

LITERATURE SUBJECTS

Course 21L Supplement to the Bulletin



FALL 2018

“It is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation.” — Herman Melville

Portrait of James Baldwin by Bee Johnson



LITERATURE SECTION

77 Massachusetts Ave, Building 14N-407, Cambridge, MA 02139
phone: (617) 253-3581 | email: lit@mit.edu | lit.mit.edu

Note: Rooms and times subject to change

21L Literature Subject Descriptions - Fall 2018

Subject	Units	Designation	Title	Fall 18 Faculty	Day	Time	Room	
INTRODUCTORY								
21L.000J L1	3-0-9	H	CI-HW - Same subject as 21W.734J The Art of the Short Story [Writing About Literature]	W. Kelley	MW	1 - 2:30p	2-103	
21L.000J L2	3-0-9	H	CI-HW - Same subject as 21W.734J The Art of the Short Story [Writing About Literature]	I. Lipkowitz	TR	11:30 - 1p	5-231	
21L.001	3-0-9	H	CI-H Foundations of Western Literature: Homer to Dante	J. Buzard	MW	1 - 2:30p	4-144	
21L.003	3-0-9	H	CI-H Literary Storms [Reading Fiction]	A. Abramson	TR	11 - 12:30p	56-167	
21L.004 L1	3-0-9	H	CI-H Reading Poetry	A. Bahr	TR	11 - 12:30p	2-103	
21L.004 L2	3-0-9	H	CI-H Reading Poetry	N. Jackson	TR	3:30 - 5p	4-146	
21L.005	3-0-9	A	CI-H Introduction to Drama	A. Fleche	MW	3:30 - 5p	2-103	
21L.007	3-0-9	H	CI-H Writing Place in Contemporary World Literature [World Literatures]	L. Finch	TR	9:30 - 11a	56-167	
21L.009	3-0-9	H	CI-H Shakespeare	S. Raman	TR	9:30 - 11a	4-253	
21L.010J	3-0-9	H	CI-HW - Same subject as 21W.042J Writing with Shakespeare	D. Henderson	TR	3:30 - 5p	66-154	
21L.011	3-3-6	A/H	CI-H	The Film Experience (Lecture)	D. Thorburn	T	3:30 - 5p	3-270
				The Film Experience (Screening)		T	7 - 10p	3-270
				The Film Experience R1		TR	3 - 4p	1-273
				The Film Experience R2		TR	3 - 4p	1-277
				The Film Experience R3		TR	4 - 5p	1-273
21L.014J	3-0-9	H	CI-H - Same subject as 21H.007J Introduction to Ancient and Medieval Studies	S. Frampton/ E. Goldberg	TR	9:30 - 11a	E51-085	
								21L.015
21L.020J	3-0-9	H	CI-H - Same subject as WGS.145J Globalization: The Good, the Bad and the In-Between	J. Terrones	MW	3 - 4:30p	14E-310	
21L.021	3-0-9	H	CI-H Comedy, Irony, Satire, Farce, and Silly Walks [Comedy]	S. Tapscott	MW	7 - 8:30p	2-103	
SAMPLING								
21L.310	2-0-4		Out For the Count [Bestsellers] (Ends October 19)	W. Donaldson	MW	3 - 4:30p	1-379	
21L.325	2-0-4		The Sketch [Small Wonders] (Ends October 19)	W. Kelley	MW	9:30 - 11a	2-103	
21L.338	2-0-4		Advanced Old English [Reading in the Original]	A. Bahr	T	3-5p	14N-112	
21L.355	2-0-4		Literature in the Digital Age (Begins October 29)	W. Kelley	MW	9:30 - 11a	2-103	
INTERMEDIATE								
21L.433	3-0-9	H	Hollywood Renaissance -- American Film in the 1970s [Film Styles and Genres]	D. Thorburn	TR	12:30 - 2p	5-234	
21L.434	3-0-9	H	Twenty-First Century Science Fiction [Science Fiction and Fantasy]	L. Finch	TR	2 - 3:30p	5-234	
21L.452J	3-0-9	H	Same subject as 24.140 Meets with CMS. 845; same subject as 21W.765 Literature and Philosophy	M. Gubar/K. Setiya	MW	11 - 12:30p	66-144	
21L.489J	3-0-9	H	Interactive Narrative	N. Montfort	W	2 - 5p	66-160	
21L.512	3-0-9	H	Weird Americas [American Authors]	J. Terrones	MW	7 - 8:30p	4-253	
INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE								
21L.607	3-0-3	H	Greek I (Ends October 19)	R. Colaizzi	MW	7 - 8:30p	14N-112	
21L.608	3-0-3	H	Greek II (Begins October 29)		MW	7 - 8:30p	14N-112	
21L.613/614	2-0-4	H	Latin Readings (Ends October 19)	S. Frampton	MW	1 - 2:30p	14N-112	
21L.640J	3-0-9	H	Same subject as 21F.740 The New Spain: 1977-Present	M. Resnick	T	7 - 10p	4-253	
SEMINAR								
21L.702	3-0-9	H	CI-M Middlemarch and After: Eliot and James [Studies in Fiction]	J. Buzard	MW	9:30 - 11a	56-167	
21L.703	3-0-9	H	CI-M The Drama of Revenge [Studies in Drama]	S. Raman	TR	1 - 2:30p	4-144	
21L.704	3-0-9	H	CI-M Poetic Life Writing: Apologia, Confession, Concealment [Studies in Poetry]	N. Jackson	TR	1 - 2:30p	4-253	
21L.705	3-0-9	H	CI-M Avatars, Allegory, and Apocalypse in Spenser's <i>Faerie Queene</i> [Major Authors]	M. Fuller	T	7 - 10p	2-103	
21L.707	3-0-9	H	CI-M The Written Kitchen: Reading Women's Cookbooks & Food Blogs [Problems in Cultural Interpretation]	I. Lipkowitz	TR	9:30 - 11a	4-146	

Note: Rooms and times subject to change

TIME	Monday/Wednesday				Tuesday/Thursday			
9:00 AM								
9:30 AM	21L.325 WK 9:30-11a 2-103 Ends Oct. 19	21L.355 WK 9:30-11a 2-103 Begins Oct. 29	21L.702 JB 9:30-11a 56-167		21L.014 SFIEG 9:30-11a E51-085	21L.007 LF 9:30-11a 56-167	21L.707 IL 9:30-11a 4-146	21L.009 SR 9:30-11a 4-253
10:00 AM								
10:30 AM								
11:00 AM		21L.452J MG/KS 11-12:30p 66-144			21L.004 Lect1 AB 11-12:30p 2-103	21L.003 AA 11-12:30p 56-167	21L.000 Lec 2 IL 11:30-1p 5-231	
11:30 AM								
12:00 PM								
12:30 PM								21L.433 DT 12:30-2p 5-234
1:00 PM	21L.000J Lec 1 WK 1-2:30p 4-144	21L.015 MG 1:30-3p 5-231	21L.001 JB 1-2:30p 4-144		21L.613/614 SF 1-2:30p 14N-112 Ends Oct. 19	21L.704 NJ 1-2:30p 4-253	21L.703 SR 1-2:30p 4-144	
1:30 PM								
2:00 PM								
2:30 PM								21L.011 DT R 3-4p Recitation 1&2
3:00 PM								
3:30 PM	21L.005 AF 3:30-5p 2-103	21L.020 JT 3-4:30p 14E-310	21L.310 WD 3-4:30p 1-379					
4:00 PM								
4:30 PM								
5:00 PM								
7:00 PM	21L.021 ST MW 7-8:30p 103	21L.512 JT 7-8:30p 4-253	21L.607 RC 7-8:30p 14N-112 Ends Oct. 19	21L.489 NM W 2-5p 66-160	21L.010 DH 3:30-5p 66-154	21L.338 AB 3-5p 14N-112	21L.004 Lec2 NJ 3:30-5p 4-146	21L.011 DT T 3:30-5p 3-270 Lecture
7:30 PM								
8:00 PM								
8:30 PM								
9:00 PM								
9:30 PM								
					21L.705 MF T 7-10p 2-103		21L.640 MR T 7-10p 4-253	21L.011 DT T 7-10p 3-270 Screening

INTRODUCTORY

Writing About Literature

21L.000 (H, CI-HW)
[Same subject as 21W.734]

Section 1
MW 1:00 - 2:30
Wyn Kelley
Room: 2-103

Section 2
TR 11:30 - 1:00
Ina Lipkowitz
Room: 5-231

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)
MW 1:00 - 2:30
James Buzard
Room: 4-144

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 Dante’s *Inferno*.

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 Literary Storms

21L.003 (H, CI-H)

TR 11:00 - 12:30

Anna Abramson

Room: 56-167

In this course we will weather famous literary storms featured in major fictional works from the late 19th century to the present day. We will use this thematic lens to think critically about the basic building blocks of fiction, and the way that fictional storms blur lines between setting, plot, characterization, suspense, and narrative structure. Short stories and novels include Kate Chopin's "The Storm," Zora Neal Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Ernest Hemingway's "After the Storm," James Joyce's "The Dead," Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse*, Ben Lerner's *10:04*, and Jesmyn Ward's *Salvage the Bones*. Some of our storms will be based upon actual events, including Hurricanes Katrina, Sandy, and Irene; this will raise complex questions about the boundaries between fictional and historical events. We will also use this topic to think about how fiction engages science, and to trace the ways in which environmental catastrophes intersect with racial and socioeconomic disparities.

Reading Poetry

21L.004 (H, CI-H)

Section 1

TR 11:00 - 12:30

Arthur Bahr

Room: 2-103

In this class we will read and discuss a lot of poems. We will also consider why so many people, going all the way back to Plato, have distrusted poets and despised their work. Among other activities, students will translate poetry into prose to see if there is something distinctive about poetic language; explore the many meanings that common words have gained and lost over the centuries, and think about how that matters; read all 154 Shakespeare sonnets to see if they're really as good as most people seem to think (don't worry, we'll read many authors besides Shakespeare!); and find a poem they love (or hate, or otherwise feel inspired to share), assign it to the class, and lead a discussion of it. Opportunities for writing will be many and varied.

Reading Poetry

21L.004 (H, CI-H)

Section 2

TR 3:30 - 5:00

Noel Jackson

Room: 4-146

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.

Introduction to Drama

21L.005 (A, CI-H)

MW 3:30 - 5:00

Anne Fleche

Room: 2-103

In this course, we'll encounter dramatic texts from the Greeks to the present, exploring their cultural and period differences, as well as the "theatricality" of an art form experienced in three dimensions and in real time. Class members will discuss readings, write papers, review dramatic performances and have the option to perform scenes themselves. In addition to modern and contemporary plays, readings will range from Ancient Greece to Medieval England, Golden Age Spain and Classical Japan.

World Literatures Writing Place in Contemporary World Literature

21L.007 (H, CI-H)

TR 9:30 - 11:00 a

Laura Finch

Room: 56-167

Spaces and places do not just exist out there, but are made through the ways that we interact with them. Space is shaped through a huge variety of things, including maps, borders, transportation, traditions, customs, architecture, and the environment. And of course, different people experience place in different ways. In addition to this already-existing range of experience, we also invent places through literature, film, and visual art: what is the relationship between the written city and the lived city?

We will address these topics through contemporary literature by writers from a variety of global locations. We will primarily read novels, but also short stories, films, and theoretical texts to develop critical thinking, reading and writing skills. In particular, we will address the question of how power affects our relationship to place, asking what effects differences of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, and disability have on experiencing and writing about space?

Shakespeare

21L.009 (H, CI-H)

TR 9:30 - 11:00 a

Shankar Raman

Room: 4-253

We will focus on four or five plays by Shakespeare, drawn from different genres. While close readings of his plays will be our focus, we will also explore how they have been adapted and performed around the world, on film and on stage. We may also attend one or more theatrical performances, depending on what is available in the Boston area. Plays selected will include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Hamlet*.

Writing with Shakespeare

21L.010 (H, CI-HW)

[Same subject as 21W.042]

TR 3:30 - 5:00

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—creatively, critically, 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 and perform scenes from what is now a "problem play," *The Merchant of Venice*. Other plays will include one each from Shakespeare's major tragedies, histories, and comedies. In all these cases, we will examine the reasons for Shakespeare's enduring power and performance around the globe. Nevertheless, our aim is less to appreciate Shakespeare as an end in itself than to draw on his remarkable drama (its vocabulary, variety, 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/H, CI-H)

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

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

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

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

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

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

David Thorburn

This course is an introductory survey of classic films. Emphasis falls equally on cultural and on artistic matters: on films as anthropological and historical artifacts that articulate the values and assumptions of particular societies and eras and on films as works of art. The course aims to sharpen students' analytic skills, to give them a sense of the history and cultural significance of movies, and to improve their writing.

Format: Two lectures (Tuesdays 3:30-5 and 7-7:30) and one recitation section each week (Thursdays 3-4 or 4-5 pm). A screening of the required film(s) will follow the Tuesday evening lecture.

Introduction to Ancient and Medieval Studies

21L.014 (H, CI-H)

[Same subject as 21H.007]

TR 9:30 - 11:00 a

Stephanie Frampton

Eric Goldberg

Room: E51-085

Explores the fascinating history, culture, and society of Europe and the Mediterranean in Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Investigates essential themes, structures, and developments in the ancient and medieval worlds and the diverse methodologies scholars use to interpret them. Wrestles with big questions about the diversity of life and thought in pre-modern societies, the best ways to study the distant past, and the nature (and limitations) of knowledge about the long-passed eras. Considers a wide range of scholarly subjects such as the rise and fall of the Roman empire, the triumph of Christianity and Islam, the Vikings and Crusades, courts and castles, philosophy and religion, and the diversity of art, literature, and government. Ponders different types of evidence, reads across a variety of disciplines, and develops skills to identify continuities and changes in ancient and medieval societies. Serves as an excellent introductory subject as well as a springboard for future work in MIT's Ancient and Medieval Studies curriculum.

Children's Literature Imagining Alternative Worlds

21L.015 (H, CI-H)

MW 1:30 - 3:00

Marah Gubar

Room: 5-231

In this course, we will study fantasy narratives that invite readers to immerse themselves in enchanted alternative realms or magical worlds enmeshed within the realm of everyday life. Revisiting familiar environs such as Never Land, Narnia, Middle-Earth, and Hogwarts and concluding with a trip through more contemporary and diverse fantasylands, we will investigate how authors employ the tools of fiction to craft such convincing alternative worlds. Are these fantasies an escapist solution to the problem of modern disenchantment, or can we tell some more complicated story about their emergence and function? Since creative writers are themselves astute critics of fantasy, we will take inspiration from Ursula K. Le Guin, Lev Grossman, and other writers for whom criticism itself constitutes a creative act.

Globalization: The Good, the Bad and the In-Between

21L.020 (H, CI-H)

[Same subject as WGS.145]

MW 3:00 - 4:30

Joaquin Terrones

Room: 14E-310

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)

MW 7:00 - 8:30 p

Stephen Tapscott

Room: 2-103

Texts:

Geoffrey Chaucer, Selected 'Canterbury Tale,'

William Shakespeare, 'Midsummer Night's Dream'

Jonathan Swift, 'Gulliver's Travels', 'A Modest Proposal'

Jane Austen, 'Pride and Prejudice',

Lewis Carroll, 'Alice in Wonderland'

Oscar Wilde, 'The Importance of Being Earnest.'

Robert Browning, 'My Last Duchess' and other poems,

Henry James, 'Daisy Miller'

Mark Twain, 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn'

Anton Chekhov, 'The Cherry Orchard'

Samuel Beckett, 'Waiting for Godot'

films, videos, performance:

'I Love Lucy'

'My Beautiful Laundrette'

'Modern Times'

'East is East'

Monty Python skits

'Get Out'

and Gilbert and Sullivan production

SAMPLINGS

Bestsellers Out For the Count

21L.310

MW 3:00 - 4:30

William Donaldson

Room: 1-379

ends October 19

Dracula, first published in 1897, has undergone a dramatic re-evaluation in modern literary history. Long dismissed as mere pulp fiction, it is by now hailed as a highly significant work and a pioneering proto-modernist text. But how did its author, Bram Stoker, create this extraordinary tale? There were no vampires in British folklore—so where did he get his ideas? *Out for the Count* tracks the growth of the vampire trope from the early nineteenth century through a series of classic works by Byron, Polidori, le Fanu and others, during which we learn about the formation of the modern literary canon, the folklore of the undead, and the creation and subsequent growth of one of the most prolific popular culture genres—vampire fiction—which reached its first apotheosis in Stoker’s masterwork, *Dracula*.

Small Wonders The Sketch

21L.325

MW 9:30 - 11:00

Wyn Kelley

Room: 2-103

ends October 19

Although the term implies spontaneity, haste, improvisation, and ephemerality, the sketch has endured and flourished for centuries. Sketches appear in many forms (artistic, literary, dramatic) and with different aims (moral, biographical, journalistic, comic). This class samples American sketch artists and work ranging from the romantic musings of Washington Irving and Nathaniel Hawthorne, to satiric essays of Fanny Fern, Mark Twain, Dorothy Parker, Alice Childress, Nora Ephron, and David Sedaris, as well, according to the interests of the class, as televisual sketches by a wide range of comics.

Literature in the Digital Age

21L.355

MW 9:30 - 11:00

Wyn Kelley

Room: 2-103

begins October 29

How have digital media changed the way authors write? How has the internet affected literary texts and the ways they conceive of memory, information, identity, space, and time? This class tests these questions by examining authors whose careers span the digital age (roughly from the early 1980s to the current moment). We will explore early and later works by Philip Roth (*Goodbye, Columbus* and *The Human Stain*) and Toni Morrison (*Sula*, *God Help the Child*). Then we will look at authors who foreground digital media and devices: Chimimanda Ngozi Adichie (*Americanah*) and/or Mohsin Hamid (*Exit West*). Besides giving us an opportunity to compare books by a range of contemporary authors, this experiment will draw attention to such topics as reading habits, fans and audiences, the economics of publishing, and the migrations of narrative across different cultural spaces and media forms.

Bestsellers Out For the Count

21L.338

T 3:00 - 5:00

Arthur Bahr

Room: 14N-112

Readings in Old English poetry and prose, most of which will be determined by student interest. Prerequisite: 21L.601 or equivalent.

INTERMEDIATE

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

21L.433 (H)

TR 12:30 - 2:00

David Thorburn

Room: 5-234

A close study of landmark films of the late 1960s and 70s when a new generation of actors and directors transformed American movies. Syllabus will include such films as *Bonnie and Clyde*, *The Graduate*, *Five Easy Pieces*, *The Godfather*, *Nashville*, *Mean Streets*, *Chinatown*, *Cabaret*, *Annie Hall*.

Prerequisite: 21L.011 or permission of the instructor.

Science Fiction and Fantasy Twenty-First Century Science Fiction

21L.434 (H)

TR 2:00 - 3:30

Laura Finch

Room: 5-234

The course that North America is on in the present moment can make imagining a liveable future seem like an impossible task: an increasing gap between rich and poor, continued warfare, and the looming disaster of environmental collapse. One response to this by writers has been to represent an apocalyptic future, often including zombies, climate catastrophes, and biological pandemics.

This seminar is not about these writers. Rather than the relative luxury of being able to imagine a future-world that is worse than ours, some writers – typically minority writers – argue that the world is already pretty apocalyptic in 2018. These writers choose to use the imaginative potential of science fiction and speculative fiction to rewrite our collective future. By tackling the social injustice of the present, these writers invite us to imagine our future differently.

Specifically, this intermediate literature class will focus on global science fiction from the last two decades, including short stories, novels, and films. Our texts will address topics such as: race, indigeneity, LGBTQIA+ and gender rights, mass

incarceration and police violence, immigrant rights, and environmental devastation, and colonialism/settler colonialism.

Literature and Philosophy Epistemology

21L.452 (H)

[Same subject as 24.140]

MW 11:00 - 12:30

Marah Gubar &
Kieran Setiya

Room: 66-144

How do we know what we know? That's the central question that animates the philosophical field known as epistemology. It's also a problem that creative writers regularly ponder in their poetry and prose. Reading literary and philosophical texts side by side, we will discuss the nature of empirical, scientific, and poetic ways of knowing, as well as considering what it means to achieve self-knowledge and knowledge of other minds. Ought we to conceive of knowledge as perspectival or situated? If so, how might that affect how we try to obtain it? To enrich our discussion of these and other puzzling philosophical questions, we'll read everything from a raucous eighteenth-century comic novel to a Modernist masterpiece to pulp horror stories, children's fiction, and contemporary poems. Meanwhile, we will ask: does literature merely illustrate philosophical ideas or does it do philosophy in its own right?

Authors we will read include David Hume, Laurence Sterne, Virginia Woolf, H. P. Lovecraft, E. L. Konigsberg, Iris Murdoch, Herman Melville, and Wallace Stevens.

Interactive Narrative

21L.489 (H)

[Same subject as 21W.765],

CMS.845]

W 2:00 - 5:00

Nick Montfort

Room: 66-160

The course focuses on one methodology and includes two large-scale creative projects which students undertake individually.

NARRATIVE THEORY is the methodology. We study narratology (narrative theory) to gain a better understanding of the form and function of narratives in general, and to be able to discuss and work with the elements and aspects of interactive narrative particularly. Narrative theory is introduced throughout the first half of the course, during the **FORKING PATHS** unit, and is applied in the **ELECTRONIC LITERATURE** unit as well.

FORKING PATHS. We study non-linear print pieces of different sorts –not only the Choose-Your-Own-Adventure series but other juvenile fiction books of similarly unusual structure; parodies of Choose-Your-Own-Adventure books; literary works such as those by Saporta, Queneau, Mathews, Pavić, Coover, and others; and comics by Jason Shiga and others. Students write their own creative multisequential print piece.

ELECTRONIC LITERATURE. We focus on digital work that has narrative as an important component. Often, the “user” or “reader” is the one who gets to produce the narratives by interacting. A narrative electronic literature work can be a structured document that the interactor can traverse in many ways or a more complex computer program that simulates a world, accepts English input,

and perhaps does other interesting things. This includes many computer and video games, including interactive fiction, along with classic and more recent hypertext fictions, visual novels, and many other examples of creative computing.

The main project for the term is to create a work of electronic literature of some sort, which can be done by programming or for instance by creating a hypertextual work, which does not require programming.

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.

INTERNATIONAL LITERATURES

Greek I

21L.607 (H)

MW 7:00 - 8:30 p

Randall Colaizzi

Room: 14N-112

ends October 19

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 October 29

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 1:00 - 2:30

Stephanie Frampton

Room: 14N-112

ends October 19

Read Latin literature in the original language! This year, our text will be the poems—*carmina*—of the Roman poet Catullus, famous for his playful epigrams, his heartfelt love songs, and his rich mythological tales in hexameter. 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.

The New Spain: 1977-Present

21L.640 (H)

[Same subject as 21F.740]

T 7:00 - 10:00 p

Margery Resnick

Room: 4-253

Deals with the vast changes in Spanish social, political and cultural life that have taken place since the death of Franco (1975). Topics include new freedom from censorship, the re-emergence of strong movements for regional autonomy (the Basque region and Catalonia), the new cinema including Almodovar and Saura, educational reforms instituted by the socialist government, the changes in the role of the Catholic church, the emergence of one of the world's most progressive gender environment, and new forms of fiction. Special emphasis on the mass media as a vehicle for expression in Spain. Materials include magazines, newspapers, films, television series, fiction, and essays. Each student chooses a research project that focuses on an issue of personal interest. Taught in Spanish.

SEMINAR

Studies in Fiction *Middlemarch* and After: Eliot and James

21L.702 (H, CI-M)

MW 9:30 - 11:00 a

James Buzard

Room: 56-167

What are novels for? How should they be made?

In this class, we'll not only study George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871-72) – one of the greatest of all novels – but will also examine two other major works that make critical contributions to the evolution of the novel form itself: Eliot's own *Daniel Deronda* (1874-76), her last finished novel, and Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady* (1880), which attempts to rewrite the basic plot of *Deronda* and to set the novel as a genre on a different course. This was the course, many critics think, that led to the Modernist fiction of such writers as Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, and Virginia Woolf, with its apparent fixation on psychological states (think “stream of consciousness”) and its apparently overriding commitment to literary form. By focusing on James's vexed response to Eliot, we'll reconsider the story critics have told of how the novel moves from Victorian to Modernist, or from “traditional” to “experimental.” I am currently working on a critical project on this very issue.

Student work will most likely involve short responses to readings, brief oral reports, one critical essay, and a creative project at the semester's end.

Studies in Drama *The Drama of Revenge*

21L.703 (H, CI-M)

TR 1:00 - 2:30

Shankar Raman

Room: 4-144

This seminar will explore narratives of vengeance, from the horrific to the comic and the parodic, across a range of time periods and cultures. Our goal will be to study the mechanics, ethics, and aesthetics of payback. Alongside plays, books, and films, we will be reading critical and theoretical essays that will help sharpen our understanding of such stories and their enduring relevance.

Studies in Poetry Poetic Life Writing : Apologia, Confession, Concealment

21L.704 (H, CI-M)

TR 1:00 - 2:30

Noel Jackson

Room: 4-253

What motivates a poet to set down his or her life story in verse, and how does one do so? To what extent does the aim to tell the authentic truth about an individual life come into conflict with the time-honored aims of poetry, upending traditional expectations of formal regularity and decorum? The poets we will read wrote frankly about a range of personal topics not typically regarded as the stuff of poetry in their time. More broadly, they wrote with a sense that one of poetry's

highest attainments is the accurate recording of subjective experience and inward states of mind. The course subtitle ("Apologia, Confession, Concealment") names three possible, by no means comprehensive or mutually exclusive, modalities of self-representation in poetic life writing. Our reading will be organized around the study of two literary-historical periods each known for their innovative turn to the autobiographical mode and the precise delineation of inner life: British Romanticism (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Lord Byron) and the second half of the twentieth century, with the American poets labeled "confessional" foremost (Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, John Berryman), as well as others (Elizabeth Bishop, Frank O'Hara, Allen Ginsberg).

Major Authors Avatars, Allegory, and Apocalypse in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*

21L.705 (H, CI-M)

T 7:00 - 10:00 p

Mary Fuller

Room: 2-103

After the medieval legends of King Arthur, and before modern fantasy novels and role-playing games, lies Spenser's epic poem, *The Faerie Queene*. FQ -- written by a contemporary of Shakespeare's -- weaves together quests, moral allegory, political argument, apocalyptic vision, gender play and comedy into a sequence of multi-layered stories loosely connected by the youthful Arthur's search for the *Faerie Queene*. Each of its major characters seeks to complete a series of tasks and ordeals linked to one of the qualities a perfect man should have. At least, that's the job the poet initially sets out to do

Each week, we will storyboard the action of the poem, visualizing the arcs of characters and narrative and mapping the spaces through which they progress. Alongside our reading in FQ, we will pay attention to its prehistory in medieval chivalric romance; its historical context, in an England struggling to found an empire and build a national identity; and its afterlives, in fantasy genres and modern allegory.

Work for the class will involve short written and oral research presentations; analytic writing; and a modest amount of creative work.

Problems in Cultural Interpretation

The Written Kitchen: Reading
Women's Cookbooks & Food Blogs

21L.707 (H, CI-M)

TR 9:30 - 11:00 a

Ina Lipkowitz

Room: 4-146

In the words of Louis Menand, “advanced pop criticism” is “the belief that you can talk about cultural goods loved uncritically by millions in terms originally developed to talk about cultural goods known mainly to an overeducated few.” In this class, we will give the same care & attention to cookbooks and food blogs that are often given more traditional forms of writing. Why cookbooks and blogs? Because historically women have expressed themselves through domestic manuals, recipes, and cookery books; even today, with so many avenues open to them, women continue to dominate both cookbook publishing and the culinary blogosphere. The lines themselves might tell us how to bake a really good chocolate cake, what is it we read *between the lines*?

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.

