

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
SPRING 2016

ENGLISH 12S: WAR STORIES

War movies have long been a vivid form of Hollywood storytelling. For better or for worse, they have helped to shape how Americans (and many other people) imagine war. In this class we will consider two key questions: “What do war movies do?” and “What is the relationship between imagining and understanding?” In search of answers, we will compare three approaches to making a war movie: the embodiment of realism, the grandeur of myth and the subversiveness of comedy.

Movies may include: *Saving Private Ryan*, *The Hurt Locker*, *Glory*, *Apocalypse Now*, *The Thin Red Line*, *Three Kings*, *M*A*S*H*, and *The Battle of Algiers*. We will also read Ed Sikov’s fun, useful overview of movie conventions, *Film Studies: An Introduction*.

Requirements: Regular attendance and participation, 2 short papers and a final exam.
Kinney. TR 0810AM 0930AM

ENGLISH 20C: INTRODUCTION TO ALTERNATIVE CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON LITERATURE AND CULTURE

The course will use film adaptation, literature, and visual culture as a means of introducing alternative critical perspectives. The underlying assumption regarding adaptation is that it is not only a means of transforming the written to the cinematic, but also a means of acculturation, translation, and critique—among other things. We will look at five texts and their cinematic adaptations. The texts will include novel, autobiography, crime novel, and short story. We will spend a week on the written text and a week on the cinematic film adaptation. In doing so, students will engage literary and cultural theory and film and visual theory, including adaptation theory, deconstruction, African-American literary, cultural, and film theory, queer theory, feminist theory, and gender theory among them.

The texts are as follows:

Tess of the D’Urbervilles (Thomas Hardy)- *Tess* (Roman Polanski)

Lady Sings the Blues (Billie Holiday)- *Lady sings the blues* (Sidney J. Furie)

Clockers (Richard Price)- *Clockers* (Spike Lee)

Billy Budd (Herman Melville)-*Beau Travail* (Claire Deni)

What we talk about when we talk about love (Raymond Carver)- *Short Cuts* (Robert Altman)

These titles are subject to change.

Harris. TR 0340PM 0500PM

Fulfills #1 in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 23: AFRICAN AMERICAN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

This course introduces students to African American literature through the lens of autobiography, paying special attention to how the black literary tradition in the U.S. has been shaped by self-narrated responses to terror and oppression. Students will learn about the African American literary tradition as well as the formal conventions of autobiography. Readings may

include Ida Wells-Barnett's *Crusade for Justice*, Assata Shakur's *Assata: An Autobiography*, and Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me*. Requirements will include two exams and three essays.

Edwards. MWF 0910AM 1000AM

ENGLISH 102W (SECTIONS 001 AND 002): INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL METHODS

What are “literary techniques” and how do they work? What are “critical methods”? Is there a difference between reading a text and interpreting it? Or is reading always really interpretation? What does it mean to do a “close reading” of a text? What is involved in the process? Why do some interpretations make more sense than others? Why can two (or more) different interpretations be equally convincing? These are some of the basic questions that we will consider as we read and discuss a diverse array of poems, a novel, critical essays, and a collection of short stories. The required texts are *An Introduction to poetry*, ed. X.J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia (13th edition, 978-0-205-68612-4), E.M. Forster's *Howards End*, Dover Thrift Edition (ISBN 0-486-42454-5), James Joyce's *Dubliners* (ed. Terence Brown, ISBN 0 14 01.86476). It is important for students to buy these particular editions (all in paperback and available at the UCR bookstore), for purposes of discussions and assignments. Because in-class warm-up exercises are a significant portion of your final grade, daily attendance and class participation are not “optional”.

Devlin. Section 001: MWF 1210PM 0100PM; Section 002: MWF 0210PM 0300PM

Fulfills # 2 in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 114: RHETORICAL STUDIES

Making Presence: Raced, Gendered, Queered and Neo-Liberal Rhetorics

Class will utilize music, speeches, art, literature, politics, and popular culture to make two primary arguments. **One**, the importance of rhetoric, tropes, and spaces in the construction, circulation, and manufacturing of subjectivities, identities, and knowledges. In short, no tropes, no rhetorics, no meaningful existence. **Two**, more than a buzzword, how the world's most important economic-religious belief—**neo-liberalism**—attempts to reduce all human and post-human relations (religious, social, political and cultural), to market relations. Where corporations are more human than humans.

Nunley. TR 0510PM 0630PM

Fulfills #5 in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 117C: SHAKESPEARE: TRAGEDY

A close analytical study of plays selected from one of Shakespeare's dramatic genres as they are designated in the First Folio.

Staff. MWF 1110AM 1200PM

Fulfills #3-A in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 127B: AMERICAN POETRY FROM 1900 TO 1950

We will explore in depth the great modernist and Harlem Renaissance poems of the twentieth century. We will look for visions, subversions, ruptures, complexities, and resonances. We will consider psychological, social, political, and aesthetic issues.

From the teens and twenties, we will read such poets as Gertrude Stein, Robert Frost, Yone Noguchi, Wallace Stevens, Angelina Weld Grimké, William Carlos Williams, Marianne Moore, Ezra Pound, Hilda Doolittle, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and T. S. Eliot. From the nineteen thirties and forties, we will read such poets as Hart Crane, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and Lorine Niedecker. We will also look at Native American poems, corridos, Dada, blues lyrics, and internment camp poems. We will consider the role of poetry in the world of yesterday and today.

Two short papers, plus midterm and final exams. Regular attendance necessary. Required book: S. G. Axelrod et al., *The New Anthology of American Poetry, Volume 2* (Rutgers Univ. Press).

Very fine is my valentine.
Very fine and very mine.
Very mine is my valentine very mine and very fine. –Gertrude Stein

For you I have
Many songs to sing
Could I but find the words. –Langston Hughes

Axelrod. TR 1240PM 0200PM

Fulfills #3-D in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 127T: STUDIES IN AMERICAN POETRY

NEW ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY SYSTEMS FOR POETRY

In this class we will begin by recalling that print was an alternative delivery system for poetry, one that came to be seen as having eclipsed, though in reality it never came close to eclipsing, various modes of aurality as the primary way poetry is disseminated and received. The age of Hip Hop came along to make that clear to us at the same time that it has made it possible to think again about what a new, primarily visual alternative delivery system might be. Digital media, wherein the screen partly displaces and partly refigures the page, as the dominant mechanism for the spread of the visible word, is the obvious candidate for the new alternative but with its capture in and by various nerdy, macho-man networks of racial and sexual exclusion, the question of alternative form immediately bumps into the question of alternative content. This class will be a place for us to ask (at least) a few preliminary questions by way of a focus on women (of color) poets as the makers of the new alternative: What's the relation in poetry between phonic and visual materiality? How are new modes of each created when poetry's focus on the word is blurred or when the poem is no longer understood to be a (literary) object? How

does the new alternative imagine and instantiate another kind of social life both in the poem and within which the poem circulates? It seems that poetry is (always) on the way to some things it doesn't quite get to while carrying some things it can't quite leave behind. *By way of lots of reading and writing*, we'll see if we can see poetry's melancholic non-arrival as a good thing.

Moten. MW 0510PM 0630PM

Fulfills #3-D in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 128J: JANE AUSTEN

In this course we will read the major works of one of the most popular novelists of the English tradition. In addition to considering the author, her life, and her age, we will pay some attention to contemporary writers of sentimental, Gothic, and political fiction.

Haggerty. MWF 1110AM 1200PM

Fulfills #3-B in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 130: AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1620-1830

Colonial Encounters

The historical rubric of English 130 as stated in the course catalog defines early American literature as originating in 1630 and concluding in 1830. But this course offers a provocation to the conventional theoretical and historical approaches to early American literature by offering an analysis of what can be considered a transnational prehistory of the Anglophonic presence in the Americas and a critique of the centrality of Puritan textual production in early American literary scholarship. This course encourages students to re-imagine the linguistic, cultural, and geographical terrain of early American literature and to acquaint them with a range of discursive responses to contact with the "Other" from indigenous oral narrative to the late 16th century in what is now known as "the Americas": Canada, the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean. We will question and think critically about the ways in which invasion and encounter between Native Americans and Europeans within the settler colonial regime is figured in literature and visual culture, focusing on how the trope of cannibalism, in particular, works as a powerful and pervasive way of incorporating; (mis)understanding; rendering hypervisible and invisible; and committing violence against the gendered and racialized Indigenous "Other." While sermons and spiritual narratives constitute the majority of 17th and 18th century Anglophonic literary production, non-fiction representations of cannibalism are central to the canon of early literature and culture of "the Americas" broadly speaking, particularly in the 15th and 16th centuries, and continue to play a primary role in genres such as science fiction as filmmakers and writers seek to understand future possible encounters with the "Other" through earlier representations such as those we will be reading this quarter. We will approach the topic of anthropophagy from several different disciplinary perspectives—anthropology, history, literature, psychoanalysis, visual culture—in order to better understand how cannibalism has been represented from the early colonial period to the present and how it has informed the major texts and contexts of American literary history.

Raheja. TR 0210PM 0330PM

Fulfills 3-C in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 131: AMERICAN LITERATURE 1830--CIVIL WAR

Grand Contested Election for the Presidency of the United States

Whaling Voyage by one Ishmael

Bloody Battle in Afghanistan

So declares, Ishmael as he begins his tale, *Moby Dick*, and as our world mirrors Melville's, so I declare that we will voyage through Antebellum America to find the relationships between their world and ours. All the assignments will build toward a final project. Class will be discussion-based with reading notes, short papers and the final project.

Texts: Emerson's *Self-Reliance* and *Experience*; Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables*; Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*; Cummins' *The Lamplighter*; Thoreau's *Walden*; Whitman's *Leaves of Grass (1855 edition)*; Dickinson's *Collected Poems*; Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener*.

Cohen. TR 1110AM 1230PM

Fulfills #3-C in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 138B: AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE SINCE HARLEM RENASSAINCE

This course offers an in-depth study of African American literature through the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Studying a range of authors such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Zora Neale Hurston, Ralph Ellison, Nikki Giovanni, Amiri Baraka, and Toni Morrison, we will discuss fiction, poetry, drama, essays, and film as forms of expressive culture that reimagine the world in the wake of ongoing racial violence. Requirements will include two exams and two papers.

Edwards. MWF 1210PM 0100PM

Fulfills 3-D in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 140J: MODES OF NARRATIVE

This course is misleadingly named. In the first place, it is not about narrative in the sense of fictional or historical stories, but about a genre usually understood as “non-narrative”, lyric poetry. We will explore how lyric relates to “relation”, that is, to the ways in which it relates language and its materials in forms that may or may not include implicit narratives. Why do we need genres that do not rely on stories? What does the modern lyric succeed in doing that is utterly different from what the technically more effective narrative genres—story, novel, cinema, video games—do? And although we will mostly be reading modern poems, this course is not intended to introduce you to the full range of modern poetry, American or British. It is not by any means a survey or an introduction to the canon.

The course is principally about reading. How to read. How not to read. How to think about what we read. What to expect from reading different kinds of poetry. Above all, about the qualities of attention that we can bring to bear in reading. We will read poems, one at a time, until we consider that we have read them as exhaustively as they—or we—can bear. Mostly we

will be considering what kinds of attention poetry, as a mode of apprehending the world, demands and brings to bear. We will be thinking about language—as something we use to grasp our worlds, as something that intervenes between us and our world, as something that is our world, as play, as representation. I will be trying to find poems that, in turn, make the models of reading we have developed up to any point on the basis of reading other poems irrelevant, hard to sustain, unproductive. We will spend as much time as we want on anything we read: there is no set quantity of material to cover, no particular thing you need to know at the end of this course, no body of information you need to master. Every so often, I will introduce critical essays that may help us to refine our thinking about poetry, but the main thing is our collective focus on poems. There will therefore be no syllabus or reading list—I will simply provide you with a copy of a poem that we will read until we are done, and then I will hand you a fresh one.

In advance of the class, you should buy or familiarize yourself with the library's online version of a large, etymological dictionary and use it constantly. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) is recommended as is Webster's multi-volume dictionary. A college dictionary alone will not be adequate to this class's work. Print copies are pretty easily and cheaply available in second-hand bookstores.

Writing requirements: students will write three essays, of increasing length on individual poems throughout the quarter, for about 14 pages in total. The first essays will require you to focus on close and careful readings of the poem[s] assigned; the final essay will also permit you to reflect on critical and theoretical readings and issues relating to poetry.

Lloyd. MW 0510PM 0630PM

Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 142F: VICTORIAN MATERIALISM AND CULTURE: POPULAR FICTION OF THE 1880s and 1890s

This course introduces students to three British writers active in the 1880s and 1890s, Arthur Conan Doyle, Robert Louis Stevenson, and H.G. Wells. As writers of shilling shockers, adventure fiction, detective stories, and science fiction, they created the genres of modern popular fiction. What made these genres so compelling to their original audiences? Which aspects of them endure and which have become quaint? How did the stories construct youth, gendered, sexual, class, national, and imperial identities? How did they engage psychological, historical, and scientific debates of their day? What made them so adaptable to early cinematic representation? We will ask these and other questions as we read *Kidnapped*, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, *A Study in Scarlet*, *The Time Machine*, and *The Invisible Man*. Practical requirements include participation in class discussion,

an in-class exam, and two papers. The required texts are the ones listed above. There are no required editions for this course: you can find all of the novels and stories online for free, and other essays will be provided on the course website.

Zieger. TR 0940AM 1100AM

Fulfills #3-B in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 146I: SPECIAL TOPICS IN TECHNOCULTURE AND DIGITAL MEDIA

"In this course we will read expository essays (or in some cases other texts, like poetry) in a variety of formats, from print to digital media, and explore the ways in which presentation, design, and compositional style may all contribute or detract from the material presented. We will be specifically interested in the potential for digital essays, and each person will be encouraged to take a paper they have written, or a paper they will write, and format it for digital presentation (as web page; as digital graphic novel; as digital video; etc.). The goal will be to consider the range of ways in which use of data, digital presentation, sound and/or image, and interactivity or navigation may extend the possibilities of scholarly argument."

Tobias. MWF 1010AM 1100AM

Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 147I: ROBERT LOWELL'S MEMOIRS

Not an introductory course, this course is designed for dedicated English and Creative Writing majors. We will study the as-yet unpublished Memoirs of the American poet Robert Lowell (1917-1977). The professor is presently editing these memoirs for publication, so class members will have a first look at an important example of life writing. Lowell's memoirs go beneath the surface of his troubled childhood and his adult experiences in a mental hospital. At the same time, the memoirs cast an ironic light on the gendered, raced, and classed mores of his time.

Students will compare Lowell's prose memoirs with the autobiographical poems that made him famous. They will thereby consider the difference genre makes in an author's self-revelation. Class members will also be asked to read the autobiographical prose and poetry of *one* other poet of their choice: for example, Gwendolyn Brooks, Diane Di Prima, Sylvia Plath, Audre Lorde, Sandra Cisneros, Lyn Hejinian, Cherríe Moraga, Theresa Cha, Charles Simic, Stephen Dunn, Essex Hemphill, Gil Cuadros, or Maggie Nelson. In so doing, they will consider the differences and similarities between two very different autobiographical authors.

Research paper, plus midterm and final exam. Required book: Robert Lowell, *Selected Poems*, Expanded Edition (Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2006). Professor will provide the text of Lowell's Memoirs.

Axelrod. TR 0340PM 0500PM

Fulfills #3-D in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 151B: MIDDLE ENGLISH LITERATURE

This course will consist of a deep and close reading of four of the great works of the late Middle Ages in England: Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, Langland's *Piers Plowman*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Pearl*, probably by the same anonymous author. We will supplement this immersion in the texts with selections from other romances, and medieval courtly, religious and philosophical writings. Lectures will provide cultural and historical background as well as theoretical frameworks; student reports will analyze the texts. A previous Chaucer or Medieval literature class is not required, since we will spend some time practicing Middle English pronunciation. Works will be read in Middle English: for instance, "SIPEN þe sege and þe assaut watz sesed at Troye" and you will be expected to recite and translate.

Ganim. TR 0940AM 1100AM

Fulfills #3-A in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 176C: STUDIES IN 20TH C. BRITISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE: POSTMODERNISM

In the wake of W.W.II, a growing number of writers, artists, and cultural critics proclaimed that not only was it no longer possible to believe in the myth of modernity as progress through the exercise of reason in science, technology, and industry, it was no longer possible to believe in or practice the modernist critique of that myth which had so revolutionized literature and the arts at the turn of the last century. This course explores the cultural practices and critical discourses that respond to this crisis in literature, the arts, and criticism, engaging a range of media and genres, including fiction, poetry, drama, television, music video, architecture, visual art, philosophy, and literary and cultural theory. Among characteristic postmodernist themes and issues addressed are appropriation and sampling, parody and pastiche, self-reflexivity, neo-primitivism and traditionalism, fragmentation and collage, schizophrenia and paranoia, multiculturalism and postnationalism, and the posthuman. Required texts include Tim Woods' *Beginning Postmodernism*, an advanced introduction to the topic; Beckett's hugely influential absurdist tragi-comedy *Waiting for Godot*; and essays, images, videos, and music posted on the course web site. Required writing includes a mid-term essay, a short final research paper, a final exam, and five short reading and screening quizzes.

Tyler. TR 1240PM 0200PM

Fulfills #3-D in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 179T: STUDIES IN SCIENCE FICTION

Blackness and Gender in Process: Octavia E. Butler and Rhetorics of Science Fiction

Class will explore and examine some of the works and themes of seminal writer Octavia E. Butler through a rhetorical lens. Both embodying and exceeding the boundaries of the science fiction genre, her work provides a rich terrain to think and re-think dominant and emerging notions of religion and spirituality, progress, the (S)elf, race, economics, identity, ethics, and futurity.

Nunley. TR 0210PM 0330PM

Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 193A-001: SENIOR SEMINAR: ONCE UPON A TIME REDUX: THE FAIRY TALE GENRE

As today's proliferation of films and television shows that draw on the genre show, the fairy tale has had an enduring appeal, not just for children but adults. This course explores the genre so that we might begin to understand why, with a focus on the British, U.S., and European context. It compares retellings of key tales across the centuries, though with a particular emphasis on three literary periods (the Romantic, modern, and postmodern), and in various media and genres (fiction, poetry, film, book illustration, painting, sculpture, photography, and rock music). It supplements this cross-period and interdisciplinary reading and viewing with a survey of various theoretical approaches to the genre and its meanings and effects, constituting something of an introduction to literary and cultural theory and criticism in the process. Particular attention will be paid to the genre's aesthetic conventions and themes, its pleasures and frustrations, and its politics, with the aim of providing material for reflection on our contemporary investments in the genre through a historical and theoretical analysis of it. Required texts include Tatar's anthology *The Classic Fairy Tales* and Barthelme's experimental short novel *Snow White*, as well as essays, images, videos, and music posted on the course web site. Required writing includes a mini paper early in the quarter and a substantial research paper and drafts, as well as four short reading and screening quizzes.

Tyler. TR 0340PM 0500PM

Fulfills #5 in the English Major Requirements

ENGLISH 193A-002: SENIOR SEMINAR

The Peripatetic Past: Racialized Temporalities, Dystopian Vistas, and Conditional Possibilities

The dystopian novel has a long history in American literature, and it is often one characterized as being both monoracial and atemporal. That is, many think of the dystopian novel as depicting a nightmare world in which paradigmatic, unraced (read "white") subjects struggle in some unnamed future. Yet one of the earliest American dystopian novels, anti-abolitionist Jerome Holgate's 1835 *A Sojourn in the City of Amalgamation, in the Year of Our Lord 19--*, is centrally

concerned with race and warns against the nightmarish effects of miscegenation in the twentieth century. The question here, of course, is whose dystopia? Whose nightmare?

This course takes as its starting point that there is an alternate and parallel tradition of the American dystopian novel, most often organized under the banner of “American Ethnic Literatures.” In this tradition, dystopia is in the present, not the vague future; struggle is real, not imagined; and racialized regimes of power create subjects who are deemed outside the range of “universal human” experience. We will explore how racial temporalities reconfigure and mobilize the past, spatialize futurity and disrupt the possibility of a nostalgic “before” against which the dystopian is understood, while also pushing against the notion that racialized subjects only become visible (and to whom?) as subjects of a totalizing dystopia. How do such subjects become visible and legible to themselves? What are the conditions, and conditionals, of hope? In one of the books we will be reading a character says, “[T]he only way we survive is to do the love thing, you know? . . . I think I called it the hurting game . . . [I]t’s not love that’s the hurting game. It’s life. Life is the hurting game” (Sáenz). What does it mean to link love and survival – without sentimentality and in spite of everything?

This capstone course, limited to 25 students, is designed seminar-style, which means that students will be expected to demonstrate a great deal of initiative, self-direction and active participation. The books we will be reading lay out a capacious landscape of possible topics for the paper projects, and I will encourage you to make intellectual connections with the work you have done in previous courses. Details to be announced near the start of spring quarter, but they will include a formal oral presentation component, as well as the choice of writing either two 7-8 page papers or one 12-15 page paper (geared, but not limited, toward those who wish to generate a possible writing sample for graduate applications).

Likely Required Texts (please check bookstore for final order): Cormac McCarthy, *The Road*; Susan Choi, *American Woman*; Chester Himes, *If He Hollers Let Him Go*; Nina Revoyr, *Southland*; Benjamin Alire Sáenz, *Everything Begins and Ends at the Kentucky Club*; Chang-rae Lee, *On Such a Full Sea*.

Yamamoto. TR 1110AM 1230PM

Fulfills #5 in the English Major Requirements