Haverford College
Fall 2020 Course Guide

Department of English

Containing descriptions of readings, approaches and course conduct for all department offerings.
**Major Requirements:**
Admission to the major requires completion of at least two courses, one at the 100 level and 1-2 at the 200 level, by the end of the sophomore year; note: ENGL 150L may be counted as one 200-level course (since its rubrics are in line with 200-level materials).

**In the total major requires eleven credits, including a .5 credit tutorial (298j) as part of Junior Seminar. Note 399F and 399B comprise a 1.5 credit course taken over the full senior year.**

- Seven courses at the 100, 200 and 300 levels of which
  - At least two must be in literature written before 1800;
  - At least two in literature written after 1800;
  - At least one (and no more than two) must be at the 100 level; a minimum of two, preferably three, must be at the 200 level (WRPR 150 “Approaches to Literary Analysis” counts); and a minimum of two must be at the 300 level.
- ENGL 298 and 299, the two-semester Junior Seminar in English
- ENGL 298J, the .5 credit yearlong Junior Seminar in English
- ENGL 399F (Fall) and 399B (Spring) for a total of 1.5 credit Senior Conference

Note: The department will give major credit for one credit for one semester course in a foreign literature in the original language or for Comparative Literature 200. No more than four major credits will be awarded for work done beyond the Tri-College Consortium, whether abroad or in the U.S. Courses taken in the Bryn Mawr English Department, the Swarthmore English Department, and the U. Penn English Department may also be counted towards the major at Haverford.

**Creative Writing Concentration:**
Creative Writing courses at Haverford are open to all students. Only a handful of English majors per year, however, are accepted into the Creative Writing Concentration.

The Creative Writing Concentration entails:

- Two courses in creative writing (only one of which is counted toward the major).
- Writing a senior thesis composed of an original creative text (usually poetry, fiction or drama) and a rigorous critical introduction.

Students interested in completing a Creative Writing Concentration apply for acceptance in the spring semester of their junior year by submitting a portfolio of creative work to the department chair, Professor Asali Solomon, **by the Friday before Spring Break of their junior year (no extensions)**. The Departmental Concentration Committee will grant admission to students whose work suggests their readiness to generate a substantial literary project.
## English Department Course Offerings Fall 2020
### Asali Solomon, Chair

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<tr>
<td>COML 200A</td>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Introduction to Comparative Literature</td>
<td>T/TH 2:30-4:00</td>
<td>McInerney</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENGL 209A</td>
<td>HU/VIST</td>
<td>Third World Cinema: Desiring Freedoms, Freeing Desire</td>
<td>T 7:30-10:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>ENGL 265A</td>
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<td>ENGL 291A</td>
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<td>ENGL 293A</td>
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<td>ENGL 298A</td>
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<td>Premodern Women Writers</td>
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<td>ENGL 353A</td>
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<td>ENGL 363A</td>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Trauma and Its Others</td>
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<td>ENGL 365A</td>
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<td>How to Do Things with Books</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENGL 399A</td>
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<td>Senior Conferences: Finley, Mohan, Sherman, Solomon, Stadler</td>
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<td>WRPR 150L</td>
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<td>Writing Program</td>
<td>T/TH 10-11:30 T/TH 1:00-2:00</td>
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Cross-Listing Key: VIST = Visual Studies, AA= Africana Studies, CL=Comparative Literature; GS=Gender & Sexuality Studies; HLTH=Health Studies
Libraries, Labyrinths and the Quest for the Perfect Reader

This course proposes a series of experiments in close reading, beginning with Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex*, and devoting the second half of the semester to Umberto Eco’s encyclopedic novel, *The Name of the Rose*. We will consider the complex web of relationships linking text to text and text to reader. Attention will be paid not only to the “literary” texts which are echoed, parodied, or incorporated in some other fashion in Eco’s novel, but also to approaches from critical theory; Eco himself was, after all a professor of Semiotics (the study of signs and sign theory). Students will be expected to write two essays, and also to conduct a significant amount of research on specific aspects of Eco’s novel.

Can be counted towards either the Comp Lit major or the English Major.

**Required Texts** (available in the Haverford Bookstore)

- Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* (Penguin)
- Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Complete Sherlock Holmes*, vol. 1
- Jorge Luis Borges, *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings*
- Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*, trans. William Weaver

There will also be supplementary materials posted on Moodle. *The Key to the Name of the Rose* is recommended but not required; a copy will be on reserve in the displaced Library (in Founders Hall).

**Course requirements:**

- Engaged participation in all class sessions
- Several brief writing assignments, ungraded: abstracts of articles, responses to reading
- 1 short essay (5-6 pages) bringing together a theoretical text with a literary text (due March 23)
- 1 longer essay (8-10 pages) on some aspect of intertextuality in *The Name of the Rose* (due at the end of the semester)
- Extensive annotations on and oral presentation of your research on 2 chapters by Eco, posted to the class Moodle site.
This course explores the central role of film in imagining decolonization and desire as entangled narratives in the Third World.* What movements shaped earlier films’ vision of de/coloniality? How have projects of freedom been delineated through gender and sexual difference? What avant-garde turns mark un/fulfilled demands for equity in post/colonies? Treating film as a text within specific cinematic traditions, we read for the ways in which Third World artists have interrogated the complex objectives of desiring freedoms and freeing desires and discuss how desire may at times impede, at times facilitate liberatory projects. We also read for context specificity and consider independent as well as commercially dominant cinemas—such as Cinema Novo and Third Cinema in Latin America and Nollywood and Bollywood in Africa and South Asia, respectively—tracing how conditions of production shape aesthetic and messaging. We close with the not yet “post” demands of indigenous and tribal actors across First and Third Worlds, i.e. the lush and provocative claims put forth by so-called Fourth World cinema.

READINGS: All readings are articles or excerpts posted to Moodle.
SCREENINGS: Sunday evenings, 7:30-10 or so in VCAM. May change due to COVID-19, but films will be accessible online for asynchronous viewing.
REQUIREMENTS: In-progress but will definitely include writing response per (four) unit, weekly blog, and final paper.

*Post-WW II term distinguishing former colonies (primarily in Asia, Africa, and Latin America) from First World (U.S. and Western and Northern Europe) and Communist Bloc (Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China). Third World texts have often generated valuable conversations on struggles around imperialism, capitalism, and sovereignty.
The Bible and Literature

This course will offer students the opportunity to read widely among the literatures of the Bible, considering in their turn Biblical myth, legendary or patriarchal history, law, chronicle, psalm, love-song and dirge, prophecy, gospel, epistle, and apocalypse. While continuing to acknowledge the Bible as scripture, the course will study the Bible as narrative, as canon and form, and as a richly tropic and intertextual network, the encyclopedia of the figura. Although technical matters of general importance will be surveyed, we will attempt a reading of the Bible as a total form, as the darkly radiant text that permeates English and American literature. Our concern with the Bible as canon, as comprehensive form, will entail an effort to read the Biblical text for its figurative interconnectedness, remembering that the Septuagint (the Hebrew Bible in Greek) served as sacred archive, history, and scripture for the writers of the New Testament. The complex literary symmetry of the Christian Bible that resulted will be one of our recurrent topics of discussion, and our study of important and diverse Biblical genres, including ode, elegy, type-scene, parable, and sayings, will often require our reading forward and reading back between Hebrew scripture and Christian Bible. The Bible's intense and interior confirmation of its own reiterated structures, such as that of passover or ritual cleansing, generates its haunting power to conform its readers to itself. It has been often and even now remains a dangerous book (or books--the biblia).

In addition to this study of the Bible, we will look throughout the term, as occasion allows or demands, at examples of the relationship between the literatures of the Bible and of English. The central feature of the course is an extremely diverse and wide-ranging collection of materials (via Moodle documents), one that draws from numerous traditional and contemporary (alternative) sources in order to illustrate the continued life of Biblical narrative and poetry. We will try to analyze the terms of the typical interchange between sacred and secular text, in works by Shakespeare, Donne, Herbert, Vaughn, Traherne, Milton, Dryden, Blake, Wordsworth, Keats, Christina Rossetti, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Ruskin, Newman, Patmore, Hopkins, Owen, T. S. Eliot, A. R. Ammons, W. S. Merwin, John Hollander, Denise Levertov, Alice Walker, Sharon Olds, Eleanor Wilner, Breece Pancake, and others. We will also note the richness of modern and contemporary Jewish and Israeli poetry, including Yehudi Amichai, Avraham Ben-Yitzhak, Hayim Nachman Bialik, Uri Zvi Greenberg, Rose Drachler, Haim Guri, Linda Zisquit, Amir Gilboa, Rachel Korn, Leonard Cohen, and Robert Mezey. We will consider brief excerpts, as well, from Shulamith Hareven’s Desert Trilogy. We will touch from time to time the issue of Biblical translation, not least to hear the language of the Authorized Version (1611), which has so often sponsored those endless resonances and echoes in the literatures of English, and to collate traditional Christian readings with The Torah (Jewish Publication Society, 1962), and with other contemporary translations from the Hebrew, including Robert Alter’s edition of Genesis (1996) and David Rosenberg’s The Book of J (1990). Inevitably, the course will address what might be called deforming un/readings of the Bible, those pressured by fierce ideologies, whether political/national, sexual, and/or literal/fundamentalist. Throughout we will work to avoid the supercessionism with which Christian exegetes have colonized and concentrated the Hebrew tradition. We will find ourselves asking: can the Bible survive the claims of its ostensible defenders?

(See page 2 for Course Requirements and for a list of textual sources.)
Course Requirements: Regular class attendance, two essays, one brief (2-3 pages) early in the term, and one longer (4-6 pages) toward term's close. A couple of short writing exercises (in class) during term, and a final, take-home, comprehensive examination. There will also be at least one evening session of the course, “Biblical Pizza,” where we view a series of clips and shorts from the filmic history of biblical narrative in the 20th century.

Texts


Literary Texts: Many of our readings among the poets will be part of a class-wide collection: we will build up an anthology of poems and chapters as the semester progresses. See the list of names given above.

Our accompanying critical readings will contain parts from the following:


The Bible and the Narrative Tradition, ed. Frank McConnell (Oxford UP, 1986): Harold Bloom's "From J to K, or the Uncanniness of the Yahwist," and Herbert N. Schneidau's "Biblical Narrative and Modern Consciousness."


Robert Grant and David Tracy, A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible (1984).


Black Horror

In this course, we will explore the artistic genre of horror and its tendencies, with a particular focus on representations of blackness. We will consider affinities between horror and literary modes such as realism and naturalism, attentive to the distinction between the fear of blackness with the terror associated with being black in America (often a fear of whiteness). The central focus of this course is the creative work of African American and Afro-Caribbean artists, but we will also consider a few white American representations of racial otherness in foundational literary horror, feature film and a documentary about a relatively recent historical horror, the 1985 MOVE fire in West Philadelphia.

Books:
*The Conjure Stories*, Charles Chestnutt (1899)
*The Ballad of Black Tom*, Victor LaValle (2016)
*If He Hollers, Let Him Go*, Chester Himes (1945)
*A Visitation of Spirits*, Randal Kenan (1989)

Films & Television:
*Night of the Living Dead*, George A. Romero, (1968)
*Let the Fire Burn*, Jason Osder, (2013)

There will also be a number of essays, short stories and video clips on Moodle.

Course Requirements: There will be three formal essays for the class ranging between 5-10pp in length as well as five less formal response papers.

Grade Breakdown:
Formal Essays 50%
Attendance 10%
Participation 20%
Response Papers 20%
Contemporary Poetry

English 289 is a study of twentieth and twenty-first century poetry and poetry movements of North America. This literature course explores American poetry from Allen Ginsberg to Claudia Rankine. A central position and struggle is that “Poetry must constantly renew itself.” Through close readings and the use of critical texts and audio recordings, the course examines poetic practices focusing upon the ways in which poets have undertaken the task of redefining poetry in relation to history, politics, music, the body, and language itself. Many of the poets explore strangeness and the gaps in communication embedded both in the culture and the language. The interplay and generative tensions between the poet’s deep distrust and deep passion for language is examined throughout the survey. “How do I say it?” asks Joy Harjo. “In this language, there are no words for how the real world collapses.” The Beats, the New American Poetry of the 1960s, the New York School, the Black Arts Movement, Feminist poetics, Queer poetries, the Language poets, and poets drawing on First Nation traditions and histories are read.

Requirements for the course include a series of short response prompts and three essays: First Essay (5 pages), a Reflection Essay (3 pages), and the Final Essay (8-10 pages)

TEXTS

*Lunch Poems* by Frank O'Hara (City Lights)
*Citizen* by Claudia Rankine (Graywolf)
*One With Others* by C.D. Wright (Copper Canyon)
Introduction to Creative Writing: Poetry I

English 291A01 is an introductory creative writing workshop on poetry. Student work is the focus along with the analysis of a wide variety of poems and poets. Weekly writing prompts will encourage students to widen their scope and develop their craft. Poetry is a language inquiry. Each week students will write poems that respond to other poems and some of the principal genres of poetry, including the sonnet and haiku. Each week the class will read poems that invite them to sit down and listen to a voice speaking thoughtfully and passionately about what it feels like to be alive. There will be a combination (2-3 people) small-group workshops and full class workshops (in the second half of the semester) where the poet will lead the dialogues about their work-in-progress.

A final portfolio of revised poems (10 to 12 pages) is required.

TEXTS:
- *Sleeping on the Wing*, edited by Kenneth Koch and Kate Farrell
- *Voices in the Air*, by Naomi Shihab Nye
- *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*, by Ross Gay
Introduction to Creative Writing: Fiction

This course will explore the glorious art and stringent discipline of storytelling through a focus on the fundamental elements of fiction: character, plot and language, both in narrative and dialogue. Students will develop as readers, and learn to write distinct and engaging short stories. The centerpiece of class meetings will be a workshop where students discuss their peers’ work and offer useful and inspiring criticism. We will also read and discuss a wide range published short fiction, learning to respond to this work as fiction writers. The success of this course depends on each student’s frequent and thoughtful participation; those who expect to miss more than one meeting due to previously scheduled events should consider another course.

**All published reading is available on Moodle with the exception of What It Is by Linda Barry**

Course Requirements: Produce two stories for workshop (6-10pp), respond to classmate’s workshop stories and complete five (5) writing exercises. You must write a revision of one of your stories for your final project. The course usually requires attendance and responses to readings; if learning is virtual, we will adapt. There are tons of videos of authors giving readings online.

This course has a limited enrollment of 15 students. You must submit a writing sample of no more than 10pp, preferably, but not crucially prose fiction. Please include your name, year and major (if declared) by the end of the preregistration period. You will hear about your status in the course at the beginning of next semester.
Junior Seminar in English

This course is a two-semester Seminar required of all Junior English majors.

Through readings, class discussion, written assignments, and tutorials, students will become familiar with 1) a series of texts selected to represent a range of English language poetry and fiction; and 2) examples of critical writing selected to represent critical theory and practice as it has been influenced by linguistics, hermeneutics, history, sociology, psychology and the study of cultural representation. Junior Seminar aims to cultivate in the student some sense of the variety of British, American, and Anglophone literature and its criticism, and to introduce the student to the activity of criticism as it interacts with literature and the intellectual life of our time. This active criticism will lead students to grasp both the nature of literary convention and tradition and the perspectives that open up the canon to a richer diversity of voices and forms. Sections will follow the same syllabus, meeting together occasionally for joint sessions. For the most part the two sections will function as independent seminars, with each instructor responsible for a single seminar.

Students will be required to write three papers (5-7 pages) first term, with revisions in response to the critique each paper will receive in tutorial sessions, and take part in an oral examination at the end of the first semester. The second semester includes two longer papers (8-10 pages), and concludes with a comprehensive final examination that covers both semesters of the course. Regular attendance in both discussion and tutorial is required, and students are urged to prepare rigorously for class.

Readings: The first term is devoted to poetry, poetics, and practical criticism, and includes examples of Renaissance lyrics by Shakespeare, Donne, and Milton, complemented by contemporary American poetry; selected British Romantic poetry from Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats; nineteenth-century American poems by Whitman and Dickinson; and poetry by Yeats, Stevens, Bishop, and Walcott. The second term focuses on narrative and its theorization and criticism, and readings include George Eliot’s *Middlemarch*, slave narratives by Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs, stories by Edgar Allen Poe, and James Joyce’s *Ulysses*. 
**Course Description:**
In 1928, Virginia Woolf urged women writers to draw inspiration from literary “foremothers” such as Jane Austen. But who were the women who paved the way before Austen? This course examines medieval and renaissance women writers active between 1100 and 1700. We will read the romances of Marie de France, the mystical visions of Hildegard von Bingen and Margery Kempe, the proto-feminist works of Christine de Pizan, and the bawdy poetry of Gwerful Mechain. We will study the political speeches of Elizabeth I, the science fiction writing of Margaret Cavendish, and the poetry of Isabella Whitney, Aemilia Lanyer, and Aphra Behn. While the heart of the course will cover women authors in England and Western Europe, we will devote a long unit to exploring early women writers from around the globe including ‘A’ishah al-Ba’uniyah, an Arabic scholar and poet, Sei Shōnagon, a Japanese author and court lady, and Phyllis Wheatley, the first African-American woman to publish a book of poetry. All foreign-language texts will be taught in translation but students with knowledge of other languages will be encouraged to engage with the primary texts.

Throughout the course, we will consider the social and cultural circumstances that have challenged women writers across time and space. How, we will ask, have women overcome restricted access to education or harmonized the art of writing with the ever present duties of wifehood and motherhood? How have women carved out a space for their writing in a male-dominated profession? What methods do women use to authorize their voices? Secondary texts by historians and literary scholars will guide our inquiry, offering critical frameworks for the investigation of gender, writing, and authority.

**Assignments** will include in-class presentations, two short papers, and a final project. The final project may take the form of a research paper or a creative project.

**Partial Reading List:**
Hildegard von Bingen, “The Cosmic Egg” and “A Vision of Love” (c.1160)
Marie de France, *Lays and Fables* (c.1170)
Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies* (1405)
Margery Kempe, *The Book of Margery Kempe* (c.1430)
Gwerful Mechain, “Cywydd y cedor (The Female Genitals)” (c.1490)
Isabella Whitney, “I.W. To Her Unconstant Lover” (c.1567)
Elizabeth I, “The Golden Speech” (1601)
Aemilia Lanyer, “Eve’s Apology in Defense of Women” (1611)
Margaret Cavendish, *The Convent of Pleasure* (1668)
Victorian Poverty, Ecology, and Public Health

“For every image of the past that is not recognized by the present as one of its own threatens to disappear irretrievably” (Walter Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History”).

This course will be centered upon the "street folk," the homeless, and the working poor of the 1840's and 1850's, as they are described in the literature and social documents of the period, and with special regard for the relationship between human destitution and environmental degradation. In one enduring sense, it is a course about sewers (or the lack thereof) and sewage—a course about water. We will try to gain access to first-hand accounts of Victorian poverty (as from Mayhew's London Labour and the London Poor [1851-52] and Engels' Condition of the Working Class in England [1845]), even as we read an "industrial novel" of the period, such as Gaskell’s Mary Barton (1848), which makes an integral response to the "condition-of-England" debate. The period between 1837-1842 witnessed an economic depression and large-scale unemployment, along with severe tension between the new class of factory owners and their workers, issuing in bitter and often violent strikes and social disruption, which brought human suffering and state repression on a breadth of scale rarely experienced in England in the post-Civil War period. The Victorian mid-century, for all its gathering imperial glories was, as well, a kind of ecological heart of darkness, in which we see the ineradicable tie between the industrial assault upon the environment and the accompanying decline in human health and well-being. The great crowded Victorian city was caught in the paradox of an advancing technological and economic revolution as yet unaccompanied by comparable advances in medical science or the control of the underlying infectious conditions that seeded numerous epidemics, the mortality rates of which remain shocking. The morbidity of poverty and disease did much to give a persistent shape and tenor to the Victorian novel, not least its attempt, through fiction, to bear witness to an unmediated "actual," a visceral history, one that we see in the "literal" work of parliamentary studies and reports, such as Fowler's "Report on the Condition of the Calder." Fowler’s unblinking document, about the pollution and saturation by sewage of a once living river, and the misery of those who must drink from it and wash in it, is the kind of material we will be reading, in addition to literary texts. By moving from one kind of discourse to another, from working-class ballads and broadsides, to Parliamentary Blue Books, to Mayhew’s eyewitness "sociology" and to Steven Marcus’s study of Victorian pornography, and then
toward the panoply of social voices in the novel (Bakhtin's theory of *heteroglossia*), we ought to turn up fresh confrontations in our reading and open pathways in the ideological constructions of class, empire, and “England,” that once “green and pleasant land.”

The “condition-of-England” debate in mid-century gave rise to foundational writings in English about social justice. This course asks: What is the relationship between social concern and social document (the government’s Blue Books, or Parliamentary reports and commissions, the public acts of “Reform”), the novel, and radical critique? Carlyle, who became an abusive Tory reactionary, brilliantly used a vignette, or localized anecdote, of social degradation in order to enforce his scathing review of the contemporary industrial and commercial order in *Past and Present* (1841). Ruskin, in *Unto This Last* (1862) and in the often pathetic and “mad” letters of *Fors Clavigera* (1871-1884), was even more concerned than Carlyle with the apparent blindness of the Victorian state and with the machinery/mastery of the ascendant commercial class. These forces in tandem brought about what he saw as the ecological catastrophe of the Industrial Revolution, the ecology, not of wealth, but of “illth.”

Requirements:

Seminar attendance and participation in class discussion; two or three short writing exercises; a class presentation; two essays: one 4-5 pages, earlier in the term, and the second 10-12 pages, due at term’s end. There will be a research component to the second of these essays, including a required bibliography. This longer essay will ask students to make a bridge between the supplemental and theoretical materials, and a location or cluster in one/several of our texts. A list of topics: public health, the epidemic of infectious diseases—smallpox, cholera, typhus; ideological structures of contagion and contamination, sewage, ecology, scatology and scopophilia, crime, prostitution, pornography; sex and wage slavery, commerce in corpses, Victorian sciences of the body, dissection; the workhouse, the poor law, starvation, child labor, child abuse, spouse abuse, the disintegration and/or reification of the family; urban design and class boundaries, industrial technologies, ghetto and suburb; extreme vocations of the poor, urban sociology, the culture of poverty, street life and street folk; industrialism and imperialism; emerging science and practice of public sanitation.

Primary readings from Wordsworth, Carlyle, Elizabeth Gaskell, Engels, Mayhew, Dickens, and Ruskin.
After Mastery: Trauma and Its Others

The emergence of "trauma studies" has made it possible to reenlist psychoanalysis in the work of cultural critique. Viewed as the issue most valuable for showing the blindness and insight of Freud’s legacy, trauma theory has also become a vehicle for rethinking social and literary histories.

Trauma's meaning in Western medicine extends from a surgeon's description of a wound to the head in the early nineteenth century to a much more complex and puzzling narrative about a wound to the psyche toward the century's end. This transformation has about it a compelling social character: trauma becomes attached to psychic injury when train accident victims complain of lingering mental and physical disorders despite the fact that they emerge from accident scenes "unharmed." Certain questions of liability motivate this extension of trauma's meaning: who is responsible for the disability resulting from such accidents? Indeed, the question begins to be asked, what type of disability is it? And what are the social boundaries of such an inquiry?

Trauma's value can be said to have extended in this way at a conscious level, with interested parties pulling its representation to suit specific needs. Yet the transformation of trauma's meaning reaches into deeper levels of the shared symbolic register we call culture, both in Europe and in this country. In the United States, the traumatic injuries of slavery (and mastery) are converted into elaborate psychic enclaves having both horrific and healing ideological power. Freud's mention of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to explain beating fantasies in twentieth-century Vienna is only one example of the elaborate route trauma's meaning seems to have taken in the Circum-Atlantic world.

This course will expose students to recent trauma theory and the segregated traditions of literary history. Thinking about trauma theory before and after Freud, we will look again at authors attempting to bring together (and sometimes keep apart) cultural traditions irrupting into literary form from the late 18th to the early 20th century. We will also explore how satire and humor cross wires with traumatic experience. The role of heightened emotional states, including fugue or hypnotic experiences, and the shifting currency of the words "terror," "freedom," and "shock" will be part of our focus. At the same time, we will explore how questions of environment impact theories of trauma. How do conditions of the environment, or even shocks of a pandemic like Covid-19, alter and revise those theories.

Theoretical readings in Freud and other theorists of trauma, historical memory, and the environment will be central and extensive. Our literary readings may include fiction and poetry from Poe, Twain, Hemingway, Baldwin, Porter, Brooks, Hayes and recent writers like Tommy Orange, Richard Powers, and Colson Whitehead.
How To Do Things With Books: Literature, Performance, and Pedagogy

This course examines fiction, poetry, and criticism by a series of 19th- and early 20th-century American writers who have positioned the encounter between reader and text as an act or event with unpredictable effects. The themes of this year's version of the course are pedagogy and performance. We'll examine how literature teaches, what it teaches, how you come to believe that you've been taught something, or that you've not been taught something. With this in mind, we'll read fiction that stresses scenes of pedagogy (in and out of the class room), as well as pedagogy gone awry. We'll also explore the related notion of texts as performative, that is, as 1) performing actions, and 2) creating a theatrical relationship, a sense of presence, between author and reader. Our reading will include a generous amount of 20th-century theoretical writing exploring the issues of language representation, power, and cultural difference underwrite pedagogical and performative dynamics. We will focus on primary and secondary works that explore language as an action, as something that does rather than is.

Primary (19th-century) Texts (all italicized titles are at the bookstore; others will be on Blackboard)

Jefferson, “Declaration of Independence”
Thomas Jefferson-Charles Brockden Brown letters re novel-reading
Susannah Rowson, Charlotte Temple
Edgar Allan Poe, selected stories, poems, and essays. (“Philosophy of Composition”; “The Raven”; “Rue Morgue”; “M. Valdemar”; others)
Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The American Scholar”; “Self Reliance”
William Wells Brown, Clotel and other writings
Fanny Fern, Ruth Hall: A Domestic Tale of the Present Time
Matthew Arnold, “The Function of Criticism”
Louisa May Alcott, Little Men
Henry James, “The Pupil”; “The Lesson of the Master”
William James, from The Will to Believe
Charles Chesnutt, The Conjure Woman and Other Stories; “Superstition and Folklore”
Gertrude Stein, from The Making of Americans and How to Write; “The Gradual Making of the Making of Americans”

Secondary Texts in alphabetical order (all on Blackboard)
Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”
J. L. Austin, from How to Do Things with Words
Richard Brodhead, from Cultures of Letters: Scenes of Instruction in 19th-Century America
Judith Butler, “Performativity and Gender Insubordination”
Jacques Derrida, “Declarations of Independence”
Shoshana Felman, The Scandal of the Speaking Body; “Teaching Terminable and Interminable”
Jay Fliegelman, from Declaring Independence
Michel Foucault, from Discipline and Punish
Barbara Johnson, “Strange Fits”
Richard Poirier, from The Uses of Literature and The Performing Self
Requirements:
Active class participation.
One 5-7 page paper.
One 10-12 page paper.
One writing group session (in lieu of a class) for which you prepare comments on your peers’ work.
Group pedagogical project in last 2-3 weeks of class.
Paper responding to the pedagogical projects.
Occasional informal writing assignments.