Honors ENGL 110 Spring 2022

ENGL 110-080
Reality, Adapted; From Page to Screen
Naghmeh Rezaie
TR 12:30 – 1:45

What does “based on a true story” mean to us and what expectations are associated with that expression? Could reality have multiple versions and where the origin of that “true story” is: in memories, journals, books, or films? How does an adaptation represent a historical reality by retelling a story? This course explores the interrelation between the origin and the text, the historical reality, fictional reality, and media reality by following the so-called true stories in multiple mediums including journals, books, and film adaptations. With a comparative approach to selected films, like Selma (2014) and Milk (2008), and their textual references, we will follow multiple versions of certain narratives traveling from page to screen to analyze the role of each adaptation in representing and rewriting versions of social, historical, and political realities. Students will get familiar with topics of film and adaptation studies by reading selected sections from Hutcheon’s A Theory of Adaptation, Leitch’s “History as Adaptation”, and Benjamin’s “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”. The assignments consist of two comparative analysis papers, a multimodal project, and a final research project plus online discussions, and short critical responses on reading and watching materials.

ENGL 110-081
Sports in America
John Jebb
MWF 11:15 – 12:05

Sports, athletes, and the outdoors have among their fans some renowned American writers. So this course will use athletics as a means to encounter some great American texts and use these texts as springboards into writing. Among fiction writers who were sports fans, possible authors and their works for our course may be Ernest Hemingway (selected short stories), Ring Lardner (You Know Me Al), William Faulkner (Go Down, Moses), playwright Sarah DeLappe (The Wolves). Many professional sportswriters are superb stylists, so we may sample the works of journalists such as Frank Deford and Gary Smith (both of Sports Illustrated) and Jon Krakauer. We will use these authors to investigate such topics as the value of the wilderness, team psychology, coaching, differences between male and female athletes (and coaches), athletics in the minority community, and more. The journalism will allow use to consider rhetorical approaches, the authors’ points of view, even reporters’ research methods. Writing projects will allow you to explore some of
these topics as they are treated in our readings and to augment what our authors say with your own experiences as athletes, fans, and readers. The course will begin with shorter writing assignments about our texts, with weeks devoted to both fiction and journalism, then continue with longer analytic pieces. Your negotiated research project will grow from your interest in our readings and topics. At least one of the longer pieces will involve special audiences and multiple modes.

ENGL 110-082
The Slave Narrative: Past and Present
Frank Hillson
MWF 9:05 – 9:55

This course examines the poignant and enduring legacy of the slave narrative. We will begin our study by examining three powerful and eloquent slave texts, which many scholars consider to be classics: The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano (1789), The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave (1831), and Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (1861). To show the extent of the genre and its many ramifications, we will also explore the rich area of neo-slave novels by reading Octavia Butler’s Kindred (1979), a science fiction/slave narrative hybrid. We round out our discussion with Charles Chesnutt’s short story “The Passing of Grandison” (1899). These works highlight the vast scope of the slave narrative tradition in our literature and the incredible power of the human spirit to overcome and endure. Examining these pieces will provide a rich vehicle for several thought provoking and rewarding assignments. Assessments will be three essays, participation, quizzes, a multi-model presentation on your research topic, and the research paper. This last assignment gives you the opportunity to pick a topic (freedom, race, education, social justice, etc.) from our readings and relate it to a modern societal issue.

ENGL 110-083
Writing a Feminist Life
Jessica Jones
MWF 1:25 – 2:15

From Beyoncé declaring herself a “modern-day feminist,” to the 2017 Women’s March, to the #MeToo movement, feminism has gained new currency in the US popular imagination. This course uses these headlines and hashtags as a jumping off point to explore what it means to different people and groups to live a feminist life. How has feminism as a practice worked to reimagine traditional forms of relation to one’s self and body, one another, and even the natural world? How do feminist concerns intersect with other social justice concerns such as combatting racism and homophobia? What does it mean to you to live a feminist life? We will consider works in poetry, film, critical theory, art, and manifesto by figures such as Silvia Federici, Audre Lorde, Ana Mendieta, Sara Ahmed,
Pussy Riot and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor. From each, we will glean ideas of how to become more effective writers, as well as gain fodder for our own writing and thinking. In addition to journal posts, major writing projects of the course will consist of generating your own feminist manifesto, a researched essay on a course topic of your choosing, and a multi-modal project that remixes the researched essay for a popular audience.

ENGL 110-084
The Cultural Impact of the Superhero
Jim Burns
TR 8:00 – 9:15

Super-heroes are everywhere it seems. A common staple of comics, graphic novels, film, television and even serious fiction; any parent will understand the ubiquitous appeal that superheroes have for the young. Any trope this common allows for fertile cultural interpretation. The course will explore the idea of the superhero in several ways. We will look at the proto super-heroes of history (Odysseus, Arthur, etc.) and how they articulated cultural ideas. We will examine super-heroes through the lenses of race, gender and class. The main reader for the class will be Secret Identity Reader: Essays on Sex, Death and the Superhero by Lee Easton and Richard Harrison. In addition we will examine the graphic novel Watchmen and films that portray the super-hero. Students will hone their writing skill in short response papers dealing with readings from the Easton and Harris text; longer papers will focus on the cultural lessons in race and gender taught by super-heroes. Students will create and describe a super hero of their own creation for the multimodal project. Students will write a longer research paper expanding on these ideas.

ENGL 110-085
Migrants and Refugees
Emily Davis
MWF 2:30 – 3:20

UD scholar Mark Miller has characterized our contemporary era as “the age of migration,” involving vast movements of people across and within national borders. In this class we will explore stories of migration and refugee-ism in a range of genres, memoir (Laila Abdelrazaq’s Baddawi), film (Manus), and journalism (Reece Jones’s Violent Borders and Valeria Luiselli’s Tell Me How It Ends, among others). We’ll investigate some of the key causes of migration, from environmental crisis to violent conflict to economic stagnation, as well as the effects of migration on those who move. Some of our guiding questions will be: What compels people to move? What obstacles do they face in moving, and how are they received when they arrive in a new place?
How do these writers describe migrant experiences of the loss of home, separation from family and friends, and the possibilities for belonging in a new place? How does human migration reflect the migrations of other species in our current moment? As writers, we will consider how to make sense of these stories and explain them to different audiences through a range of assignments, including journal entries, a research paper, and informational web pieces published on the web site Moving Fictions: Exploring Migration in Modern Literature.

ENGL 110-086 and ENGL 110-087
What to Do in Case of Climate Emergency
Sean Lovitt
2 sections
086: MWF 12:20 – 1:10
087: MWF 1:25 – 2:15

The climate change debate has long revolved around how big business and governments might address and stop it. In the increasingly likely case of emergency, it might be up to ordinary people to prepare for the effects of climate change. In this class, we will look to the past and present for models of how everyday people could respond to the emergencies of the future. Community-based initiatives and grassroots disaster relief provide models for participatory and proactive responses to our changing environment. We will examine a range of social movement groups and environmental activists, from the famous (Greta Thunberg) to the more obscure (Common Ground Collective and the Unist’ot’en Camp). We will also look at investigative journalism like the podcast It Could Happen Here, political theory like Geoff Mann and Joel Wainwright’s Climate Leviathan, and science fiction that explores climate change (cli-fi) like N. K. Jemison’s Broken Earth Trilogy. Coursework will be centered on participatory responses, including opportunities to write on your own predictions, a critical analysis of climate reporting in the media, a research essay on a climate change or disaster relief project, and a podcast that calls listeners to take action.

ENGL 110-088
Writing About Work (Online section)
Keerthi Potluri
TR 11:00 – 12:15

In today’s economy, work is always on our minds – how to get it, how to avoid it, and how to make the most of it. To understand how we arrived here, this course explores writing about a broad array of work and industries, from finance, to retail, to writing itself. Starting with the mid-19th century and moving into the present, we’ll consider the representation of the modern workplace, ideas of prosperity and economic growth, and the moral and social lives of working people around the globe. We’ll also explore writing on speculative economies and possible futures for work. Covering a range of styles and
genres, course texts will include Herman Melville's short story “Bartleby, the Scrivener,” Studs Terkel's oral history Working, Nikil Saval's nonfiction book Cubed, and the recent film adaptation of Aravind Adiga's novel The White Tiger, as well as several journalistic and philosophical essays by such authors as Silvia Federici and David Graeber. Together, we’ll think about how writing on work can offer us a way into each other’s lives and beliefs beyond the 9-to-5. Students will write weekly entries in a reading journal, a short personal essay about their own experiences on the job, one in-depth research paper that examines a topic related to the course, and a final multimodal project that can include visual and digital elements.

ENGL 110-089
Rulers and Resisters: Archetypes of the Just Society
Kevin Burke
TR 2:00 – 3:15

Throughout history and around the world, societies have expressed ideals of social justice through myths and legends centered on perfect rulers, and, paradoxically, heroic outlaws. In Western culture, these ideals find their paradigmatic expression in the characters of King Arthur and Robin Hood, but similar figures, legends, and ideals are found in a wide variety of cultures. Examples include the West African hero-king Son-Jara (immortalized in the oral epic tradition of Mali and in the Disney production, Lion King) and the outlaw heroes of the classical Chinese novel, Water Margin. Although hero-rulers and hero-outlaws tend to be male, there are numerous and notable archetypal women figures, ranging from the legendary Amazonian queen, Hippolyta to outlaw, Phoolan Devi. Ruler and outlaw are combined in the remarkable Granuaile (Grace O’Malley) the Irish pirate queen and contemporary of Elizabeth I. This course will examine the manifestations of the ruler and resister archetypes in their variety, with particular attention to the vision of a just society that underlie the legends, stories, and songs in which those aspirations are expressed. We will consider how the legends are changed and appropriated, and the ways that historical figures are subsumed into the archetypes. We will read a number of primary sources as well as theoretical accounts by Eric Hobsbawm, Graham Seal and others. Students should expect to write several short papers in response to historical topics and to complete a research paper and presentation on a particular current expression of one of the archetypes with an analysis of its relevance for understanding the aspirations for justice in our own times.

ENGL 110-090
Storytelling and Climate Change
Amelia Chaney
TR 3:30 – 4:45

In an era of global pandemic and ongoing environmental crisis, storytelling has never been more socially relevant to our lives. The question of how we arrived at this moment and how we might envision a more resilient future together necessitates analyzing and reshaping the stories we tell about the environment. In this class we will look
at a range of works including excerpts from Elizabeth Kolbert’s *Sixth Extinction*, Amitav Ghosh’s *The Great Derangement*, Elizabeth Rush’s *Rising* and indigenous food activists like Rowen White and Devon A. Mihesuah, exploring how to approach mass extinction, the climate refugee crisis, food insecurity and sheer scale of our planetary predicament. In addition to these non-fiction accounts we will examine creative storytelling in textual, visual and audio media such as Cherie Dimaline’s dystopian coming of age novel *The Marrow Thieves*, Mary Mattingly’s “Swale,” a floating edible art installation in NYC, and Michele Koppes and Susie Ibarra’s soundscape “Water Rhythms: Listening to Climate Change.” We will conclude the semester by analyzing the documentary *Eagle and the Condor* (2019) tracing indigenous land defenders of North and South America taking on the fossil fuel industry. Assignments will include weekly discussion forums, critical response papers, and a multimodal capstone project including both a research paper and podcast exploring a climate change issue in relation to storytelling methodologies.