ENGLISH 1975

Course Descriptions
Fall 2026

1975-001
MWF 8:30 AM - 9:20 AM
Robert Duggan

Apocalyptic Literature
Say "apocalypse" and people think of the end of the world, but the ancient Greeks knew it as meaning a "revelation" or "uncovering." From Kate Chopin's short gem "The Story of an Hour" to Alan Moore's musings on time and eternity in the graphic novel *Watchmen*, we'll uncover great "a-ha!" moments of knowledge—both good and bad—and reveal their impact on both characters and readers. We'll time travel to experience the Greeks' original tale of (not) seeing and (not) believing, Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*. Together, we'll drift down the Congo River towards "The horror! The horror!" in Joseph Conrad's novella *Heart of Darknes*s and watch how Francis Ford Coppola reinterprets that tale in the film *Apocalypse Now*. From these literary experiences, we'll discuss not just the works themselves, but also the intertwined nature of reading and writing to generate both informal and formal essays incorporating the writing process from thesis to draft to final (not necessarily finished) product.

1975-002
MWF 8:30 AM - 9:20 AM
Karen Graziano

Law and Modern Lit

"In front of the law there is a doorkeeper." – Franz Kafka, The Trial

"We all have a responsibility to create a just society." – Bryan Stevenson

"Literature is as old as speech. It grew out of human need for it, and it has not changed except to become more needed." – John Steinbeck

While Aristotle described "the law" as "reason, free from passion," society undertakes both the discussion and evaluation of law passionately. Fiction and nonfiction writers fiercely evaluate, intensely critique, and subtly comment on the intended and unintended impact of "the law." Law as a theme in literature captures something that the dispassionate law itself cannot: its nuances. Individuals' and fictional characters' legal challenges and struggles provide compelling points to examine. In the readings, we will explore how the authors present the role of law and lawyers in society and how they define justice, equality, and ethics. We will consider how literature plays a significant role in educating society on the law's impact, how it prompts its readers to question the purpose, application, and impact of the law, and how it can inspire or galvanize individuals to work with the law in order to shape or change it.

This course counts toward the Legal Studies minor

1975-003
MWF 8:30 AM - 9:20 AM
Cathy Velez

An Existential Journey
The concepts of man's struggle to find justice in a world of injustice and his need to search for self are addressed in *The Stranger*, the 20th century work of Albert Camus. In Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit*, the

conception of an afterlife is explored, questioning the existence of hell and its impact on the human mind. In Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, the relationship of man to a superior being is addressed while underscoring the need to believe. The course is interdisciplinary and while focusing on the literary experience will delve into the areas of philosophy, theology, sociology, and psychology. It is a writing intensive course. In this course you'll improve your writing and critical thinking skills by reading, discussing, and writing about literature. You will also gain confidence and pleasure in your reactions to literature and related arts. You'll give close readings to selections of fiction, poetry, drama, and memoir and respond to them in class discussions, formal papers, and informal writing. To enhance the coherence and interdisciplinary nature of the course, we will focus on the explosion of literature created by American, Irish, British, and French writers living in Paris between WWI and the Great Depression: the so-called Lost Generation. We will examine how the artistic, financial, and social freedoms of this milieu led to creative surges not only in literature but also in art and music. We will visit the art museum to see literary innovations mirrored in art. To widen our perspective of literary modernism, we may also read works from contrasting historical periods.

1975-004
MWF 9:35 AM - 10:25 AM
Robert Duggan

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1975-005
MWF 9:35 AM - 10:25 AM
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Cathy Velez

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1975-007
MWF 9:35 AM - 10:25 AM
Lara Rutherford-Morrison

Monsters in Literature
Monsters haunt literature and art across time periods, cultures, and genres. In works ranging from ancient epics to dystopian science fiction, monsters function as important vehicles for negotiating cultural and social anxieties and, ultimately, defining what it means to be human.

This course will consider key questions related to literary monsters: What is a monster? What purpose do monsters serve? How do monsters in literature and film work to engage issues of gender, sexuality, race, and embodiment?

In this course, we will study monstrous figures in poetry, fiction, and film. We will start by exploring the monstrosity of *Beowulf*'s Grendel, and go on to study mythical monsters in poetry by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, William Blake, Patricia Smith, and Louise Erdrich. We will consider monstrosity in fairy tales by Christina Rossetti and Angela Carter, and iconic Victorian monsters in the *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *Dracula*. We will also consider the intersection of monster narratives and genre fiction in short stories by Octavia Butler and N.K. Jemisin. We will watch three films: *Alien* (1979), *Monsters* (2010), and *Ex Machina* (2015).

This course counts for the Gender & Women's Studies major/minor.

1975-008
MWF 9:35 AM - 10:25 AM
Kate Neilsen

Environmental Catastrophe in Narrative
Contemporary culture is filled with depictions of environmental catastrophe – films like *The Day After Tomorrow* and *Wall-E* portray global disasters as obstacles for humanity to overcome on a path towards greater enlightenment, justice, and of course, survival. Though we often imagine the natural world as a place of refuge and beauty, disaster narratives depict the environment in different terms – as a monster, a villain, or a victim of human excesses. In this class, we will examine how narratives of eco-disaster ask us to imagine the relationship between humans and their environment, and we will also investigate how historical disaster fictions have shaped contemporary depictions of environmental catastrophe. What role do concerns of race, class, and gender play in the rhetoric of natural disasters? We will consider both historical disaster narratives like H.G. Wells *The Time Machine*, as well as more contemporary fictions such as M.T. Anderson's *Feed* and Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*.

This course counts toward the minor in Sustainability

1975-009
MWF 10:40 AM - 11:30 AM
Molly Young

The Marriage Plot Revisited
Marriage has always been the stuff of storytelling. Across literary history, authors have returned to "the marriage plot" time and again to reveal the complexities of the human condition amidst the trials and tribulations of love and courtship. But what, exactly, makes marriage so compelling in literature—and indeed, in life? How do questions around love, partnership, and commitment lead to deeper meditations on matters of individuality and social life, ethics and desire, gender and power? In this class, we'll consider the topic of marriage in literature from all angles and at a variety of historical moments. In doing so, we'll work to understand how and why it has remained such a powerful literary—and social—institution.

1975-010
MWF 10:40 AM - 11:30 AM
Mary Ellen Fattori

Disability in Literature
As an art form, literature often creates, reflects, or questions cultural messages about what is "normal" and "abnormal" in our lives. As a result, reading and writing about the experience of disability in literature can help us better understand our responses to situations and events around us that might be different from our own. Through close readings of fiction, drama, and poetry, students will experience how writers have created literary characters exhibiting various forms of disability throughout the centuries. These depictions include physical, mental, emotional, and social disabilities of all types.

Traditionally, these literary inventions were often used metaphorically as diabolical symbols of evil, or realistically as actual challenges to overcome, or even sentimentally as figures of pity and pathos. Contemporary authors, however, are reconsidering how to utilize disability as literary device, thereby requiring their readers to re-examine their own perception of what is means to be "disabled." This introspection often leads to the realization that such categorization frequently undermines and marginalizes a vast proportion of society, calling for vast political or social reforms.

One note - because this is a literature course rather than a sociology course, its primary focus will remain on critically reading, interpreting, and writing about these works as literature. In addition, a significant amount of class time will be devoted to the teaching of formal writing, especially the thesis-driven critical essay, and improving presentation skills by delivering an end-of-the semester paper presentation.

1975-011
MWF 11:45 AM - 12:35 PM
Kate Neilsen

Fast Fashion & Fiction
Fast fashion isn't just everywhere in American culture – for the average consumer, it is increasingly the only kind of new clothing available. In this class, we will examine the rise of fast fashion (and the consumption of single-use and cheaply made commodities more generally) by examining a range of novels, shorts stories, essays, and films. How have material goods and commodities become associated with happiness and the "good life" in American culture? What is to be made of the fact that so many of these products are cheaply made or of dubious quality? What are the environmental and social impacts of fast fashion? We will read both contemporary novels like M.T. Anderson's *Feed* and historical texts such as Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* to explore how narratives have depicted not only the ethical, emotional, and social impacts of consumerism, but also its links to environmental destruction. We will also examine consumerism on Villanova's campus and consider how we can be informed and thoughtful consumers. Finally, but crucially, you will develop your skills in textual analysis and analytical writing as we engage with a wide range of environmentally oriented works.

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1975-014
MWF 11:45 AM - 12:35 PM
Robert O'Neil

Stories of 9/11
This course will utilize a variety of genres to explore the many lives impacted, changed, and lost to the terrorist attacks on 9/11. We will read *102 Minutes: The Unforgettable Story of the Fight to Survive Inside the Twin Towers* by Dwyer and Flynn, *The Only Plane in the Sky: An Oral History of 9/11* by Graff, and the novel *Falling Man* by DeLillo. In addition to these readings, we will also utilize film, poetry, art and photography, short stories, excerpts from novels, and documentaries. The events of 9/11 shaped a generation. In anticipation of the 25th anniversary of 9/11, this course ensures their stories are never forgotten.

1975-015
MWF 12:50 PM - 1:40 PM
Kate Neilsen

Environmental Catastrophe in Narrative
Contemporary culture is filled with depictions of environmental catastrophe – films like *The Day After Tomorrow* and *Wall-E* portray global disasters as obstacles for humanity to overcome on a path towards greater enlightenment, justice, and of course, survival. Though we often imagine the natural world as a place of refuge and beauty, disaster narratives depict the environment in different terms – as a monster, a villain, or a victim of human excesses. In this class, we will examine how narratives of eco-disaster ask us to imagine the relationship between humans and their environment, and we will also investigate how historical disaster fictions have shaped contemporary depictions of environmental catastrophe. What role do concerns of race, class, and gender play in the rhetoric of natural disasters? We will consider both historical disaster narratives like H.G. Wells *The Time Machine*, as well as more contemporary fictions such as M.T. Anderson's *Feed* and Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*.

This course counts toward the minor in Sustainability

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1975-018
MWF 12:50 PM - 1:40 PM
Michelle Filling-Brown

Bodies of Literature
In this course we will examine literature that contributes to the ethos of the field of Women's Studies. We will use feminist theory as a lens to understand critical problems facing women throughout American history. This course will survey many women's studies issues including work, sexuality, violence, social and political activism, the media, beauty culture, and gender roles. We will focus on how race, class, and gender form what Patricia Hill Collins terms "a matrix of domination," and take an intersectional feminist approach to analyzing literary texts. We will explore literature and texts from the media to see how this matrix of domination manifests throughout history. This course both studies the body of women's literature and the recurrent images and imaginings of women's bodies and roles.

By examining the tradition of women's writing, deconstructing the pervasive, controlling images of women in the media, and analyzing how women define their experiences through language, we will develop an understanding of how a tradition of women's writing has evolved and how it both reflects and impacts the place of women in society. The course involves critically analyzing diverse texts such as *For Colored Girls, The Women of Brewster Place,* and *The Good Body.*

This course counts for the Gender & Women's Studies major/minor.

1975-019
MW 1:55 PM - 3:10 PM
Lora Novak

Saints & Sinners
The world conspires to convince us that everything and everyone is either good or bad, right or wrong, innocent or guilty, saintly or sinful. Of course, living shows us otherwise: it is not that simple. We can turn to good

literature for a more accurate representation of gray areas and complexity. In this class, we will read works that explore how authors represent bad and good and then complicate it. We will also consider related matters. For example, when is it okay for a writer to use ugly language or to write in the voice of a culpable character? How might books make us aware of our own selves as innocent or complicit? This is primarily a discussion class in which students will write both creative and critical responses to what we read and receive peer and instructor feedback on their writing.

1975-020
MW 3:20 PM - 4:35 PM
Joseph Drury

The Gothic
Why do we read stories that scare us, that make our skin crawl and our stomachs turn? Why in a modern, disenchanted world do we take so much pleasure in stories of ghosts and monsters, demons and vampires? Why have Gothic tropes—gloomy castles, howling winds, dark passageways—proved so successful and durable in so many different genres, forms, and media? In this course students will learn the history of Gothic writing, how it emerged out of British anti-Catholic feeling around the time of the French Revolution, and how it evolved into a sophisticated form for addressing the unspoken fears and unconscious desires of readers in periods of social upheaval and unrest.

1975-021
MW 3:20 PM - 4:35 PM
Lora Novak

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1975-022
MW 4:45 PM - 6:00 PM
Ruth Anolik

The Cultural Uses of Horror and Terror
Horror and terror entertainments are often dismissed as irrelevant escapism. Yet, a careful examination of horror and terror fictions reveals that they often hide and project the deepest fears – social and psychological – of the culture that generates them. In this course, we will consider some central anxieties of our time, and read texts that reflect those anxieties in a variety of moments of history. In response to our current moment of anxiety, we will read a number of texts that present the horrors of plague: Richard Matheson's 1950's American novel *I Am Legend*; Edgar Alan Poe's early nineteenth-century "The Masque of the Red Death," and Sheridan LeFanu's *Carmilla*, a nineteenth-century Anglo-Irish text. As we will note, each of these plague horror stories reveals a fear of human difference, of the Other. While reading *Carmilla,* which also reveals anxieties about the dangerous monstrosity of female sexuality and homosexuality, we will turn our consideration to moments when horror is determined by sexual and gender anxiety. We will end the semester reading two relatively recent novels, Shirley Jacksons *The Haunting of Hill House* and Barbara Neely's *Blanche on the Lam*. In these novels

we will encounter the classic conventions associated with the haunted house, as well as timely considerations of gender/sexuality, race, and disability. In addition, these two texts display a surprising amount of humor and wit. During the semester, we will bring in other media that display horror and terror through student presentations.

This course counts toward the Gender & Women Studies major/minor

1975-023
MW 4:45 PM - 6:00 PM
Yumi Lee

The New Classics
What makes a work of literature a classic? The literary canon—or the body of works that have achieved the status of "great books"—has been a core part of the college experience for generations of students, with the canon itself thought to serve as a repository of the best of Western culture and civilization. But as long as the idea of the canon has existed, debates over what really belongs in the canon have also raged. This course dives into these debates and brings them up to date for our world today. How do we define universal "greatness"? Are canons elitist and exclusionary by definition? How can we update the "great books" to be more representative of today's readers? Are lists of "great books" even necessary, or beneficial? Is it important for us all to read and learn from the same works, and if so, why? In this course, we'll read and analyze a selection of what I'm calling "the new classics," placing an emphasis on works by women, authors of color, and queer authors who have historically been excluded from the traditional canon. At the same time, we'll interrogate and deconstruct the idea of the "canon" or the "classic" itself. How do we value what's considered "great" against what's popular? What does "classic" mean in the age of memes, algorithms, and remakes? Along with reading literary works by authors including Toni Morrison, James Baldwin, and Maxine Hong Kingston, we'll examine the idea of the "canon" in film, TV, comics, fan cultures, and other forms of media. Students will be encouraged to integrate their own interests into the writing assignments for this course, which will include three papers of critical writing in different genres.

1975-024
TR 8:30 AM - 9:45 AM
Katy Karlin

Books into Film
Is, as they say, "the book always better?" In this course we will read novels and memoirs with an eye to narrative tone, theme, and context, and we will examine cinematic adaptations. Is the most faithful adaptation the best? How does a viewing audience differ from a readership? Who gets to decide what to leave in and what to omit?

1975-025
TR 8:30 AM - 9:45 AM
Von Wise

Genre & Hybrid Forms
What is genre? At a distance, it's easy to recognize familiar categories and the texts that belong to them, but the closer we look, the fuzzier the boundaries become. We will examine texts that both exist within those blurred lines and challenge familiar categories all together. Students will read a mixture of poetry, drama, fiction, non-fiction, and, of course, everything in between. By considering works that work against easy categorization, we will see texts anew and reconsider the boundless possibilities that exist for creative expression in order to better understand creativity and even to find comfort in uncertainty.

1975-026
TR 10:00 AM - 11:15 AM
Brooke Hunter

Magical Saints and Sinners
This writing-intensive course will teach you to craft an argumentative essay as we explore how literary and cinematic depictions of magic construct and understand goodness and evil. Notions of sin and sanctity are often tied to questions of free will. Writings about magic can explore these questions by imagining the supernatural extension of the human will in fantastical ways. Our readings will take us through a variety of different historical understandings of magic from an occult force of nature, to the work of demons, to a topic for high school study. You'll read short stories, novels, plays, and poems as you develop your critical reading and analytical writing skills

1975-027
TR 10:00 AM - 11:15 AM
Katy Karlin

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1975-028
TR 11:30 AM - 12:45 PM
Mary Beth Simmons

"The Only People for Me Are the Mad Ones": The Beat Generation's Enduring Influence
Who were the Beats? Jack Kerouac famously wrote: "The only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars." Not a bad description of the Beat Generation itself. We will question if they were truth tellers in post-war America or lazy do-nothings road tripping across America writing poetry and getting lost. We'll discuss the major players of the Beat Generation, including Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, Joyce Johnson, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Diane di Prima, and William S. Burroughs. We'll also explore the lesser known or forgotten Beats who were part of the crazy quilt of poets, artists, writers, and musicians. Expect a rollicking and trippy course with a great deal of reading and writing, sleuthing for those forgotten voices, and making connections with present-day America. Why do these voices still resonate? Do they? Lawrence Ferlinghetti once remarked, "The ideas that Jack and the Beat generation stood for are needed today more than ever. But I'm not so interested in nostalgia. I'm interested in the future." Students will write three formal papers, four journal entries, and take a final exam.

1975-029
TR 1:00 PM - 2:15 PM
Emily Skillings

Literary Interiors
How do interiors—rooms, surfaces, furniture, and the decorative arts—influence the way we think and write? How have poets, novelists, and essayists portrayed indoor spaces, and what roles do these fabricated and inhabited environments play in shaping/revealing plot, mood, psychological landscape, and identity as it relates

to class, race, and gender? From the moody labyrinths of fictional manors and estates, to the haunted house, to an animal's burrow, to a writer's desk in a cramped apartment, this discussion-based and writing-focused seminar explores interiors and dwellings not only as settings but as subjects and characters in their own right. We will also consider our own dwelling places and our unique ways of arranging them—both the rooms we live in and the spaces that exist in our memories. Throughout the course, students will experiment with multiple modes of essay writing, including the personal and critical essay. Participants will engage in peer review, workshops, revision, and in-class writing as part of an active writing practice.

1975-030
TR 1:00 PM - 2:15 PM
Rena Potok

Borders, Migration, National Identity
Borders represent a significant way of looking at the world we live in, especially in this time of global unrest over border incursions, border equity, and border security. Literature offers us a framework for understanding, a portal to thinking about the concept of borders as both literal and figurative – on political, psychological, and social levels – and the impacts they make on us individually and collectively. This course will explore the dynamics of borders, migration, and exile, and their effect on constructions of national identity. We will focus on the literatures and borderzones of Ireland & Northern Ireland, and Israel & Palestine. In our readings and discussions, we will consider social justice issues such as the border as a means of oppression and a prospect for liberation; and we will view the issue of migration with an eye toward matters of human dignity, gender, vulnerability, and marginalization. The course prioritizes teaching students to become more perceptive readers of literature and to hone critical thinking and writing skills, by crafting a variety of formal analytical essays and informal reflections.

We will begin with foundational readings on the concept of the border and expand our field of inquiry to novels, plays, short stories, poems, and memoirs by 20th and 21st-century writers such as Colum McCann, Anne Devlin, Rosaleen McDonagh, Mosab Abu Toha, Mahmoud Darwish, Adania Shibli, Yehuda Amichai, Oren Friedlander, Hamutal Bar-Yosef and others. Our immersion in these materials will help us cultivate an understanding of borders in the modern world, and the important ways they intersect with the history, literature, culture and conflict of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Israel and Palestine.

This course counts toward the Peace & Justice major/minor
This course carries the Irish Studies attribute

1975-031
TR 2:30 PM - 3:45 PM
Kimberly Takahata

Putting the US in U.S. Literature
Since the founding of the United States, writers and thinkers have worked to answer the question: what is America? who is American? This class explores writings from the Declaration of Independence to the present day to examine how literature provides an opportunity to define the United States as a nation and as a collection of people. We will pay particular attention to writings that seek to expand these categories, analyzing how literature provides a space for inclusion, critique, and reflection. We will ask: how does the language we use change our conceptions of citizenship, nationality, and identity? How can literature offer a chance for us to reflection on our own assumptions and blind spots? How do our authors create community through their writings?

This course counts toward the Peace & Justice major/minor

1975-032
TR 2:30 PM - 3:45 PM
Karyn Hollis

International Literature
This seminar focuses on ways that writers over the globe represent their fellow citizens' everyday lives as they encounter work, war, poverty, family, school, leisure--and especially--courtship and marriage. We will try to understand the commonalities and differences that arise among the people portrayed, examining cultural questions along the way. We'll read short fiction, poetry and critical essays by internationally acclaimed authors from Europe, Asia, South America, the Middle East, and Africa. The readings for the course will be accessed for the most part from prizewinning websites such as *Words Without Borders*. Several critical approaches will guide our exploration of contemporary literature: postcolonialism, New Criticism, Marxism, ecocriticism, queer theory, magical realism, feminism, and the like. In addition, the literature will be studied in contexts: cultural, political, historical; and in terms of gender, race and class. You will write three papers for the course which include a narrative as well as expository format.

1975-033
TR 4:00 – 5:15 PM
Rena Potok

Women in Irish Literature & Film
This course will explore the particular experience of being an Irish woman in political, domestic, religious, and social spheres by taking a deep dive into works of 20th and 21st-century Irish literature and film. Our sustained examination of these texts will unpack the many roles that women occupy (and resist) in Irish literature and film: symbol of Ireland; queens, hags, and fairies; incarcerated bodies; bearers of trauma and memory; rebels, migrants, Travelers, and more. The course prioritizes teaching students to become more perceptive readers of literature and to hone critical thinking and writing skills, by crafting a variety of analytical essays and informal reflections.

Our readings will include literary works generated from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland – the two political and geographic spaces that constitute the island of Ireland. Materials will include short stories, poems, and plays by Eavan Boland, Rosaleen McDonagh, Claire Keegan, Eílís Ni Dhuibhne, and Melatu Uche Okorie (among others); and films such as *Float Like a Butterfly, The Magdalene Sisters, Silent Grace,* and *Wildfire*. These works of literature and film will guide us in a discovery of key topics in the history, memory, and lived experience of Irish women: mythic female figures and modern fairy tales; trauma and memory under colonial and religious authority; incarceration and resistance; family and friendship; migration, exile, and return; Traveler culture; and stories of contemporary Ireland. Woven through these stories are their historic and cultural contexts: British colonialism, the Great Irish Famine, the Troubles, post-conflict Ireland and Northern Ireland, and the Celtic Tiger boom and bust.

In the course of our reading, viewing, discussion, and writing, we will look closely at the relationship between nationalism, feminism, gender, and Irish culture. And we will consider how these works might create new intersections between the fields of Irish studies and gender studies.

This course counts toward the Peace & Justice major/minor
This course carries the Irish Studies attribute

1975-034
TR 4:00 – 5:15 PM
Von Wise

Genre & Hybrid Forms
What is genre? At a distance, it's easy to recognize familiar categories and the texts that belong to them, but the closer we look, the fuzzier the boundaries become. We will examine texts that both exist within those blurred lines and challenge familiar categories all together. Students will read a mixture of poetry, drama, fiction, non-fiction, and, of course, everything in between. By considering works that work against easy categorization, we will see texts anew and reconsider the boundless possibilities that exist for creative expression in order to better understand creativity and even to find comfort in uncertainty.

1975-H03
TR 2:30 PM - 3:45 PM
Brooke Hunter

Literature of Magic
This writing-intensive course will teach you to craft an argumentative essay as we explore how literary and cinematic depictions of magic construct and understand goodness and evil. Notions of sin and sanctity are often tied to questions of free will. Writings about magic can explore these questions by imagining the supernatural extension of the human will in fantastical ways. Our readings will take us through a variety of different historical understandings of magic from an occult force of nature, to the work of demons, to a topic for high school study. You'll read short stories, novels, plays, and poems as you develop your critical reading and analytical writing skills

This is an Honors course

1975-H04
MW 1:55 PM - 3:10 PM
Evan Radcliffe

Family Matters

Our views of our families, present or absent, are central to how we define ourselves but also endlessly shifting—and so also are the literary uses of families. In this course, we will look at some literary portrayals of families and the relationships they contain. While most of these portrayals feature family love, they also include rivalries, tensions, and betrayals, as family members struggle with their roles, find their roles transforming with time, construct myths or discover truths about themselves and their siblings or parents or children, or look back at all of these with varying emotions and degrees of understanding. Our texts will include fiction (Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban), plays (Tennessee Williams's The Glass Menagerie and August Wilson's Fences), poems (by Seamus Heaney, Langston Hughes, Robert Hayden, and others), and Alison Bechdel's graphic narrative Fun Home. Becoming more perceptive readers and more skilled writers (with particular attention to the ways in which writing is a crucial form of thinking) are fundamental goals of the course. The course includes frequent writing, informal as well as formal.

This is an Honors course