001	<i>Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde</i>	Martha Rust	Tuesday 4:55-7:40PM	Room 306	Medieval and/or Renaissance
Engl-GA 2270.002	Dante's Divine Comedy: Purgatorio	Maria Luisa Ardizzone	Thursdays 3:30-6:15pm	Casa Italiana Room 203	Medieval and/or Renaissance
Engl-GA 2323.001	Bordering the Nation in Shakespeare's England	John Archer	Wednesday 2:00-4:45PM	Room 105	Medieval and/or Renaissance
Engl-GA 2838.001	Writing the city: New York after wwii	Tom Augst	Tuesday 6:20-9:05PM	Room 105	20th and/or 21st centuries
Engl-GA 2902.001	Black Poetry and Social Movements	Sonya Posmentier	Wednesday 4:55-7:40PM	Room 105	18th and/or 19th centuries
Engl-GA 2902.002	Dramas of the Black Diaspora	Honey Crawford	Thursday 4:55-7:40PM	Room 306	20th and/or 21st centuries
Engl-GA 2902.003 x-listed with Comp Lit	Topics in African Lit: Literary Archives & Experiments in Reading	Tinashe Mushakavanhu	Thurssday 4:55 - 7:35PM	Tisch Hall, Room LC6	20th and/or 21st centuries
Engl-GA 2916.001 x-listed with SPAN-GA 2967.001	Latinx Modernisms	T. Urayoán Noel	Monday 2:00-4:45PM	19 UP	20th and/or 21st centuries

Engl-GA 2916.002 x-listed AMST-GA 3701	<i>Comparative Colonialisms: Latin America and the United States</i>	Maria Saldaña-Portillo	Monday 2:00-4:45PM	20 Cooper Sq, Room 485	20th and/or 21st centuries
Engl-GA 2917.001	Deep England: War, Empire and Modern British Culture	Patrick Deer	Monday 2:00-4:45PM	Room 306	20th and/or 21st centuries
Engl-GA 2927.001	Topics in Contemporary poetry: Poetry in English Since WWII	Lytle shaw	Monday 4:55-7:40PM	Room 306	20th and/or 21st centuries
Engl-GA 2957.001	Literature as Philosophy/Philosophy as Literature	Robert Young	Wednesday 2:00-4:45PM	Room 306	20th and/or 21st centuries
Engl-GA 2957.002	Archives, Monuments, and Cultural Memory	Paula McDowell	Wednesday 11:00-1:45PM	Room 306	18th and/or 19th centuries
Engl-GA 2958.001 x-listed with COLIT-GA 2122.001	Conspiracy Theories: Genealogies and Futures	Mark Sanders	Monday 11:00-1:45PM	19 UP	21st and/or 21st centuries
Engl-GA 2958.002 x-listed with COLIT-GA 2956	The Third Person	Zakir Paul	Thursday 11:00-1:45PM	19 UP	18th and/or 19th centuries
Engl-GA 2958.003 x-listed with HBRJD-GA 2520	Topics in Literary Studies: Mother Tongue: Theories of Language and Maternity	Roni Henig	Thursday 2:00-4:45PM	King Juan Carlos, Room 109	18th and/or 19th centuries

Spring 2023 Graduate Course Descriptions

Engl-GA 1084.001 x-listed with IRISH-GA 1084.001

Literature of Modern Ireland II: The Irish Gothic

Professor Kelly Sullivan

This class traces Irish literature written in the gothic mode, from 19th century classics like Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Grey*, and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, through the 2022 rural gothic film *God's Creatures*. It considers why the gothic, with its hallmark characteristics of haunting and the uncanny, of monstrosity and excess, predominates through two centuries of Irish writing, and why it is particularly suited to 21st-century post-Celtic Tiger Ireland with its ghost estates and financial ruins.

We will read work from 19th century classic gothic texts through JM Synge's gothic-inflected anti-pastoral *The Aran Islands* to WB Yeats's play *Purgatory*; from Elizabeth Bowen's *The Last September* to Molly Keane's *Good Behaviour*; and from Patrick Kavanagh's *The Great Hunger* to Seamus Heaney's *North* and Leontia Flynn's *Profit and Loss*. We consider short stories, plays, poetry,

and even film in this survey course that fulfills the Irish Studies MA “Literature of Modern Ireland II” module.

Engl-GA 1085.001 x-listed with IRISH-GA 1085.001

Topics in Irish Literature, "Writing the Troubles"

Professor John Waters

The outbreak of political demonstrations and violence in Northern Ireland in 1968 coincided with unrest and political instability across the globe. However, unlike other flashpoints of conflict in that memorable year, the conflict in Ireland led to a low-intensity civil war and a political impasse that has eased over the last 20 years while never truly receding into the past. This course will examine how imaginative writers grappled with the crisis in Northern Ireland, and within the broader crisis in Irish and British culture and politics. We will examine a variety of genres in order to answer the question of how social crisis can prove generative of, and destructive to, literary culture. What were the cultural pre-conditions for the outbreak of the crisis, and how were these expressed in writing before 1968? Why did poetry flourish in the worst years of the conflict, and in what ways did poets express their own relation to the different communities on the island? How was violence brought within the field of representation across literary genres? With what different tools did popular culture, popular literary genres, film and folk music and punk rock, relate to the conflict? How has the literary culture of Northern Ireland changed in the period after the Good Friday Agreement of 1998? And how has a place with such local conditions of crisis been represented against wider global trends such as neoliberalism, globalization, and migration? We will consider a range of theoretical reflections on the state and crises of legitimacy, the rise of mass surveillance practices, internment and imprisonment in the context of global human rights discourse, and post-colonial theoretical concepts as applied to a developed European economy and late- and post-imperial state. Key authors read on the course include Seamus Heaney, Paul Muldoon, Ciaran Carson, Medbh McGuckian, Brian Friel, Sinéad Morrissey, Seamus Deane, David Lloyd, and others.

Engl-GA 2270.001

Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and the Matter of Troy

Professor Martha Rust

Widely hailed as his masterpiece, Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* has also been judged the pinnacle of medieval romance and the first psychological novel. Accordingly, it is seen as the fulfillment of a medieval genre that looks forward to a modern one. In this course, we will consider Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* as a contribution to a vast tradition that precedes it: the “matter of Troy,” that mix of fiction and historiography relating the fall of Troy, the migration of the Trojan heroes to the West, and the founding by their descendants of Rome and thereby of Western Christendom. We will begin with readings from Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and wend our way thence to the earliest European versions of the Troy story, attributed to Dares the Phrygian and Dictys of Crete, and from there to works by Benoît, Boccaccio, and others. In this reading we will discover the cultural cachet of Troy and observe its sociopolitical uses (and abuses). In our reading of the course's centerpiece, we will see Chaucer's particular use of the prestige of his source material along with his narrator's canny play with the fictional source of his story. Our primary readings throughout the course will be complemented by readings in the theories of reception and intertextuality.

Engl-GA 2270.002 x-listed with ITAL-GA 2311

Dante's *Divine Comedy: Purgatorio* (Seminar)

Professor Maria Luisa Ardizzone

Purgatorio is the second section of the *Divine Comedy*, a very long poem traditionally judged to be one of the most important in Western culture. At the center of the poem is the human being, his condition in the afterlife and his punishment or reward. Taken literally, the theme is the state of the souls after death. But allegorically, the true subject is moral life and thus the torments of the sins themselves or the enjoyment of a happy and saintly life. In the *Inferno*, Dante represents evil and the punishment that God's justice

inflicts upon the sinners. Hell is the place of eternal damnation. Purgatory, by contrast, is the place in which human beings are purged of their sins and become pure, thereby able to enter Paradise, which the Comedy describes as the place of eternal happiness. The course considers Purgatorio not just as the place of pain and expiation but also as the place of rebirth. Purgatory introduces a new epic which sings of the human soul's regeneration as a natural power activated by contrition and conversion. Love, here conceived as the seed of every virtue and of every vice, is the moving force of the ascent toward the happiness of the Earthly Paradise. The way in which such a regenerative process takes place will be addressed and discussed during the semester. Course conducted in English.

Engl-GA 2323.001

Bordering the Nation in Shakespeare's England

Professor John Archer

Current critical interest in ethnicity, race, religion, citizenship, and migration has led to renewed questions about the idea of the nation and its possible origins or precursors in early-modern times. Through roving provincial performance as well as its permanent sites in London, theater in Renaissance England was well-positioned to help its audiences imagine something like a national community, to adapt Benedict Anderson's classic phrase. What is, or was, a nation? Did English people see themselves as part of a nation? What role did gender and sexuality play in their self-image? Did emerging national feelings limit a militant religious identity or enable it? How did Wales, Scotland, and Ireland define the immediate borders of English nationality? What exchanges and conflicts did borders make possible? Furthermore, how did earlier concepts of geographically-defined community border upon or anticipate the coming idea of the nation in later modernity? Finally, how do earlier texts and performances alert us to the limits of the renewed interest in the nation today? Our class will address these questions through the careful reading of seven or eight plays, mostly by Shakespeare. Along with each play, we shall take up one or two theoretical statements or critical articles that deal with the nation from different points of view; older approaches like new historicism will be included, but the focus will be on work from the past decade. Along with Anderson, we will read treat the perspectives of Gloria Anzaldúa, Etienne Balibar, Hannah Arendt, and Sandro Mezzadra, along with a range of approaches from scholarship and literary criticism about early-modern England, Alba, Cymru, and Éire (Scotland, Wales, and Ireland). We shall begin in the Elizabethan period with *Richard II* and the *Henry IV* plays, and proceed to *Henry V*. Attention will be given to Elizabethan Wales and especially Ireland; we will read the anonymous *Stukeley* play, the only play from the period that includes scenes set in occupied Éire. During the final part of term we shall consider two nearly contemporary tragedies from the Jacobean period: the Scottish play of *Macbeth* and *King Lear*, along with the British romance, *Cymbeline*. Immigrants, resident aliens, and refugees figure in our secondary readings along with the developing problematic of "the nation" as exponent of physical, human, and political geographies in Shakespeare.

This course will be useful to students interested in Shakespeare and early modern drama, political forms, legal and economic criticism, landscape and environment, religion and secularism, colonial and postcolonial studies, race, ethnicity, and Irish studies. Requirements will include presentations, papers, and constant, well-informed class participation.

Engl-GA 2838.001

Topics in American Literature: "Writing the City: New York After World War II"

Professor Thomas Augst

This course explores the relation between urban experience and artistic form, surveying the literary imagination of identity and community that emerged with the transformation of New York City after World War II. How has New York City provided a setting and become a character in larger stories about modern and contemporary life in the United States, ranging from the experience of immigration and racial conflict, wealth and poverty, personal liberation and collective disaster? What resources of perspective and scale, character and setting, have genres of the novel, nonfiction, poetry and theater furnished for

writers and readers as they seek to map emergent cultural geographies of race, gender, class, and sexuality? How might literary texts guide us within local and global horizons of urban experience in our contemporary moment? Tentative readings include James Baldwin's *Another Country*, Anna Deavere Smith's *Fire in the Mirror*, Patti Smith's *Just Kids*, Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing*, Ling Ma's *Severance*, Colum McCann's *Let the Great World Spin*, Esmeralda Santiago's *When I Was Puerto Rican*, and selected poetry by Ginsberg, O'Hara, and Lorde, among other works, and include critical, historical, and theoretical perspectives on urban space. Requirements will include class presentations and active participation in course conversation, argumentation built on close reading, and analytical writing.

Engl-GA 2902.001

Black Poetry and Social Movements

Professor Sonya Posmentier

This course is an immersion in selections of Black diasporic poetry and poetics from its 18th century beginnings to the present, which may include such writers as Phyllis Wheatley, F.E.W. Harper, Paul Laurence Dunbar, James Whitfield, Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, Etheridge Knight, Audre Lorde, Kamau Brathwaite, M. NourbeSe Philip. Not a comprehensive literary history of Black poetry, our semester will instead be organized around different *movements* and their implication for the development of Black poetry as an aesthetic and social form (primarily in the US, but with some attention to Canada, Britain, and the Anglophone Caribbean). How have poets responded formally and ideologically to the radical geographic, cultural and linguistic displacements of the transatlantic slave trade from the 18th century to the present? How have poems circulated (orally and in print) through more recent migrations and immigrations around and across the Atlantic; and been shaped by cultural and social movements, like the Black Arts Movement and Caribbean Artists Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, or the Black Lives Matter movement of today? In particular, the ideology and practice of historical and contemporary *abolition* shapes the reading list and will inform our reading methods. We will take special interest in the vitality of contemporary poetic communities and social movements, and I hope we will find occasions to attend readings, performances, protests and organizing meetings, and to welcome visitors

Engl-GA 2902.002

Dramas of the Black Diaspora

Professor Honey Crawford

This course investigates pivotal works of theatre and performance grounded in global black experience. Spanning from the early 20th century to our current moment, we will study a range of texts, performances, and scholarship that encourage interdisciplinary and comparative approaches to thinking about black aesthetics, black culture, and black life. We will question the terms under which black drama is commonly framed and made legible while also digging into diasporic relationality and prevalent discourses around black theatre making. We will analyze literary works while also pushing against text-centrism with the inclusion of oral and corporeal traditions. This course does not attempt to cover a comprehensive survey of drama of the black diaspora. Invested in questions of how to define and where to locate the tenets of Black drama within a global context, we will rather ponder how black playwrights, theatre makers, practitioners, and theorists have distinctly confronted questions of marginality, genealogy and familial systems, and social mobilization with specific but not exclusive attention to the United States, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the circum-Atlantic world.

Engl-GA 2902.003 x-listed with COLIT-GA 3630

Topics in African Lit: Literary Archives & Experiments in Reading

Visiting Assistant Professor Tinashe Mushakavanhu

This seminar will explore approaches to archival research in the field of African literature, which can serve as a fascinating laboratory for literary research. Because African literature is multifaceted and multilingual, we will oscillate, at all times, between theory and practice, fundamental ways of looking at the world, through provocative contrasts and unexpected fluidities. In turn, we will also wrestle with the limitations of the archive—the silences, excesses, and (mis)representations—while also engaging with recent scholarship that addresses the methodological, theoretical, and ethical challenges of archival research in relation to the geopolitics of the black diaspora, Africa's place in its imaginaries, and ask questions around black intellectual histories and their relationship to the archive. While 'Africa' is our primary locus, we are looking to contribute to dialogues across the Black Atlantic as well as intellectual geographies such as the Caribbean, the United States and Europe. Each week there will be selected creative and critical readings.

Engl-GA 2916.001

U.S. Latina/o/x Modernisms

Professor T. Urayoán Noel

This course will focus on late nineteenth and twentieth-century U.S. Latina/o/x literary and cultural productions before 1965, in an effort to address a gap in the field of Latina/o/x Studies. Can we conceive of one or many Latina/o/x modernisms that can help us bridge “the Latino Nineteenth Century” (Lazo and Alemán, 2016) and the 1960s and “post-Sixties” (Dalleo and Machado Sáez, 2007) genealogies that have shaped Latina/o/x Studies? Can we do so without essentializing, and while complicating theorizations and chronologies of modernisms and modernities in both Anglo-American and Latin American contexts? What can we learn about Latina/o/x racialization, gender, sexuality, citizenship, and other differences by engaging texts from this era, and how can these knowledges help us inflect a range of critical conversations? Can we hold on to a sense of the eccentric literariness of many Latina/o/x modernist texts while making room for expressive cultures, and for modernist imaginaries that can unsettle the lettered city? In recognition of the historical invisibility of U.S. Latina/o/x histories within the modernist archive, and of the crucial role of New York City within Latina/o/x modernisms, we will engage with relevant materials from local archives such as the Schomburg Center, the Dominican Archives at City College, and the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College, and we may visit one or more of these archives. Assignments will consist of an archival midterm project and a final research paper.

Readings may include literary texts by Américo Paredes, Jesús Colón, Josefina Niggli, Pura Belpré, Jovita González, Arturo Schomburg, Leonor Villegas de Magnón, Salomón de la Selva, William Carlos Williams, José Martí, Fabio Fiallo, Sousândrade, and María Amparo Ruiz de Burton, and we will also consider works of expressive culture (music, dance, theater, performance, etc.) as they have helped shape Latina/o/x modernist imaginaries. Critical readings may include texts by Ramón Saldívar, Silvio Torres-Saillant, Kirsten Silva Gruesz, Laura Lomas, John Alba Cutler, Lorgia García Peña, Lisa Sánchez-González, Vanessa K. Valdés, Antonio López, Marissa K. López, David Garcia, Rita Keresztesi, Fredric Jameson, and Julio Ramos.

Engl-GA 2916.002

Comparative Colonialisms: Latin America and the United States

Professor Maria Saldaña-Portillo

Comparative study of Spanish and British colonialism; examines forms of governmentality implanted by both in Latin America, L.J.S. & Canada, and legacies thereof. Examines how colonialism produced distinct racial formations in Hispanophone and Anglophone America, focused primarily on production of Indigenous Afromestizo identities. Colonial models race were accomplished through disciplining of

gender and sexuality thus course engages active entwining of race and sex. Purpose of comparison is to assist in addressing the different modes of political subjectivity that emerged as a consequence of distinct legacies of racial formation. We critically evaluate limits of comparativist methodology, and look for modes that move us beyond comparison. How is it that Indigenous identity came to organize itself around the principle of autonomy in Latin American and around the principle of sovereignty in the United States? How did different models of enslavement in the Americas produce different modes of Black and Afromestizo enfranchisement in their aftermath? How is whiteness lived in Latin American and the U.S.? What are the geographical limits of the "white settler colonialism" model in the Americas? In short, how does racial citizenship differ in the U.S. and Latin America? We examine colonial documents coupled with contemporary analysis of colonialism. Twin goals: to gain a better understanding of the contemporal, yet distinct racial geographies in the Americas, and, as scholars of race formation, to avoid universalizing one particular experience to all of the Americas.

Engl-GA 2917.001

Deep England: War, Empire and Modern British Culture

Professor Patrick Deer

This seminar explores the profound transformations of British national identity during the twentieth and twenty first centuries in response to war, empire and decolonization, economic decline and class conflict. Focusing on questions of social class, race, gender and violence in a transatlantic and postcolonial frame, this course provides an explores the remarkable variety of modernist and contemporary British narrative. In the face of world wars, imperial decline, Cold War, sexual and social revolution, British literature underwent an unprecedented series of transformations in form and content. By considering a variety of canonically "English" works, as well as texts by exiles and migrants with a more marginal relationship to the dominant culture, we will explore the way writers appropriated elements of Englishness to negotiate crises in national identity. Some writers pursued the narrative experiments of modernism, the avant garde and postmodernism, embracing the call to "make it new"; others transformed the familiar legacies of realism and genre fiction, embracing new mass media and the challenges of the colonial and postcolonial. Nothing remained the same.

This seminar will read literature in a wider cultural field that includes film, music, and popular culture. Reading in a transnational frame, the course will pay special attention to the obsessive, racialized and gendered imaginary of Englishness, from immigrants, exiles, "mobile" women, Churchillian politicians, soldiers, scientists, immigrants, butlers, hooligans, punks and pop divas, through invented traditions, monarchy, country houses, haunted home fronts, bombed cities, nuclear bunkers, countryside in environmental crisis, and war zones in former colonies. Readings may include the work of Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, W.H. Auden, Evelyn Waugh, George Orwell, Samuel Selvon, Kingsley Amis, Ian Fleming, Muriel Spark, Anthony Burgess, Caryl Churchill, Penelope Fitzgerald, Salman Rushdie, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Zadie Smith, as well as selected films, music and streaming TV.

Engl-GA 2927.001

Topics in Contemporary poetry: Poetry in English Since WWII

Professor Lytle Shaw

A survey of poetry written mostly since 1945 and mostly in the United States, with emphasis on the avant-garde. Poets will likely include Rukeyser, Atkins, Creeley, MacLow, Porter, Spicer, Ginsberg, Mackey, Eigner, Mullen, O'Hara, Ashbery, Baraka, Hughes, Mayer, Coolidge, Hejinian, Silliman, Robertson, Davies, and Boyer. Among the concerns will be poetry's relation to specific geographic locations—and to the fieldwork and disciplinary fields commonly used to explain or frame them. Thus

the survey will be organized around poetry's shifting interactions with history, anthropology, political theory and art.

Engl-GA 2957.001

Literature as Philosophy/Philosophy as Literature

Professor Robert JC Young

As disciplines, philosophy and literature often find themselves disarmingly close to one another: philosophy comprises various modes of writing that often overlap with literary genres, while for its part literature not only engages in philosophical reflection but also highlights many of those aspects of language that most worry philosophy, namely that through language it creates forms of reality that can seem true but are nevertheless fictions. It was for this reason that Plato banished the poets from his Republic—and the anxious relation between the two disciplines has continued ever since. Like History which involves narrative, Philosophy, which often utilises autobiography, stories or poetic language, has always been keen to assert that it is not Literature. In the nineteenth century, however, it took a new turn when philosophers such as Kierkegaard started to write their philosophy in fictional, literary form. Why did they make this move?

This course will therefore begin with the question: how do we account for the relation between the two? Can literature give us truthful forms of knowledge? How far has philosophy been a creator of fictions, for example by ignoring questions of gender and race? What is the relation of literary “theory” to philosophy given that much philosophy arrives in literature departments as “theory”?

We will be examining this relationship through close readings of philosophical accounts of literature and language (drawing from those such as Plato, Sophocles, Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, Proust, Wittgenstein, Kafka), of literary forms of philosophy (such as Descartes, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Wilde, Du Bois, de Beauvoir, Fanon, Kristeva), of writing that seems to hover on the borders between the two (such as Barthes, Beckett, Benjamin, Blanchot, Borges, Cixous, Nelson), and by asking whether such writers are actually writing forms of philosophy as literature / literature as philosophy or a different genre as yet undefined.

Engl-GA 2957.002

Archives, Monuments, and Cultural Memory

Professor Paula McDowell

Office: 244 Greene Street, #415

paula.mcdowell@nyu.edu / Office Hours: any time by appointment

A practical and theoretical seminar whose goals, readings, and (to some extent) fieldwork will be shaped in part by participants' own concerns. Our agenda will be two-pronged: on the one hand, we will examine issues in archive and museum studies of special interest to students of literature; on the other hand, we will consider literary texts as sites of remembering and the question of “monumental” works. Beginning with the monuments around us (or *formerly* around us, such as the Roosevelt Statue at the American Museum of Natural History), we will engage critically with our local landscape, learning to situate monuments in time and space and interrogating the purposes, uses, effects, and value (if any) of monuments. We will then turn to the history, philosophy, and uses of archives, balancing practical training and discussion of issues such as intellectual property, copyright, and censorship; preservation, conservation, and repatriation; and problems and possibilities of institutionalization and interdisciplinarity. What can a librarian access in a library *catalogue* (let alone in the library itself) that you will likely never see? What is the relationship between cataloguing and canonization? What is the relationship between an “author's papers,” an “author's library,” and an author's “works”? How do we archive and catalogue *oral* texts? Along the way, we will read (and/or physically examine) a wide variety of

texts concerned with cultural memory (such as elegies, ballads, or novels such as *There There* by Tommy Orange) and “monumental” texts concerned with cultural memory themselves (such as Diderot and D’Alembert’s 28 volume *L’Encyclopédie*, Edward Curtis’ 20 volume *The North American Indian*, T.S. Eliot’s *The Wasteland*, or Tony Morrison’s *Beloved*). To guide our studies and no doubt no doubt provoke thoughtful debate, we will also read NYU Emeritus Professor John Guillory’s forthcoming book, *Professing Criticism: Essays on the Organization of Literary Study* (Chicago, Dec. 2022).

Engl-GA 2958.001 x-listed with COLIT-GA 2122.001

Conspiracy Theories: Genealogies and Futures

Professor Mark Sanders

It is no secret that we live in an age of paranoia, our times distinguished by a heightened concern about surveillance that is far from pathological, and a disturbing return, since 2015, to what Richard Hofstadter in 1964 termed “the paranoid style in American politics.” Our seminar is thus an attempt to gain an orientation in these times by engaging in a close and critical reading of texts and sources of theory about paranoia, from Daniel Paul Schreber’s *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* and Freud and Lacan’s readings thereof, to works by Melanie Klein, George Orwell, Michel Foucault, and Gilles Deleuze, and others. Close attention will also be devoted to documents relating to WikiLeaks and to two of the best known whistleblowers of our time, Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden. In broader terms, this course is designed as opening the question of the relevance of psychoanalytic theory to the analysis of texts both literary and political in a time of rapidly changing media and communications technology.

Engl-GA 2958.002 x-listed with COLIT-GA 2956.001

“The Third Person”

Professor Zakir Paul

Claims to epistemic certainty, political rights, and private property share a linguistic foundation in the first-person. Whether in the Cartesian cogito, the Lockean theory of personhood and appropriation, or Rousseau’s account of property in the *Second Discourse*, key junctures in Western modernity are reliant on and enabled by linguistic statements couched in the first person: I think therefore I am; this is mine, and so forth. While recent cultural and critical turns have ignited interest in third-person pronouns, much of this scrutiny has taken the form of debates about gender identities rather than number. This course shifts focus both from the possessive individualism of modernity and contemporary gender trouble in order to think through the philosophic, poetic, and political significance of the third person. The dilation of self away from the “I” lays open the promises and perils of non-identity in times of renewed nationalist and xenophobic identitarianism, as well as the emergence of multiple minoritarian and utopian communities. Figures studied may include George Eliot, Flaubert, James, Woolf, Kafka, Benveniste, Levi-Strauss, Barthes, Benjamin, Laplanche, and Simone Weil.

*Counts toward Poetics & Theory advanced certificate

Engl-GA 2958.003 x-listed with HBRJD-GA 2520

“Topics in Literary Studies: Mother Tongue: Theories of Language and Maternity”

Professor Roni Henig

How does the maternal figure in language? Is “mother” a contained otherness that operates within the symbolic order? Is it a biological fiction that perpetuates nationalist exclusions? Does it bear a generative capacity? Mother tongue, a metaphorical notion of 19th century national imagination, is a deeply charged ethnocentric concept. At the same time, the range of affects and attachments that the mother tongue entails cannot be denied. This interdisciplinary seminar navigates between changing conceptualizations of mother tongue from a range of theoretical and cultural perspectives. Considering the maternal in language

through the lens of psychoanalytic, feminist, and queer thinking, it asks whether mother tongue can be at once the product of ethnocentric ideologies and a form of resistance to cultural hegemonies. The course examines a diverse selection of critical theory alongside works of literature, cinema and art. Class discussions will trace the rise of the mother as a mark of a biological link between nation and language; explore the sexual politics of language; and focus on a set of accounts of diasporic and postcolonial linguistic experiences, in which the mother tongue appears to be fleeting and its “possession” is repeatedly questioned.