



# Course 21L Spring 2012 Subjects

Supplement to the Bulletin

*Literature is where I go to explore the highest and lowest places in human society and in the human spirit... -Salman Rushdie*

Literature

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School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences



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21L	Gets Credit For	Course Title	Fall 2011 Instructor	Day	Time	Room
<b>INTRODUCTORY</b>						
21L.000J	CI-HW/H	<b>Writing About Literature</b>	Lipkowitz, I.	TR	9:30-11a	14N-112
21L.002	CI-H/H/HASS-D2	<b>The Making of the Modern World [Foundations of Western Culture]</b>	Buzard, J.	TR	3:30-5p	14N-112
21L.002	CI-H/H/HASS-D2	<b>World Literatures and Texts II [Foundations of Western Culture]</b>	Hayek, G.	MW	9:30-11a	4-253
21L.003	CI-H/H/HASS-D1	<b>Reading Fiction (Section 1)</b>	Kelley, W.	MW	9:30-11a	66-148
21L.003	CI-H/H/HASS-D1	<b>Reading Fiction (Section 2)</b>	Delaney, K.	MW	3-4:30p	1-375
21L.004	CI-H/H/HASS-D1	<b>Reading Poetry (Section 1)</b>	TBA	TR	2:30-4p	8-205
21L.004	CI-H/H/HASS-D1	<b>Reading Poetry (Section 2)</b>	Jackson, N.	MW	3-4:30p	56-162
21L.005	CI-H/A,H/HASS-D3	<b>Introduction to Drama</b>	Bahr, A.	MW	3:30-5p	4-146
21L.006	CI-H/H/HASS-D1	<b>American Literature</b>	Tapscott, S.	MW	3-4:30p	5-231
21L.007	CI-H/H/HASS-D1	<b>Stories and Histories [World Literatures]</b>	Hayek, G.	MW	3:30-5p	14N-325
21L.008J	CI-H/A,H/HASS-D4	<b>The Caribbean Past, Present and Future [Black Matters]</b>	Braithwaite, A.	TR	1-2:30p	66-168
21L.009	CI-H/H/HASS-D1	<b>Global Shakespeares [Shakespeare]</b>	Raman, S.	TR	2:30-4p	4-253
21L.011	CI-H/A/HASS-D3	<b>The Film Experience (Lecture)</b>	Brinkema, E.	T	3:30-5p	3-333
21L.011	/	<b>The Film Experience (Screening)</b>	/	M	7-10p	3-270
21L.011	/	<b>The Film Experience (Recitation 1)</b>	/	R	3-4p	2-146
21L.011	/	<b>The Film Experience (Recitation 2)</b>	/	R	3-4p	2-147
21L.011	/	<b>The Film Experience (Recitation 3)</b>	/	R	4-5p	2-146
21L.011	/	<b>The Film Experience (Recitation 4)</b>	/	R	4-5p	2-147
21L.029J	CI-H/H/HASS-D4	<b>Exploring Identity through Asian American Literature</b>	Teng, E.	TR	1-2:30p	56-162
<b>SAMPLING S- 6 Units</b>						
21L.310		<b>Detective Fiction [Bestsellers] (ENDS MARCH 18)</b>	Tapscott, S.	W	7-10p	14N-325
21L.315		<b>Literary Translation [Prizewinners] (ENDS MARCH 18)</b>	Tapscott, S.	T	7-10p	4-146
21L.325		<b>Media, Modernity, and the Moment: Experiments in Time [Small Wonders]</b>	Jackson, N.	M	7-8:30pm	4-253
<b>INTERMEDIATE</b>						
21L.421	CI-H/H/HASS-D1	<b>Comedy</b>	Eiland, H.	MW	3:30-5p	56-180
21L.422	H	<b>Tragedy</b>	Eiland, H.	MW	1-2:30p	4-251
21L.430	H	<b>The Vampire in Fiction and Film [Popular Culture and Narrative]</b>	Donaldson, W.	R	7-10p	14N-325
21L.433	H	<b>Tarantino and the Coens: an Introduction to Style and Genre [Film Styles and Genres](Lecture)</b>	Fleche, A.	MW	2:30-4p	1-134
21L.433	H	<b>Tarantino and the Coens: an Introduction to Style and Genre [Film Styles and Genres] (Screening)</b>	/	M	7-9p	1-246
21L.434	H	<b>Cyberpunk [Science Fiction and Fantasy]</b>	Delaney, K.	W	7-10p	1-273
21L.435	H	<b>Literature and Film</b>	Kibel, A.	TR	9:30-11a	4-253
21L.448J	CI-H/H/HASS-D2	<b>Darwin and Design</b>	Kibel, A.	TR	3:30-5p	56-167
21L.451	H	<b>Introduction to Literary Theory</b>	Raman, S.	T	7-10p	14N-112
21L.460	H	<b>Legends of Arthur [Medieval Literature]</b>	Bahr, A.	MW	1-2:30p	14N-325
21L.471	H	<b>Major English Novels</b>	Lipkowitz, I.	TR	11:30-1p	14N-112
21L.473J	H	<b>Jane Austen</b>	Perry, R.	TR	1-2:30p	14N-325
21L.487	H	<b>Modern Poetry</b>	Tapscott, S.	M	7-10p	14N-325
21L.488	H	<b>Elements of Style [Contemporary Literature]</b>	Braithwaite, A.	TR	3:30-5p	1-273
21L.501	H	<b>The Stranger in the American Novel [The American Novel]</b>	Kelley, W.	MW	1-2:30p	66-148
21L.522	CI-H/H/HASS-D1	<b>International Women's Voices</b>	Resnick, M.	TR	3-4:30p	14N-313
<b>SEMINAR</b>						
21L.640J	H	<b>The New Spain</b>	Resnick, M.	TR	1-2:30p	14E-310
21L.702	CI-M/H	<b>Woolf, Joyce and the Legacy of Modernism [Studies in Fiction]</b>	Thorburn, D.	TR	1-2:30p	14N-112
21L.703	CI-M/H	<b>Stoppard and Company [Studies in Drama]</b>	Henderson, D.	TR	3-4:30p	14N-325
21L.705	CI-M/H	<b>Rewriting Genesis: "Paradise Lost" and Twentieth-Century Fantasy [Major Authors]</b>	Fuller, M.	TR	2:30-4p	4-144
21L.706	CI-M/H	<b>Heroic Cinema [Studies in Film]</b>	Marks, M.	M	7-10p	4-364
21L.709	CI-M/H	<b>Britons Abroad in the Eighteenth Century [Studies in Literary History]</b>	Perry, R.	TR	3:30-5p	4-146
21L.715	H	<b>Sound Studies: Literature, History, Media [Media in Cultural Context]</b>	Picker, J.	TR	11:30-1p	14N-325



## Introductory

### WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE 21L.000J (CI-HW/H)

T, R 9:30-11:00am                      Room: 14N-112  
Instructor: Ina Lipkowitz

Why do we write about literature? To help us clarify our own understanding of a story or poem or play, as well as to communicate that understanding to another person who might see the work very differently. Because literary works invite such different interpretations, writing about them is less a matter of proving a universal truth than of suggesting a well-informed and meaningful possibility. In this class, we'll read and talk about a variety of stories, poems, short novels, and/or plays, all of which can be understood in many ways. We'll also read and talk about students' essays in order to see how other people express and develop their ideas. The goal is to learn not only to put up with, but actually to enjoy the many possible meanings of literary works and to experiment with types of essays that reflect rather than limit the work's richness.

Readings vary, but may include stories by William Faulkner, Kate Chopin, Zora Neale Hurston, Anzia Yezierska, James Joyce, Penelope Fitzgerald, Jhumpa Lahiri; plays by Shakespeare, Oscar Wilde, or Samuel Beckett; and poems by John Donne, John Keats, and Emily Dickinson.

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### *The Making of the Modern World:* FOUNDATIONS OF WESTERN CULTURE 21L.002 (CI-H/H/HASS-D2)

Section 1  
T, R 3:30-5:00pm                      Room: 14N-112  
Instructor: James Buzard

This class reads some major European literary texts ranging from about 1600 to contemporary times for the perspectives they offer on the question, "what does it mean to be 'modern'?" We will pursue the question by considering the waning of religious authority, the rise of the modern nation-state and free-market capitalism,

concepts of liberal humanism or individualism—as well as reactions to all of these. Toward the end of the term we will break out of the "Western" framework and ask whether being modern is a singular or a plural phenomenon, following one model or adaptable to a host of different cultural environments around the world.

We will study works by Shakespeare, Cervantes, Austen, Dickens, Flaubert, T.S. Eliot, and Satyajit Ray.

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### *World Literatures and Texts II:* FOUNDATIONS OF WESTERN CULTURE

Section 2  
M, W 9:30-11:00am                      Room: 4-253  
Instructor: Ghenwa Hayek

This class focuses on foundational texts of human culture, from early modernity until the recent past. Why did these works achieve the fame and influence they achieved? How do they present what it means to be a human being? How do they describe the role of a member of a family, community, tradition, social class, gender? How do they distinguish between proper and improper behavior? How do they characterize the members of other groups? However, in several ways, these texts are also iconoclastic: they break with centuries of established tradition to shed light on previously unexplored subjects (such as the status of women or the legacy of European colonial expansion) as well as to question well-established social beliefs such as religion, monarchical rule and human nature in general.

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### READING FICTION 21L.003 (CI-H/H/HASS-D1)

Section 1  
M, W 9:30-11:00am                      Room: 66-148  
Instructor: Wyn Kelley

The theme of this class—"Reading Writing / Writing Reading"—addresses the way authors engage in certain reading practices when they write, and in turn how (our, their) writing allows

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certain kinds of reading to take place. Studying novelists such as Charlotte Bronte, Herman Melville, James Joyce, Junot Díaz, Toni Morrison, and others, students will observe the varied dimensions of texts and the ways they open up to understandings of history, culture, and identity.

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### Section 2

M, W 3:00-4:30pm

Room: 1-375

Instructor: Kate Delaney

We will read longer and shorter classics of nineteenth-, twentieth-, and twenty-first-century fiction. Readings include novels by Jane Austen, Henry James, Virginia Woolf, Michael Cunningham, and Kurt Vonnegut as well as short stories and a graphic novel. The course is designed to teach students to read better and more closely, with greater attention to literary effects. We will also examine the works' social, historical, and cultural contexts. Students will be asked to reflect on how the works assigned relate to each other and to other cultural forms, including film.

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### READING POETRY

21L.004 (CI-H/H/HASS-D1)

#### Section 1

T, R 2:30-4:00pm

Room: 8-205

Instructor: TBA

Emphasis on lyric poetry in England and the United States. Syllabus usually includes sonnets by Shakespeare, selections from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, individual poems by Donne, Keats, Dickinson, Frost, Eliot, Langston Hughes, Lowell, and Plath.

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#### Section 2

M, W 3:00-4:30pm

Room: 56-162

Instructor: Noel Jackson

An introduction to poetry in English, chiefly by British and American poets. We will explore the Renaissance, Romanticism, and Modernism in particular detail. Though the organization of the subject is chronological, our focus will be less on names and dates than on cultivating skills in

careful reading and effective writing. Poets to be read may include Shakespeare, Sidney, Wordsworth, Keats, Dickinson, Frost, Eliot, and Elizabeth Bishop. Special course-related events (readings, lectures, film screenings) will take place on selected evenings throughout the term.

Regular classroom hours will be reduced in the weeks for which special events are scheduled.

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### INTRODUCTION TO DRAMA

21L.005 (CI-H/A, H/HASS-D3)

M, W 3:30-5:00pm

Room: 4-146

Instructor: Arthur Bahr

This subject will introduce students to the Western tradition of dramatic literature, from its origins in ancient Greece to the surrealist writing of Tom Stoppard. We will write extensively in a number of genres: analytic literary criticism, theater review, peer editing, staging proposal, and self-reflection (to name just a few). Students will attend a local performance of a play and will also, in small groups, stage scenes from plays we've read. Authors to be studied include the famous (Aeschylus, Aristophanes, and Euripides, from the classical world; Wilde and Stoppard from the twentieth century) and not-so-famous (Kyd, Beaumont, Sheridan). They have in common a powerful storytelling ability that has inspired directors and actors across centuries to continue performing those stories. We will continue in that tradition.

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### AMERICAN LITERATURE

21L.006 (CI-H/H/HASS-D1)

M, W 3:00-4:30pm

Room: 5-231

Instructor: Stephen Tapscott

Studies the national literatures of the United States from the early 19th century to the early 21st century. We read novels, essays, films, and poems, focusing on efforts to define and reform a sense of American identity amidst increasing awareness of cultural diversity. Readings include works by Hawthorne, Whitman, Thoreau, Douglass, Dickinson, Frost, Fitzgerald, Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin, William Carlos Williams,

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and Amy Tan. Films include *Citizen Kane*, *Psycho*, and *I Love Lucy*.

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*Stories and Histories: WORLD LITERATURES*  
21L.007 (CI-H/H/HASS-D1)

M, W 3:30-5:00pm                      Room: 14N-325  
Instructor: Ghenwa Hayek

We will explore the tension between fiction and history through a number of novels that bear witness to historical events while also challenging the ways we think about history and the writing of history. Some of the questions we will ask in this class include: What are the implications of bearing witness? How does the medium of fiction enrich our understanding of historical events? What role does literature play in the shaping and framing of history? How does the audience of a global text come to understand a local history? And, why are so many of fiction's most engaging witnesses so unreliable? Texts include *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *Midnight's Children*, *The Tin Drum* and *Memory for Forgetfulness*, and other texts from Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Latin America, Europe and the Caribbean.

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*The Caribbean Past, Present and Future:*  
BLACK MATTERS  
21L.008J (CI-H/A , H/HASS-D4)

T, R 1:00-2:30pm                      Room: 66-168  
Instructor: Alisa Braithwaite

1492: Columbus arrives in the Caribbean. 1804: The Haitian Revolution becomes the world's only slave rebellion to create an independent nation. 1915-1934: The U.S. occupies Haiti. 1916-1924: The U.S. occupies the Dominican Republic (D.R.). 1937: President Trujillo of the D.R. orders massacre of Haitians living there. 1973: Creation of the Caribbean Common Market and Community (CARICOM) for free trade. 1975 and 1979: The West Indies becomes the first team to win the Cricket World Cup twice. 1987: The Haitian Constitution declares Haitian Creole as official language alongside French. 1992: Derek Walcott wins the Nobel Prize for Literature. 2010: Haiti

experiences one of the strongest earthquakes in the Western Hemisphere. These are just a few of the pivotal events that have come to define the Caribbean's past, present and future. Our course will use literature and linguistics to examine how the Caribbean has shaped, and has been shaped by, global events through struggle, rebellion, critique and innovation.

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*Global Shakespeares: SHAKESPEARE*  
21L.009 (CI-H/H/HASS-D1)

T, R 2:30-4:00pm                      Room: 4-253  
Instructor: Shankar Raman

We will focus on three or four plays by Shakespeare, drawn from different genres. Close reading of the texts will be accompanied by examining how they have been adapted and performed around the world, on film and in theatre. Students will watch different versions of the plays chosen, reflecting upon how staging them in different ways and contexts changes our understanding of the texts and their cultural impact. We will also attend one or more theatrical performances, depending on what is available in the Boston area in the Spring semester. Plays selected will probably include: *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Tempest*.

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THE FILM EXPERIENCE  
21L.011 (CI-H/A/HASS-D3)

M 7:00-10:00pm (Screening)      Room: 3-270  
T 3:30-5:00pm (Lecture)              Room: 3-333  
R 3:00-4:00pm (Recitation 1)      Room: 2-146  
R 3:00-4:00pm (Recitation 2)      Room: 2-147  
R 4:00-5:00pm (Recitation 3)      Room: 2-146  
R 4:00-5:00pm (Recitation 4)      Room: 2-147  
Instructor: Eugenie Brinkema

Films are familiar to you; this course should make them strange again. The Film Experience serves as an introduction to film studies, concentrating on close analysis and criticism. Students will learn the technical vocabulary for analyzing the cinematic narrative, frame, and editing; develop the critical means for

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turning close analysis into interpretations and comparative readings of films; and explore theoretical issues. We will look beyond the surface pleasures of cinema to ask how films are put together; what choices are made formally, narratively, and politically in the constructions of different types of films; and how films have changed historically and in different production and national contexts.

We will study a wide range of works made between 1895 and 2010, including films from the early silent period, documentary and avant-garde films, European art cinema, and contemporary Hollywood fare. Directors will include Coppola, Dreyer, Eisenstein, Fellini, Godard, Griffith, Haneke, Hawks, Hitchcock, Kubrick, Kurosawa, Lang, Resnais, Spielberg, Tarantino, Vertov, Welles, and Zhang. Readings will include work from film theorists including Bazin, Bellour, Bordwell, Doane, Gunning, Metz, Mulvey, Williams, and Wollen.

Format: one 90-minute lecture, one evening screening, and one discussion hour per week.

Lucky Ones"; Jen Lin-Liu, "Serve the People: a Stir-fried Journey through China"; and related documentary films.

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**EXPLORING IDENTITY THROUGH ASIAN  
AMERICAN LITERATURE  
21L.029J (CI-H/H/HASS-D4)**

T, R 1:00-2:30pm                      Room: 56-162  
Instructor: Emma Teng

This subject will explore two interrelated sets of issues: 1. the construction of Asian American bicultural identity from comparative perspectives (cross-cultural, historical, gendered, etc.); 2. self-representation, including the writing and reading of autobiography or memoir. We will relate these issues to questions of memory, family, identity, community, language, migration, and concepts of the self. Students will work also on their own memory projects and reading journals as a means of exploring authorial strategies and issues of self-representation. Texts may include: Kym Ragusa, "The Skin Between Us"; Moustafa Bayoumi, "How Does It Feel to Be a Problem: Being Young and Arab in America"; Eric Liu, "The Accidental Asian"; Lisa See, "On Gold Mountain"; Mae Ngai, "The



## Samplings (6 Units)

*Detective Fiction*: BESTSELLERS  
21L.310 (ends March 18)

W 7:00-10:00pm            Room: 14N-325  
Instructor: Stephen Tapscott

Readings in the history of the form of the detective story, from its earliest instances through the nineteenth century to the present. Studies in questions of knowing, from materialist puzzles through metaphysical meditations to elegant whimsy, from murder in an English country house to crown-jewels buried in a footnote.

Readings include: Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*; Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone*; Edgar Allen Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Purloined Letter," "The Raven," and "The Philosophy of Composition"; some of Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories; Agatha Christie's *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* and *Who Killed Roger Ackroyd?*; W. H. Auden: "The Guilty Vicarage"; Dashiell Hammett, *The Maltese Falcon* (novel); John Houston, *The Maltese Falcon* (film); Alfred Hitchcock, *Psycho*; Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire*; Robert van Gulick, *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee [Dee Gong An]: an Authentic 18th-century Chinese Detective Novel*; as well as relevant theoretical essays.

Class will meet for half the term.

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*Prizewinners*: LITERARY TRANSLATION  
21L.315 (ends March 18)

T 7:00-10:00pm            Room: 4-146  
Instructor: Stephen Tapscott

Consider the punning Italian phrase that captivated Ezra Pound: "Traduttore traditore," "to translate is to betray." This subject examines the translation of imaginative texts from one language-system to another, from one culture to another, paying close attentions to poets who have won the Nobel Prize in recent years. What is gained, what is lost, what gets double-crossed, even in good translation (and why)? How are bad

translations sometimes useful? Are certain kinds of discourse fundamentally untranslatable? We will address such questions by also trying our own hand at translating, experiencing the pleasures and difficulties of translation through its practice. We will be guided by poems/models drawn from the *King James Bible*, Goethe's *Faust*, Charles Baudelaire's *Les fleur du mal*, Ezra Pound's *Cathay*, J L Borges, Pablo Neruda, Czeslaw Milosz, Rabindranath Tagore, Wislawa Szymborska, Tomas Tranströmer, *I Love Lucy*. Alongside these, we will read relevant essays (e.g., by Suzanne Jill Levine, Martin Luther, Walter Benjamin, and George Steiner) and we will watch some films in which translation is a central issue (e.g., Michael Radford's 1994 *Il Postino*).

We will have several in-class visitors and probably do some translations together as a class as well; familiarity with other languages welcome but not required.

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*Media, Modernity, and the Moment*:  
*Experiments in Time*: SMALL WONDERS  
21L.325

M 7:00-8:30pm            Room: 4-253  
Instructor: Noel Jackson

The "small wonders" to which our course will attend are isolated moments in time, depicted in the verbal and visual media of the modern age—newspapers, novels and stories, poems, photographs, films, etc. We will move between visual and verbal "texts" across a considerable span of time, from eighteenth-century poetry and prose fiction to twenty-first-century social networking and microblogging sites, and from sculpture to photography, film, and digital visual media. We will encounter works by Roland Barthes, Charles Baudelaire, Gordon Bell, Walter Benjamin, S.T. Coleridge, Étienne-Jules Marey, Jonathan Swift, Dziga Vertov, Paul Virilio, Virginia Woolf, more. Our focus in all cases will be the practice of evoking and seeking to preserve the fleeting moments of present time. With help from philosophers, contemporary cultural historians, and others, we will begin to think historically and theoretically about a media practice largely taken

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for granted in our own moment. In the second half of term, students will work on final projects that develop their own experiments in time—in text, image, sound, video, code, or some combination of these. Meets one evening per week; enrollment limited.

## Intermediate

### COMEDY

21L.421 (CI-H/H/HASS-D1)

M, W 3:30-5:00pm                      Room: 56-180  
Instructor: Howard Eiland

The class begins with the ancient Greeks. Aristophanes' comic revel, *Lysistrata*, allows for consideration of some basic tendencies of the genre: its utopian moment (progression through blockage and discord to resolution and the vision of a more harmonious society), its nihilistic moment (the dispelling of illusion and the experience of chaos), its eye for the domestic and everyday, and for the bodily life, its festive character, etc. We then move to various types of comedy—including satire, farce, comedy of manners, screwball comedy, tragi-comedy—as exemplified in works by such authors and film directors as Shakespeare, Cervantes, Molière, Austen, Wilde, Beckett, Chaplin, and Cukor. The class format is group discussion and group readings from the texts, with student presentations and informal lectures by the instructor.

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### TRAGEDY

21L.422 (H)

M, W 1:00-2:30pm                      Room: 4-251  
Instructor: Howard Eiland

This class traces the development of the literary genre of tragedy from the ancient Greeks to modern Europe. Examples of classic tragedy will include plays by Sophocles and Euripides and by Shakespeare and Racine. We will also be considering Aristotle's theory of tragedy and its various afterlives. The question of modern tragedy will be raised in connection with works by Tolstoy, Ibsen, Conrad, Kafka, and others.

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*The Vampire in Fiction and Film: POPULAR CULTURE AND NARRATIVE*  
21L.430 (H)

R 7:00-10:00pm                      Room: 14N-325  
Instructor: William Donaldson

The course studies the evolution from the early nineteenth century onwards of the complex metaphors centered on the vampire. The course begins with early vampire fiction (including works by Byron, Polidori, and Sheridan Le Fanu) and moves on through Bram Stoker's *Dracula* to a group of contemporary novels (including Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*, Elizabeth Kostova's *The Historian*, Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* saga, and John Ajvide Lindqvist's *Let the Right One In*). Of vampire movies there is no end, but we will pay particular attention to F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu*; the classic re-make of *Dracula* by Hammer Horror Productions with Christopher Lee; Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula*; Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino's *From Dusk till Dawn*; Tony Scott's *The Hunger*; Jaume Balaguero and Paco Plaza's *REC*; and selected episodes of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Throughout, the concern will be on how texts construct meaning; how genres are created, adapted and changed; and why we should concern ourselves with 'popular culture' and find its contents of interest. Finally, we hope to gain insight into the modern preoccupation with the vampire and what this suggests about us as a society.

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*Tarantino and the Coens: an Introduction to Style and Genre:*

FILM STYLES AND GENRES  
21L.433 (H)

M, W 2:30-4:00pm (Lecture)      Room: 1-134  
M 7:00-9:00pm (Screening)      Room: 1-246  
Instructor: Anne Fleche

Few contemporary directors are more closely associated with "style" and "genre" than Quentin Tarantino and the Coen Brothers. But where did they come from? And whose films were they

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watching? This course uses their work to investigate the art they embrace, both literary and filmic, from Screwball Comedy to Jean-Luc Godard and from Homer to Elmore Leonard. We'll also look at some of the theories relevant to their work: genre, auteur, postmodernism, and psychoanalysis. Films covered will include *Reservoir Dogs*, *Pulp Fiction*, *Jackie Brown*, *The Big Lebowski*, *O Brother, Where art Thou?* and *No Country for Old Men*.

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**Cyberpunk: SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY**  
21L.434 (H)

W 7:00-10:00pm                      Room: 1-273  
Instructor: Kate Delaney

We will examine the emergence of cyberpunk in the 1980s, with special attention to its links to postmodern fiction, detective fiction, and film noir. We will also look at some characteristic works of the 1990s and then follow developments into the twenty-first century. In addition to short and long fiction we will consider developments in film (*The Matrix*, *Blade Runner*, *Johnny Mnemonic*, *Max Headroom*) and music (Laurie Anderson). Authors to be studied include William Gibson, Neal Stephenson, Philip K. Dick, and Richard K. Morgan.

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**LITERATURE AND FILM**  
21L.435 (H)

T, R 9:30-11:00am                      Room: 4-253  
Instructor: Alvin Kibel

This subject aims to sharpen appreciation of film and literary fiction by studying differences between how filmed narratives and written narratives tell their stories. One way to proceed is to study the filmed adaptations of works of fiction, but we shall be taking another way. Each film will be paired with a work of literary merit, which either deals with similar thematic materials and narrative situations or else employs a presentation technique that directly corresponds to a technique employed by the film with which it is paired. To illustrate this sort of relationship by

referring to materials that we will not study: both Billy Wilder's film, *Sunset Boulevard* and Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, depend importantly on the presence of a narrative voice (in the case of Wilder's film, a voice-over) whose capacity to comment on the action is superior to that of all the actors in the story and conveys a large portion of the story's meaning and effect. For this reason, although the stories told by Wilder's film and Austen's novel have little or nothing to do with one another, they can be profitably studied in tandem especially if one's aim is to investigate the difference that medium (film or book) makes to the telling.

The subject will pair, among others, works by Aeschylus and John Ford, Sophocles and Clint Eastwood, Shakespeare and Francis Coppola, Herman Melville and Christopher Nolan, Henry James and Jonathan Glazer, Cervantes and Woody Allen, Scott Fitzgerald and Orson Welles.

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**DARWIN AND DESIGN**  
21L.448J (CI-H/H/HASS-D2)

T, R 3:30-5:00pm                      Room: 56-167  
Instructor: Alvin Kibel

This subject offers a broad survey of texts (both literary and philosophical) selected to trace the immediate intellectual antecedents and some of the implications of the ideas animating Charles Darwin's revolutionary *On the Origin of Species*. Darwin's text, of course, is about the mechanism that drives the evolution of life on this planet, but its fundamental ideas have implications that range well beyond the scope of natural history, and the assumptions behind its arguments challenge ideas that go much further back than the set of ideas that Darwin set himself explicitly to question. These ideas are of decisive importance when we think about ourselves, the nature of the material universe, the planet that we live upon, and our place in its scheme of life.

Our main focus of attention will be the relevance of Darwin's thought to what is called "the argument for intelligent design": the notion that since innumerable aspects of the world (and most

particularly the organisms within it) display features directly analogous to objects of human design, it follows that an intelligent, conscious agency must have been responsible for their organization and creation. We will also examine some related questions, for example (a) is natural selection *via* our genetic endowment the source of our ethical biases? (b) if mindless nature can select, can mindless machinery, like computers, think? (c) does mankind's intelligence set mankind apart from nature by virtue of its capacity to adapt the natural environment to its needs or is intelligence just one way—and not an especially privileged way—to compete in the struggle for existence? In the course of discussing these issues we shall be reading literary texts by authors such as Lewis Carroll, Voltaire, E. M. Forster, H. G. Wells, Samuel Butler, and Robert Louis Stevenson, and excerpts from argumentative works by Aristotle, David Hume, Adam Smith, Thomas Malthus, Thomas Huxley, Alan Turing, and others.

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INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY THEORY  
21L.451 (H)

T 7:00-10:00pm                      Room: 14N-112  
Instructor: Shankar Raman

Examines how we read texts and the questions that we, as readers, ask of them. The subject introduces students to different critical approaches to literature, examining relations between text and reader, between text and other texts, as well as between text and context. Topics include: reader-response theory; structuralism and semiotics; post-structuralism and post-modernism; historicism; psychoanalysis; intertextuality; cultural criticism; and media theory. Each week we will work through the selected reading to see how it defines the task of literary interpretation; locate the limits of each particular approach; and trace the emergence of subsequent theoretical paradigms as responses to what came before. The literary texts/films accompanying the theoretical material will serve as concrete cases, allowing us to see theory in action.

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*Legends of Arthur*: MEDIEVAL LITERATURE  
21L.460 (H)

M, W 1:00-2:30pm                      Room: 14N-325  
Instructor: Arthur Bahr

King Arthur has been many things to many people and cultures: Christian war-leader, national savior, pathetic cuckold, noble but doomed leader. As we read medieval stories of this quasi-historical, quasi-legendary figure, we will not just discuss and write about those shifting roles. We will also ask why he, his knights, and the complicated women (Guinevere, Morgan, and others) who variously marry, seduce, assist, and betray them, have all retained such a powerful hold on the cultural imagination—in so doing enacting the medieval prophecy that Arthur would be *rex quondam et futurus*, a once and future king.

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MAJOR ENGLISH NOVELS  
21L.471 (H)

T, R 11:30-1:00pm                      Room: 14N-112  
Instructor: Ina Lipkowitz

We will read and discuss important examples of what has become one of, if not *the* most, widely read literary genres today: the novel. We will begin in the early eighteenth century and make our way up to the twentieth, considering such questions as: Why are they called “novels”? Who wrote them? Who read them? Who narrates them? What are they likely to be about? Do they have distinctive characteristics? What is their relationship to the time and place in which they appeared? And, most of all, why do we like them so much? Authors might include: Daniel Defoe, Frances Burney, Jane Austen, Walter Scott, Emily Brontë, Charlotte Brontë, Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell, Wilkie Collins, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, Virginia Woolf, Samuel Beckett, and Penelope Fitzgerald.

21L Literature Course Descriptions – Spring 2012  
Note: rooms and times subject to change.

JANE AUSTEN  
21L.473J (H)

T, R 1:00-2:30pm                      Room: 14N-325  
Instructor: Ruth Perry

We will study the full range of Jane Austen's work, reading not just her novels, but her earlier juvenilia, several unfinished fragments, and her wonderful letters to her sister Cassandra. This great writer's work will be examined in relation to both biography and history. We will learn to analyze Austen's characteristic style and techniques, thereby gaining an enhanced appreciation of her writing—its intelligence, its wit, its themes—and of the times that produced it.

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MODERN POETRY  
21L.487 (H)

M 7:00-10:00pm                      Room: 14N-325  
Instructor: Stephen Tapscott

We will read the major poems by the most important poets in English in the twentieth century, emphasizing especially the period between post-WW I disillusionment and early WW II internationalism (ca. 1918-1940). Our special focus this term will be how the concept of "the Image" evolved during this period. The War had undercut beliefs in master-narratives of nationalism and empire, and the language-systems that supported them (religious transcendence, rationalism and formalism). Retrieving energies from the Symbolist movements of the preceding century and from turn-of-the-century technologies of vision, early twentieth-century poets began to rethink how images carry information, and in what ways the visual, visionary, and verbal image can take the place of transcendent beliefs. New theories of linguistics and anthropology helped to advance this interest in the artistic/religious image. So did Freud. So did Charlie Chaplin.

We will read poems that pay attention both to this disillusionment and to the compensatory joyous attention to the image: to ideas of the poet-as-language-priest, aesthetic-experience-as-

displaced-religious impulse, and to poetry as faith, ritual, and cultural form. Poets whose work we read include W. B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Hilda Doolittle, Gertrude Stein, William Carlos Williams, Langston Hughes.

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*Elements of Style: CONTEMPORARY*  
LITERATURE  
21L.488 (H)

T, R 3:30-5:00pm                      Room: 1-273  
Instructor: Alisa Braithwaite

Hipster, Preppy, Gangsta, Classic, Postmodern, Magical Realist, Dystopian, Stream-of-Consciousness. The word that unites all of these terms is Style. Whether it be personal style or literary style, we use our creativity either to set ourselves apart from or to align ourselves with various cultural movements. This course will examine how self-fashioning and literary fashioning come together in the creation of narrative. How do our clothes participate in the narratives that we tell others about ourselves and our cultural experiences? How do authors put on and take off literary styles in order to distinguish their novels from the uniformed masses? What are the new personal and literary styles that may define us in the future?

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*The Stranger in the American Novel:*  
THE AMERICAN NOVEL  
21L.501 (H)

M, W 1:00-2:30pm                      Room: 66-148  
Instructor: Wyn Kelley

This class will focus on the novel as a place where strangers meet. Characters in Melville's *Moby-Dick*, Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Mark Twain's *The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson*, Edith Wharton's *Age of Innocence*, Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, and Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth* meet strangers who are often disturbingly kin. But characters as often find that kin turn out to be strangers. These frequently experimental texts also have the unsettling effect

of estranging the reader, who must summon the sympathy or detective skills required to familiarize the stranger. We will study the ways fiction can challenge a reader's assumptions and create new, undreamed-of relationships in a virtual world.

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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S VOICES  
21L.522 (CI-H/H/HASS-D1)

T, R 3:00-4:30pm                      Room: 14N-313  
Instructor: Margery Resnick

This class introduces students to a variety of works by contemporary women writers. The works we read derive from many cultures—Asian, African, Middle Eastern, and Latin American. Emphasis will be placed on determining to what extent each writer's work reflects her distinct cultural heritage and to what extent, if any, we can identify a female voice that transcends national cultures. In our discussions we will examine the patterns of socialization of women in patriarchal cultures, how in the imaginary and real world we adapt or rebel, the relationship of the characters to love and work, the search for identity and both the author's and the character's thoughts on sex roles, marriage and politics. The course includes films as an integral part of our work.

An emphasis on class discussion, teaching groups, journals, and individual work will enable each student to acquire skills necessary for the enjoyment of literature from a variety of cultures and countries. Students will become familiar with the political, geographical and cultural settings from which these works emerged. As we read works from several continents, students will be encouraged to choose one of these areas for additional work. Authors include: Marjane Satrapi, Liu Sola, Tsitsi Dangarembga, Mariama Ba, Jhumpa Lahiri, Anita Desai, Banana Yoshimoto, Isabel Allende, Alifa Rifaat and Nawal Al-Saadawi. Taught in English. No prerequisites.

## Seminar

### THE NEW SPAIN 21L.640J (H)

T, R 1:00-2:30pm                      Room: 14E-310  
Instructor: Margery Resnick

In this class we will come to understand the vast changes in Spanish life that have taken place since Franco's death in 1975. We will focus on the new freedom from censorship, the re-emergence of movements for regional autonomy, the new cinema, reforms in education and changes in daily life: sex roles, work, and family that have occurred in the last decades. In so doing, we will examine myths that are often considered commonplaces when describing Spain and its people. How Spain emerged as a vibrant democratic republic after forty years of fascist dictatorship will constitute an important question as students look at this period.

While *Ghosts of Spain* by Giles Tremlett will provide the background for this period, much of the class work will involve analysis of primary sources, such as the new constitution, viewing of feature films and documentaries, television shows, and articles on education, fashion, science and immigration. We will look at the contemporary economic crisis.

There will be an emphasis on class discussion, and each student will have the opportunity to complete a project in an area of interest: literary, political, economic, technological, religious, or social. In addition to articles and visual materials, we will read two novels.

This course is taught in Spanish and students are expected to read, write and speak with some fluency. That usually means prior completion of one or more post-Spanish IV intermediate courses or equivalent work in high school. Of course, native speakers do not have to take a prior subject to enroll in this course.

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### *Woolf, Joyce and the Legacy of Modernism:* STUDIES IN FICTION 21L.702 (CI-M/H)

T, R 1:00-2:30pm                      Room: 14N-112  
Instructor: David Thorburn

Four weeks on classic texts by Woolf and Joyce, followed by a study of recent fiction that refines and extends the modernist legacy by such writers as Gabriel Marquez, Arundhati Roy, Russell Hoban, John Barthes, and others.

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### *Stoppard and Company:* STUDIES IN DRAMA 21L.703 (CI-M/H)

T, R 3:00-4:30pm                      Room: 14N-325  
Instructor: Diana Henderson

Taking as its starting point the works of one of today's most respected, prolific—and funny—dramatists, this seminar will explore a wide range of knowledge in fields such as math, philosophy, politics, history and art. The careful reading and discussion of plays by (Sir) Tom Stoppard and some of his most compelling contemporaries (including Caryl Churchill, Howard Barker, Tony Kushner, and Anna Devereaux Smith) will allow us to time-travel and explore other cultures. Some will report on earlier plays that influenced these writers, others will research everything from Dadaism to the poetry of Lord Byron, from seventeenth-century antiquarianism to 1970s feminism, from the Battle of Lepanto to the bridges of Königsberg. Employing a variety of critical approaches (both theoretical and theatrical) we will consider what post-modernity means, as applied to these plays. In the process, we will analyze how drama connects with both the culture it represents and that which it addresses in performance. We will also consider the wit and verbal energy of these contemporary writers...not to mention how Fermat's theorem, futures trading, and chaos theory become the stuff of stage comedy.

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21L Literature Course Descriptions – Spring 2012  
Note: rooms and times subject to change.

*Rewriting Genesis: Paradise Lost and Twentieth-Century Fantasy:* MAJOR

AUTHORS  
21L.705 (CI-M/H)

T, R 2:30-4:00pm                      Room: 4-144  
Instructor: Mary Fuller

What is the nature of God, and how can we account for that nature in a cosmos where evil exists? What does the Genesis story of creation and temptation tell us about gender, about heterosexuality, and about the origins of human institutions? When is rebellion justified, and when is authority legitimate? These are some of the key questions that engaged the poet John Milton, and that continue to engage readers of his work.

In 1667, Milton published what he intended both as the crowning achievement of a poetic career and a justification of God's ways to man: an epic poem that retold and reimagined the Biblical story of creation, temptation, and original sin. Even in a hostile political climate, *Paradise Lost* was almost immediately recognized as a classic, and one fate of a classic is to be rewritten, both by admirers and by antagonists. Modern readers have continued to contend with both Milton's text and its sources.

In this class, we will read *Paradise Lost* alongside works of twentieth-century fantasy and science fiction which rethink both Milton's text and its source: *Perelandra* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (C. S. Lewis) and the trilogy *His Dark Materials* (Philip Pullman). As well as glancing at selections from Milton's own writings on divorce and freedom of the press, we will engage with a variety of modern critical perspectives on Milton (C.S. Lewis, Stanley Fish, Patricia Parker, and others) and on Genesis (Elaine Pagels, Mary Nyquist).

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*Heroic Cinema:* STUDIES IN FILM  
21L.706 (CI-M/H)

M 7:00-10:00pm                      Room: 4-364  
Instructor: Martin Marks

This class will focus on narrative fiction films whose main characters, male and female, live by what we call heroic codes. The films will be drawn from these genres: the ancient epic, the war story, the Western, political drama, the detective/crime story, and biographies of artists/scientists. We will consider films of each genre that differ enormously in range of characters, narrative methods, and cinematic techniques. One goal is to consider changing depictions of heroic behavior within the history of the medium. Another is to help students develop their skills in analysis of film form and style. We will also discuss fictional and historical writings that have served as primary source materials for specific films.

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*Britons Abroad in the Eighteenth Century:*  
STUDIES IN LITERARY HISTORY  
21L.709 (CI-M/H)

T, R 3:30-5:00pm                      Room: 4-146  
Instructor: Ruth Perry

Travel lust was a real phenomenon in eighteenth-century Britain. English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh men and women took to the roads and the high seas and explored other continents and other cultures. To read their real and fictional accounts is to understand more about the British culture(s) from whence they issued—as well as the new societies they were avid to explore. Through their eyes we will glimpse eighteenth-century Turkey, Polynesia, Russia, etc. Their adventures usually led them to reflect on their own culture, the nature of knowledge, and on human life as they understood it. We will examine these writings for their characteristic eighteenth-century style, their wit and invention, their sense of humor, and for their inevitable cultural biases. Readings include: Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift, Lady Mary Wortley

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Note: rooms and times subject to change.

Montagu, Samuel Johnson, Eliza Pinkney, Captain Cook, and others.

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*Sound Studies: Literature, History, Media:*  
MEDIA IN CULTURAL CONTEXT  
21L.715 (H)

T, R 11:30-1:00pm                      Room 14N-325  
Instructor: John Picker

This seminar will examine the field of auditory culture and consider the implications of this work for literary and film studies. What part does the massive technological and industrial investment in sound play in the way that modern life is represented on the page and screen? Topics may include voice and subject formation, the impact of recording and broadcast technologies, shifting conceptions of silence and noise, and the relation of sound to identity (including but not limited to race, class, and gender). Readings will be in nineteenth- and twentieth-century fiction, poetry, and drama, and the history and theory of sound practices and media, along with consideration of recordings, broadcasts, and films that reflect on the problems and possibilities of audio technologies.

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## 21L LITERATURE

# C O N C E N T R A T I O N

The Concentration in Literature is available in particular genres such as poetry, drama, fiction and in historical periods (ancient studies, nineteenth-century literature, modern and contemporary literature, etc.), as well as in popular culture, media and film studies, minority and ethnic studies, literary theory, and a range of national literatures.

Students must discuss their plans for concentrating in Literature with a Concentration Advisor and fill out a *Proposal for a Concentration* form. Ideally, this should be done by the end of their sophomore year. Once the Concentration requirements have been fulfilled, students should meet with a Concentration Advisor and submit a *Certification of Completed Concentration* form. Keep in mind that Concentration is part of the 8 HASS subject requirement for the GIR and both forms must be submitted in time or you may be subject to a late fee or/and delay in graduation. For more on Literature Concentrations go to: <http://lit.mit.edu/program/howtoconcentrate.php>

# M I N O R

Minoring in Literature aims to lay a foundation for advanced study and to enhance a student's appreciation of major narrative, poetic, and dramatic texts in relation to the cultures that produced them. In addition, it allows the student to develop a familiarity with interdisciplinary approaches, and encourages engagement with film and newer media.

The minor program should be designated by the end of the sophomore year and no later than two full terms before receiving the SB degree. Designate a minor by completing an *Application for a Minor* form in consultation with a Literature Minor Advisor. Upon successful completion of the minor program, submit a *Completion of a Minor* form by the END OF THE THIRD WEEK of your final term, or you may be subject to a late fee and delay in graduation.

# M A J O R

Majoring in Literature at MIT combines a broad coverage of a range of different literary and cultural fields with the in-depth exploration of particular domains. To ensure coverage, students organize their restricted electives in Literature according to one of two rubrics: Historical Periods or Thematic Complexes. More sustained exploration of specific domains is achieved by taking Seminars in areas of interest. In addition, students contemplating graduate work in Literature or a related field are encouraged to consider completing a Literature Thesis.

For more information on the various types of majors offered as well as a detailed breakdown of subject requirements for the different Literature majors contact Literature Headquarters in 14N-407, 253-3581 or email [lit@mit.edu](mailto:lit@mit.edu); <http://web.mit.edu/lit/www/>

For a list of current term advisors, consult the Literature Section website <http://www.mit.edu/lit/www> or the bulletin board outside Literature Headquarters, 14N-407.

# 21 Literature Section

<http://lit.mit.edu/>

Headquarters – 14N-407

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## Come to Monday Tea!

Every Monday during the semester except holidays.

4:30-6:00 in 14N-417

Companionable discussion,  
light refreshments,  
and a different tea every week.

