

# LITERATURE SUBJECTS

Course 21L Supplement to the Bulletin



FALL 2019

"It's no use going back to yesterday, because I was a different person then."  
— Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

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## LITERATURE SECTION

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Note: Rooms and times subject to change

Subject Number	Unit	Designation	Course Title	Fall 19 Faculty	Days	Times	Rooms
<b>INTRODUCTORY</b>							
21L.000J	3-0-9	H	CI-HW - Same subject as 21W.041 <b>The Art of the Short Story [Writing About Literature]</b>	Lipkowitz, I.	TR	9:30-11am	4-144
21L.001	3-0-9	H	CI-H <b>Foundations of Western Literature: Homer to Dante</b>	Buzard, J.	TR	3:30-5pm	4-253
21L.003	3-0-9	H	CI-H <b>Reading Fiction</b>	Thorburn, D.	TR	1:30-3pm	14N-112
21L.004	3-0-9	H	CI-H <b>Reading Poetry</b>	Jackson, N.	MW	1-2:30pm	2-103
21L.004	3-0-9	H	CI-H <b>Reading Poetry</b>	Tapscott, S.	MW	7-8:30pm	2-103
21L.007	3-0-9	H	CI-H <b>World Literatures</b>	Terrones, J.	MW	3:30-5pm	2-103
21L.009	3-0-9	H	CI-H <b>Shakespeare</b>	Finn, K.	MW	1-2:30pm	16-644
21L.010	3-0-9	H	CI-HW - Same subject as 21W.042J <b>Writing with Shakespeare</b>	Henderson, D.	TR	3-4:30pm	66-154
21L.011	3-3-6	A	CI-H <b>The Film Experience (Lecture)</b>	Brinkema, E.	T	3:30-5pm	3-270
					M	7-10pm	3-270
					R	3-4pm	1-273
					R	3-4pm	1-277
					R	4-5pm	1-273
21L.015	3-0-9	H	CI-H <b>Children's Literature</b>	Raman, S.	TR	2:30-4pm	5-232
21L.020	3-0-9	H	CI-H - Same subject as WGS.145J <b>Globalization: The Good, The Bad, and the In-between</b>	Resnick, M.	TR	3-4:30pm	14N-313
21L.021	3-0-9	H	CI-H <b>Comedy</b>	Kelley, W.	MW	9:30-11am	4-144
21L.023J	3-1-8	A	CI-H - Same subject as 21M.223J <b>Folk Music of the British Isles &amp; N. America</b>	Perry, R./Donaldson, W.	TR	12:30-2pm	4-158
<b>SAMPLINGS 6-UNITS</b>							
21L.310	2-0-4		<b>Literature without Borders [Bestsellers] (Ends Oct. 16)</b>	Kelley, W.	MW	1-2:30pm	1-379
21L.320	2-0-4		<b>Moby Dick Goes to the Movies [Big Books] (Begins Oct. 21)</b>	Kelley, W.	MW	1-2:30pm	1-379
<b>INTERMEDIATE</b>							
21L.433	3-0-9	H	<b>Hollywood Renaissance: American Film in the 1970's [Film Styles and Genres]</b>	Thorburn, D.	TR	11-12:30pm	14N-112
21L.434	3-0-9	H	<b>Science Fiction and Fantasy</b>	Gubar, M.	MW	11-12:30pm	5-217
21L.473	3-0-9	H	Same subject as WGS240J <b>Jane Austen</b>	Perry, R.	TR	3:30-5pm	14N-112
21L.489J	3-0-9	H	Same Subject as 21W.765J Meets with CMS.845 <b>Interactive Narrative</b>	Paradis, J.	W	2-5pm	66-160
21L.512	3-0-9	H	<b>American Authors</b>	Terrones, J.	MW	7-8:30pm	4-253
21L.580	3-0-9	A	<b>Translations</b>	Tapscott, S.	T	7-10pm	14N-325
21H.343	3-0-9	A	<b>Making Books : The Renaissance and Today</b>	Zimmer, E.	TR	9:30-11am	4-253
<b>INTERNATIONAL LITERATURES</b>							
21L.601J	3-0-9	H	Same Subject as 24.916 <b>Old English and Beowulf</b>	Bahr, A.	TR	11-12:30pm	2-103
21L.607	3-0-3		<b>Learn to Read Ancient Greek [Greek I] (Ends Oct. 16)</b>	Colaizzi, R.	MW	7-8:30pm	14N-112
21L.608	3-0-3		<b>Learn to Read Ancient Greek [Greek II] (Begins Oct. 21)</b>	Colaizzi, R.	MW	7-8:30pm	14N-112
21L.613	2-0-4		<b>Latin Readings (Ends Oct. 16)</b>	Colaizzi, R.	MW	4-5pm	14N-325
21L.614							
<b>SEMINAR</b>							
21L.704	3-0-9	H	CI-M <b>Power, Protest, and Poetry [Studies in Poetry]</b>	Jackson, N.	MW	11-12:30pm	4-253
21L.705	3-0-9	H	CI-M <b>Dickens, Early, Middle, and Late [Major Authors]</b>	Buzard, J.	TR	1-2:30pm	4-253
21L.706	3-3-6	H	CI-M /meets with CMS.830 HASS <b>Color in Film [Studies in Film] (Lecture)</b>	Brinkema, E.	W	10-1pm	1-277
					T	7-10pm	4-253
21L.707	3-0-9	H	CI-M <b>The Written Kitchen: Reading Women's Cookbooks and Food Blogs [Problems in Cultural Interpretation]</b>	Lipkowitz, I.	TR	11:30-1pm	4-144

TIME	Monday/Wednesday	Tuesday/Thursday
9:30 AM		21L.000 IL 9:30-11a
10:00 AM	21L.021 WK MW 9:30-11a	
10:30 AM		21L.433 DT 11-12:30p
11:00 AM	21L.434 MG 11-12:30p	
11:30 AM	21L.704 NJ 11-12:30p	21L.707 IL 11:30-1p
12:00 PM		
12:30 PM		
1:00 PM	21L.004 Lec1 NJ 1-2:30p	21L.023 RP/WD 12:30-2p
1:30 PM		21L.003 DT 1:30-3p
2:00 PM		21L.015 SR 2:30-4p
2:30 PM	21L.489 JP W 2-5p	
3:00 PM		21L.011 EB R 3-4p Recitation 1&2
3:30 PM		21L.020 MR 3-4:30p
4:00 PM	21L.613/614 RC 4-5p Ends Oct. 16	21L.010 DH 3-4:30p
4:30 PM		21L.001 JB 3:30-5p
5:00 PM		21L.473 RP 3:30-5p
7:00 PM	21L.607 RC 7-8:30p Ends Oct. 16	
7:30 PM		
8:00 PM	21L.011 EB M 7-10p Screening	21L.580 ST T 7-10p
8:30 PM		21L.706 EB T 7-10p
9:00 PM		
9:30 PM		

# INTRODUCTORY

## Writing About Literature The Art of the Short Story

21L.000 (H, CI-HW)  
[Same subject as 21W.041]

TR 9:30 - 11:00 a

Ina Lipkowitz

Room: 4-144

The short-story writer Alice Munro accepted the 2013 Nobel Prize in Literature expressing her “hope [that] this would make people see the short story as an important art, not just something you played around with until you got a novel.” In this class, we’ll take Munro at her word and read a variety of short stories by writers including Amy Tan, Raymond Carver, John Updike, Tim O’Brien, Jamaica Kincaid, Sandra Cisneros, and Alice Munro herself. Of course reading stories for the sheer pleasure of it is one thing; thinking about what they might mean is another; expressing those thoughts in writing is still another. In this class, we’ll be doing all three. The goal will be to increase enjoyment in reading and in understanding, as well as to feel more confident in the ability to express oneself effectively, efficiently, and gracefully.

## Foundations of Western Literature: Homer to Dante

21L.001 (H, CI-H)

TR 3:30 - 5:00 p

James Buzard

Room: 4-253

This course examines foundational literary works from the Ancient Greeks and Romans to Medieval Europe. We’ll consider these works as sources of some very long-lasting traditions in the representation of love, desire, conflict, justice, the quest for knowledge, the scope or limits of human action, human relations with the divine and animal realms. Works to be considered will most likely include:

Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; Aeschylus’s *Oresteia*; Sophocles’s *Oedipus the King*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Antigone*; Euripides’s *The Bacchae*; Virgil’s *Aeneid*; and selections from Dante’s *Divine Comedy*.

As a CI-H class, 21L.001 will devote considerable attention to student writing and speaking. There will be a number of short essays and at least one formal oral report per student.

## Reading Fiction

21L.003 (H, CI-H)

TR 1:30 - 3:00

David Thorburn

Room: 14N-112

We'll read about thirty remarkable stories — roughly two or three each week — by a roster of great and very good writers, chosen to represent something of the formal diversity and moral and artistic complexity of the short story as a literary form. Among our authors: Nathaniel Hawthorne, James Joyce, Gabriel Marquez, Doris Lessing, Flannery O'Connor, Alice Munro, Lydia Davis.

I aim for lively discussion from everyone. In addition to reading our week's stories, I expect students to have searched on line for basic general information about our authors' lives and major writings. We'll begin each class with a brief overview of our writer, and then work toward a close reading of the required story. Students must bring texts to class; we'll be reading many passages together during our discussions. In most classes we'll discuss two complex stories, so you must be truly prepared, familiar with the texts, ready to talk about them seriously.

## Reading Poetry

21L.004 (H, CI-H)

Section 1

MW 1:00 - 2:30

Noel Jackson

Room: 2-103

An introduction to poetry in English, chiefly by British and American poets. We will explore Renaissance, eighteenth-century, Romantic, and Modernist poetry 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.

## Reading Poetry

21L.004 (H, CI-H)

Section 2

MW 7:00 p - 8:30 p

Stephen Tapscott

Room: 2-103

An introduction to poetry in English. We will explore poems written during several periods and in several genres (nature-poems, narratives, the epic, sonnets, odes, experimental forms). Focus will be less on names and dates than on tactics of analytic reading. Poets whose work we'll read include William Shakespeare, John Keats, Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Sylvia Plath, Elizabeth Bishop, Langston Hughes, Seamus Heaney, Derek Walcott, Liyoung Lee, and many others. 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 a special event is scheduled.

## World Literatures

21L.007 (H, CI-H)

MW 3:30 - 5:00 p

Joaquin Terrones

Room: 2-103

Literature has always reached across borders, hemispheres and oceans in order to explore the conflicts and connections between cultures. In this course, we will discuss contemporary novels, short stories and graphic novels by non-Western authors in order to analyze how they intervene in the current global cultural landscape. We will study the ways in which these works of fiction reflect and refract the political, economic, and religious forces shaping the world, as well as the specific national contexts in which they were written.

Some of the authors we will read include Chimamanda Adichie (Nigeria), Patrick Chamoiseau (Martinique), Mia Couto (Mozambique), Santiago Gamboa (Colombia), Mohsin Hamid (Pakistan), Yuri Herrera (Mexico), Adriana Lisboa (Brazil), Haruki Murakami (Japan), Arundhati Roy (India), Marjane Satrapi (Iran) and Kyung-Sook Shin (South Korea).

## Shakespeare

21L.009 (H, CI-H)

MW 1:00 - 2:30

Kavita Mudan Finn

Room: 16-644

This term Shakespeare (21L.009) approaches some of the playwright's most enduring works through close reading of the text(s) and through their vibrant and varied afterlife in performance and on film, including scenes from productions from across the world in the MIT Global Shakespeares Video and Performance Archive. In addition to several papers, work for the subject will include class discussion, notes on each play, and short student presentations. Focuses on the reading of six to eight of Shakespeare's plays, as well as their adaptation for stage and/or film. Selected texts cover the range of genres in which Shakespeare wrote (i.e., history, comedy, tragedy, and romance). Special emphasis in some terms on performances and adaptations of Shakespearean drama around the world. Plays studied vary term to term, and have recently included *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *The Tempest*. We may also attend one or more theatrical performances, depending on what is available in the Boston area during the semester. Enrollment Limited.

## Writing with Shakespeare

21L.010 (H, CI-HW)

[Same subject as 21W.042]

TR 3:00 - 4:30

Diana Henderson

Room: 66-154

William Shakespeare didn't go to college. If he could time-travel like Dr. Who, he would be stunned to find his words on a university syllabus. But he would not be surprised at the way we will be using those words in this class, because the study of rhetoric was essential to all education in his day. We too will focus on communication using words, with Shakespeare as a capacious model and inspiration for dialogue, self-presentation, and writing.

By writing 'with' Shakespeare—critically, creatively, in groups, and in a variety of media—you will have ample opportunity to explore the elements and occasions that shape effective, meaningful communication. In addition to famous speeches and sonnets, we will analyze film versions of the comedy *Much Ado About Nothing* and the tragedy *Othello*, and perform dramatic scenes from what is now a 'problem play', *The Merchant of Venice*. We will look at how Shakespeare revises his stories and style, including in the late 'romance,' *A Winter's Tale*, and at how his plays have in turn been reinterpreted across the globe. In the process, we will debate the reasons for Shakespeare's enduring power. Nevertheless, our aim is less to appreciate his works as an end in themselves than to draw on his remarkable drama (including its vocabulary, variety, verve, and verbal command) in order to help you improve your own writing, speaking, analytic thinking, use of resources, and understanding of media today.

## The Film Experience

21L.011 (A, CI-H)

Lecture T 3:30 - 5:00  
Room 3-270

Screening M 7:00 - 10:00 p  
Room 3-270

R1 R 3:00 - 4:00  
Room 1-273

R2 R 3:00 - 4:00  
Room 1-277

R3 R 4:00 - 5:00  
Room 1-273

R4 R 4:00 - 5:00  
Room 1-277

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 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.



## Children's Literature Imagining Alternative Worlds

21L.015 (H, CI-H)

TR 2:30 - 4:00

Shankar Raman

Room: 5-232

Through the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, a canon of “classic” texts for children took shape. This course will invite you to (re) encounter a variety of celebrated children’s books drawn from England and Europe. You will absorb yourselves again in such classics as *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, *The Wind in the Willows*, or *Treasure Island*, or *The Little Prince*—as well as perhaps meet for the first time Tove Jansson’s Moomintroll family, or see what else Astrid Lindgren has written beyond *Pippi Longstocking*, or where Michael Ende’s *The Neverending Story* leads. Many of these books have not only been read by millions of children and adults, they have also been adapted, parodied, and recycled—transformed into movies, musical works, television shows, and so on. Why do we keep telling these particular stories over and over again? What does their popularity tell us about the history of childhood and its representation? As we study these and other influential works of art starring children, we will ask: What images of the child emerge out of these texts? What makes such images culturally appealing?

## Globalization: The Good, The Bad, and The In-between

21L.020 (H, CI-H)

[Same subject as WGS.145]

TR 3:00 - 4:30

Margery Resnick

Room: 14N-313

This subject examines the cultural, artistic, social, and political impact of globalization across international borders in an historical context. Novels and short stories as well as case studies on global health, human trafficking, and labor migration illuminate the shaping influence of contemporary globalization on gender, race, ethnicity, and class. Guest lecturers visit class as we examine the impact of globalization on cultural identity, the arts, the politics of language, and the media. How has migration changed notions of cultural and racial hybridity? What can we learn from specific examples of global media and expressive culture including popular music and film? In what ways has globalization affected human rights? Students develop sensitivity to other cultures and the ability to read broadly across national boundaries. Furthermore, the emphasis on the historical context gives students a foundation to continue work in literature, history, and the arts from a global perspective.

## Comedy

21L.021 (H, CI-H)

TR 9:30 - 11:00 a

Wyn Kelley

Room: 4-144

How do comedy and love get along? Does love conquer all, or just make us laugh? This class considers comedy and love in drama, narrative, and film spanning more than 2000 years. We will revel in Greek, Roman, and Shakespearean theater and the bawdy humor of Rabelais; explore Aphra Behn's eighteenth-century feminist rakes in *The Rover*; investigate romantic comedy, and social satire in Jane Austen and Oscar Wilde; peek under the covers of small-town family life in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*; and explore the uneasy relationship between farce and romance, violence and redemptive humor, satire and festivity in comic art. Discussion will draw on popular and contemporary forms, including political humor, stand-up and sketch comedy, and cartoons.

## Folk Music of the British Isles & North America

21L.023 (H, CI-H)

[Same subject as 21M.223]

TR 12:30 - 2:00

Ruth Perry &  
William Donaldson

Room: 4-158

This subject will introduce students to some of the folk music of the British Isles and North America and to some of the scholarship as well as the folklore about it. We will examine the musical qualities of "folk poetry" — particularly the old narrative Scottish and English ballads. We will try to understand the historical context in which folk music was a precious part of everyday life. We will survey how, when and why folk music began to be collected, beginning in the 18th century with broadsides, Percy's *Reliques*, and Sir Walter Scott's collections — and how it changed the course of literary history. We will compare the instrumental styles and sung ballads as they migrated from the U.K. to North America- with their attendant changes and continuities. We will examine the enormous influences of African-American musics and texts on U.S folk music. We hope to conclude with the "folk revivals" in the USA and Britain in the 1950's and 1960's, although we usually don't manage to get that far.

# SAMPLINGS

## Bestsellers Literature without Borders

21L.310

TR 1:00 - 2:30 p

Wyn Kelley

Room: 1-379

*Ends Oct 16*

This class examines novels that trouble the boundaries between nations or states. In books by bestselling authors such as Art Spiegelman, Edwidge Danticat, Louise Erdrich, Mohsin Hamid, and Ruth Ozeki, we encounter stories of global itinerancy, questions about identity, family, and the past, and narratives of a search for home. Some of these themes may seem familiar to readers of “ethnic,” “immigration,” or “coming-of-age” stories. At the same time, these works often break through established or familiar boundaries, engaging with terror, violence, and risk at the borders of self, nation, and literary form. In works by Spiegelman, Danticat, and Erdrich, characters experience conflicts between home and nation as they move toward identifying as “American.” Characters in works by Hamid and Ozeki more fully inhabit “America” before traveling physically or imaginatively away from the US to “home” countries. These different dynamics make visible the complexities of life at borders and draw attention to different literary strategies as well.

## Big Books Moby Dick Goes to the Movies

21L.320

TR 1:00 - 2:30

Wyn Kelley

Room: 4-144

*Begins Oct 21*

We take as our starting point a singular paradox: without popular culture (movies, radio, television, comic books, music) Moby-Dick would not be a literary classic, considered today one of the greatest literary texts written in the U.S., if not the greatest. But Moby-Dick was not always the greatest American novel. The dissemination of Moby-Dick through twentieth-century mass media brought it to wide attention for the first time and resurrected a work that had never been popular in Melville’s day. This class examines Moby-Dick, as both literary text and cultural phenomenon. Giving close attention to the novel as a rich experience in itself, we will also explore the emergence of Moby-Dick in twentieth-century media: early silent film, cinematic and theatrical adaptations, video, anime, music. Topics for discussion will include Melville’s sources and influences, changing definitions of the classic, race, gender, sexuality, and religion as questions for interpretations of the novel, and as issues in contemporary media translations of older forms and stories.

# INTERMEDIATE

## Film Styles and Genres Hollywood Renaissance — American Film in the 1970s

21L.433 (H)

TR 11:00 - 12:30 p

David Thorburn

Room: 14N-112

A close study of landmark films of the 1970s, sometimes called Hollywood's New Wave, when a new generation of actors and directors transformed American movies. Films by such directors and with such actors as Altman, Coppola, Scorsese, Spielberg, Malick, others. This course requires heavy movie-viewing and selected reading in cultural history and film criticism.

All required films will be available for streaming to students' laptops.

I aim for lively discussion from everyone. In addition to watching our week's films, I expect students to have searched on line for basic general information about our directors' careers. We'll begin each class with a brief overview of our director, and then work toward a close reading of the required films. In most weeks we'll discuss two or three complex movies, so you must be truly prepared, familiar with the material, ready to talk seriously.

## Science Fiction and Fantasy

21L.434 (H)

MW 11:00 - 12:30

Marah Gubar

Room: 5-217

The Hugo Awards are named after Hugo Gernsback, who coined the term "science fiction" in 1926 while publishing *Amazing Stories*, the first magazine devoted solely to science fiction. Yet long before that, nineteenth-century writers such as Mary Shelley, Grant Allen, H. G. Wells, and Edith Nesbit were penning their own *Strange Stories* (Allen, 1884), testing out many of the sci-fi and fantasy tropes that contemporary authors continue to retool to this day. Mad scientists and the monsters they create! "Last man on earth" dystopias! Stories about robots, time machines, mummies who come back to life and rampage around museums—and even a park filled with dinosaurs living right next door to modern humans! In all of these cases, the Victorians got there before us, in fictions that were heavily influenced by the earth-shaking hypotheses being advanced by nineteenth-century scientists such as Charles Darwin, Caroline Herschel, and Richard Owen. In this course, we will explore not only how nineteenth-century science influenced art, but also how art influenced science. We will also investigate the integral (and often forgotten) role that children's authors, women, and people of color played in pioneering and popularizing speculative fiction.

## Jane Austen

21L.473 (H)  
[Same as WGS240]

TR 3:30 - 5:00

Ruth Perry

Room: 14-112

This is your chance to read every word that Jane Austen ever wrote— not just her novels, but her earlier hilarious juvenilia, several unfinished fragments of novels, and the wonderful letters she wrote over her lifetime to her sister Cassandra. This great writer's work will be examined in relation to both her biography and the historical period in which she lived and wrote. We will analyze Austen's characteristic style and techniques, in order to gain an enhanced appreciation of her writing— its intelligence, its wit, and its themes. Because she was a serious satirist, we will also discuss her moral values, and in the process, become more familiar with the culture of eighteenth-century England and the place of women— and art— in it.

## Interactive Narrative

21L.489 (H)  
[Same as 21W.765]  
Meets with CMS.845]

W 2:00 - 5:00

James Paradis

Room: 66-160

Provides a workshop environment for understanding interactive narrative (print and digital) through critical writing, narrative theory, and creative practice. Covers important multisequential books, hypertexts, and interactive fictions. Students write critically, and give presentations, about specific works; write a short multisequential fiction; and develop a digital narrative system, which involves significant writing and either programming or the structuring of text. Programming ability helpful.

## American Authors Weird Americas

21L.512 (H)  
MW 7:00 - 8:30 p

Joaquin Terrones

Room: 4-253

Christopher Columbus's initial description of the Americas featured rivers of gold and man-eating monsters. From the moment settlers and conquistadors first encountered its endless frontiers, abundant nature, and alien cultures, the New World has often stood as otherworldly counterpart to European worldliness. This course will examine how contemporary North and Latin American authors have reflected on their national identities through horror, magical realism, and science fiction.

Our first unit will consider hauntings and ghosts stories as attempts to make sense of the hemisphere's violent past. In the second, we will explore divergent worlds, geographies, and timelines that reimagine otherness and cultural plurality. The final unit will study genetic and cybernetic splicings that blur the carefully guarded lines between man, animal, and machine. Some of the texts we will read include

Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*, Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*, and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, as well as short stories by Borges, Poe, Lovecraft, and Ocampo. We will also analyze the Brazilian graphic novel *Daytripper*, the Canadian television series *Orphan Black*, the film *Jupiter Ascending*, and the music of Janelle Monáe.

## Translations

21L.580 (A)

T 7:00 - 10:00 p

Stephen Tapscott

Room: 14N-325

In this subject we'll work with literary texts, chiefly poems. We'll read theories of translation (is linguistic translation even possible? is it necessary-but-undesirable? is it even ethical? Is it imperialistic or politically-charged? Is it more like paraphrase or transformation or musical-performance? ), will do comparisons of texts-in-their-original-languages and texts-in-translation, and will try some translations and "versions" ourselves. We'll consider whether transferring from one medium or genre (e.g., a poem or a novel) to another (e.g., film, opera) is a mode of "translation"—and also what to do when a text is considered sacred (what happens when we translate the Bible?) or when a machine does the work? or a language is historically compromised (how does a Jewish writer use the German language immediately after the Shoah?).

No competence in any other language except in English is required (we can discuss the processes and theories of "translating" texts from languages one doesn't know); students who do know other languages, however, are welcome.

Theorists and practitioners include Walter Benjamin, Benjamin Whorf, Nancy Chodorow, George Steiner, Jon Felstiner, William Gass. Artists whose work we'll read include Basho, Li Bai, Ezra Pound, Xu Zhimo, Lam Thi My Da, Ngo Tu Lap, Cesar Vallejo, Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Dante Alighieri, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Rainer Maria Rilke, Pablo Neruda, Gabriela Mistral, Paul Celan, Czeslaw Milosz, Wislawa Szymborska, Aimé Césaire, Samuel Beckett, Constantine Cavafy, Robert Lowell, Charlie Chaplin... and probably others.

Assignments and readings: Essays / theories of translation, comparisons of translated texts, working out our own versions, workshopping our own work, a final project.

## The Renaissance and Today Making Books

21L.343 (A)

TR 9:30 - 11:00 a

Erica Zimmer

Room: 4-253

What have books been, and what might they be? How can actually making books “edit” our expectations about them? In this course, we undertake three main activities. First, we study the history of the book in Europe and the world, from Gutenberg (ca. 1450) to the American Civil War (ca. 1860). Second, we examine in detail books, prints, and related artifacts from the MIT Libraries and MIT Museum collections. Third, working in the Beaver Press print shop on the eighth floor of Barker Library, we will use a movable-type printing press built by MIT students

for a series of printing exercises, culminating in an 8-page pamphlet designed and printed entirely by hand. (We also plan to make paper!) Through these activities, we will develop a holistic view of print: its stakes, its requirements, its valances, and its possible iterations. Along the way, we consider parallels between the Early Modern textual world and today’s rapidly changing media landscape. How might “affordances” of particular media contribute to shaping texts themselves? And how might placing new media in historical context help us understand the book’s future potential?

## INTERNATIONAL LITERATURES

### Old English and Beowulf

21L.601 (H)

[Same subject as  
24.916]

TR 11:00 - 12:30 p

Arthur Bahr

Room: 2-103

hƿæt ƿe gardena in geardagum ƿeodcyninga ƿrym gefrunon hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon... Those are the first words of the Old English epic Beowulf, and in this class you will learn to read them.

Besides being the language of Rohan in the novels of Tolkien, Old English (also called Anglo-Saxon) is a language of long, cold, and lonely winters; of haunting beauty found in unexpected places; and of unshakable resolve in the face of insurmountable odds. It is, in short, the perfect language for MIT students.

We will read greatest hits from the epic Beowulf as well as moving laments (The Wanderer, Wulf and Eadwacer, The Wife’s Lament), the personified Cross’s psychedelic and poignant account of the Crucifixion (The Dream of the Rood), and a host of riddles whose solutions range from the sacred to the obscene but are always ingenious.

## Greek I

21L.607 (H)

MW 7:00 - 8:30 p

Randall Colaizzi

Room: 14N-112

Ends Oct 16

Introduces rudiments of Greek to students with little or no prior knowledge of the subject. Aimed at laying a foundation to begin reading ancient and/or medieval literary and historical texts. Greek I and Greek II may be combined by petition (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS Elective.

## Greek II

21L.608 (H)

MW 7:00 - 8:30 p

Randall Colaizzi

Room: 14N-112

Begins Oct 21

Introductory Greek subject for students with some prior knowledge of basic grammar and vocabulary. Intended to refresh and enrich ability to read ancient and/or medieval literary and historical texts. May be taken independently of Greek I with permission of instructor. Greek I and Greek II may be combined by petition (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS Elective.

## Latin Readings

21L.613/614 (H)

MW 4:00 - 5:00 p

Randall Colaizzi

Room: 14N-325

Ends Oct 16

Read Latin literature in the original language! This year our text will be selections from Petronius' *Satyricon*, a comic novel about the misadventures of several disreputable characters, showing the decadent life on the Bay of Naples during the Age of Nero. 21L.613 serves as a bridge for students with one semester or more of formal Latin training (Latin 1/2, high school Latin, or equivalent) between the study of Latin grammar and vocabulary and the reading of Latin authors. 21L.614 offers more of a challenge for advanced readers. They run simultaneously and each may be repeated once for credit.



# SEMINAR

## Studies in Poetry *Power, Protest, and Poetry*

21L.704 (H, CI-M)

MW 11:00 - 12:00 p

Noel Jackson

Room: 4-243

The poetry we'll read in this seminar was written against the background of momentous social, political and economic transformation. Alternately inspired by and aghast at these transformations, Romantic writers undertook an ambitious project to expand and redefine poetry and what it means to be a poet. Beyond inventing new poetic genres, styles, and theories of poetry, these authors envisioned nothing less than a thoroughgoing reevaluation of the writer's vocation in the modern world. To write (and to read) was to be part of a world-making, potentially world-changing enterprise – as potentially efficacious in changing the world as the historical and political events to which their poetry responded.

Our reading will focus on the work of two friends and collaborators, William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and that of William's sister Dorothy. Along the way we'll encounter a colorful secondary cast of poets, radicals, philosophers, and scientists. We will also read some later poetry and prose (Lord Byron's *Don Juan*, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Thomas de Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*) that revisits the poetry and ideas of the previous generation with irony, remorse, or humor.

## Major Authors *Dickens, Early, Middle, and Late*

21L.705 (H, CI-M)

TR 1:00 - 2:30 p

James Buzard

Room: 4-253

If he had given us nothing more than Ebenezer Scrooge and the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future, or *Oliver Twist* and "Please, sir, can I have some more?" we would probably still be reading Charles Dickens (1812-1870). And he gave us much, much more. This class will study three of his long novels, taking our time to sink into their immersive worlds of plentiful characters, multiple plots, unexpected connections, zany humor, and searing pathos. They are probably not the novels by him you may have read in high school. The early work *Barnaby Rudge* is a generally underrated and fascinating historical novel set in the turbulent 1780s. *Bleak House* is Dickens's mid-career masterpiece of social critique, analyzing Victorian society from high to lowest of the low. *Our Mutual Friend*, his last completed novel, is a darkly brilliant work featuring hidden identities, lost fortunes, and (very likely) buried treasure. Students will be asked to give one or two brief oral reports, to write short response papers on a regular basis, and to either write a sustained critical essay or design and present a final creative project.

## Studies in Film Color in Film

21L.704 (H, CI-M)

Lecture TR 1:00 - 2:30  
Room I-277

Screening T 7:00 - 10:00 p  
TBD

Eugenie Brinkema

“Ce n’est pas du sang, c’est du rouge.” [ It’s not blood; it’s red. ] —Jean-Luc Godard

The history of film theory has been the history of ignoring color. Treated as a minor detail, ornament, or gimmick, and aligned with degraded cultural modes such as the feminine, the exotic, and the melodramatic, a rigorous aesthetics of color has only recently received due scholarly attention. This seminar explores those aesthetic issues in addition to the affective, political, ethical and interpretive possibilities made available by taking color seriously. Although we will briefly study innovations in color film cinematography (attending to early hand-tinted films and the development of Technicolor), our focus will be on theoretical questions: How have philosophers defined color and how have these accounts moved between chromophobia and chromophilia (deriding or fetishizing it)? How does a logic of color work in specific genres and modes (melodrama, horror, surrealism, animation)? How is color linked to desire, excess, and other formal areas including sound, duration, space and movement? How is color attached to specific (gendered, raced) bodies? How is color linked to violence and how is color affectively provocative?

Readings from philosophers, art historians, and film theorists pair with films early and recent from all over the globe, including: *The Wizard of Oz*, *Kill Bill*, *Blue*, *Raise the Red Lantern*, *Sombre*, *Vertigo*, *Red Desert*, *Fantasia*, *Written on the Wind*, *Schindler’s List*, *The Cook, the Thief, his Wife and her Lover*, *Blue is the Warmest Color*, *Contempt*, *Don’t Look Now*, *Three Colors Trilogy*, and *In the Mood for Love*. In addition to the lecture, there will be an optional weekly four hour film screening. Prerequisite: 21L.011, one subject in Literature or Comparative Media Studies; or permission of instructor.

## Problem in Cultural Interpretation

The Written Kitchen: Reading Women’s Cookbooks and Food Blogs

21L.707 (H, CI-M)

TR 11:30 - 1:00 p

Ina Lipkowitz

Room: 4-144

Cookbooks can tell us how to bake a really good chocolate cake, but what is it we find when we read between the lines? Not only sources of recipes, cookbooks are also windows into the worlds that produced them, revealing what foods were available (and to whom), what technologies were used, who cooked (and for whom), and what food meant to the people who produced, transported, processed, cooked, and ate it. In this class we will give the same care and attention to American cookbooks and food blogs that are often given more traditional forms of writing. We will focus on women’s contributions because historically it was through domestic manuals, recipes, and cookery books that women expressed themselves. Even today, with so many avenues open to them, women continue to dominate both cookbook publishing and the culinary blogosphere.

# CONCENTRATION

Students come to Literature to fulfill their Concentrations for many reasons. Some love to read great books, plays, or poems, or want to explore film and media studies. Some wish to hone their skills in thinking and writing about literary questions. Others enjoy participating in lively discussion in small classes. Many have favorite authors or periods they want to know better.

Concentrations may be organized by genre (poetry, drama, fiction, film), historical period and/or national literature (Renaissance, nineteenth-century British and American literatures, modern American literature), subject of study (popular culture, media studies, literature and aesthetic theory), or theme (race and imperialism, literature and the city, etc.).

# MINOR

A Literature Minor lays the foundation for advanced study by enhancing the 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 Literature Minor is designed to allow a student to make a smooth transition from a prior Concentration in Literature, as well as to progress smoothly towards a Major in Literature (should the student so desire).

# MAJOR

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.

Students considering majoring in Literature should first see our Undergraduate Academic Administrator to declare interest and to arrange a Major Advisor.

Join Literature faculty & students for

# Literature Tea

every monday during the term

4:15 PM - 5:45 PM

14N-417

