

Blount 301 Seminars for Fall 2019

Quest Literature -

Parker - TR 3:30- 4:45 PM BUI 301-010 CRN 49816

The heart of this course will be the study of the archetype of the hero's quest in the mythology and literature of adventure. We will read classic adventure novels such as J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*, as well as stories that challenge the very idea of 'adventure', such as Samuel Beckett's *The Expelled*. We will examine the defining aspects of how the literature of adventure shapes our cultural understandings of current society. Through a historical and philosophical lens, we will analyze representations of identity, belief, and class in these novels, as well as in contemporary films such as David Lynch's *The Straight Story* and Werner Herzog's *Grizzly Man*.

Screenwriting Scene Workshop

Lazer, A – W 6:00- 8:30 PM BUI 301-001 CRN 47562

Have you ever wondered why some movies make you dream, while others just put you to sleep? In this class, we will seek to answer that question by developing an understanding of dramatic screenwriting. This class will focus on how a scene works by exploring the fundamentals of dramatic storytelling such as conflict, character development, and antagonists. In addition, we will develop the ability to analyze creative writing and improve it through rewriting. Even if you aren't a film buff or aspiring screenwriter, advancing a knowledge of narrative can be useful in your everyday life-- you can figure out how to create a more compelling paper or presentation, as well as identify how the stories swirling around social media, the news, and other sources may be squirming their way into your subconscious. There are stories all around you, so how about you try writing a few yourself this coming Fall?

Free Speech and Hate Speech

Webb MW 10:00-11:15 BUI 301-002 CRN 44906

A study of the history of free speech with an emphasis on how hate speech may or may not be limited by the government.

Robert Johnson and The Birth of Rock and Roll

Hornsby TR 12:30-1:45 BUI 301-009 CRN 41638

Robert Johnson has been called the King of the Delta Blues (that's the Mississippi Delta). Though his life was short (1911-1938) as was his recording career, his legacy was long. Musicians who claim Johnson as their musical fore bearer include Muddy Waters, the Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion to name a few. That massive influence years after his death is based on just 29 songs recorded in 1936 and 1937. This course will consider the the myths surrounding Johnson's life, he

may have sold his soul to the Devil for musical virtuosity, and the limited facts of his life--he probably was poisoned for an indiscretion with another man's woman. We'll also examine Delta musicians like Charley Patton and Son House, who influenced Johnson, then we'll move to his musical children, Waters, Howlin Wolf for instance, and his musical grandchildren, the Stones, Clapton and Hendrix. We'll read about the cultural circumstances that gave rise to this enigmatic figure, and listen to a ton of music. We may even eat a few tamales and koolade pickles. If you're lucky you might even experience what it's like to have a hell hound on your trail. At best, you'll have your head realigned.

**Urban Legends, Violent Crime, Illness, Stranger Danger and A Culture of Fear
Copeland TR 12:30-1:45 BUI 301-008 CRN 46193**

Slenderman, /nosleep, murder, kidnapping, medications everyone needs, thousands of violent criminals storming our borders, all signs of an impending apocalypse? What do urban legends, violent crime discourse, pharmaceutical advertising, and political propaganda have in common? They use fear as a tool to spread messages, sell product, or engender support. In this class, we explore whether or not a culture of fear exists in America today, the basis of these fears, and ways that people use fear for profit. We also examine the role of media and social media in perpetuating fear. We critically assess the ways others attempt to influence us through advertising and media as well as how to evaluate such claims.

**Race and Ethnicity in Antiquity and Today
Shannon-Henderson MW 2:00-3:15 BUI 301-003 CRN 41637**

In this course, we will examine ancient Greek and Roman attitudes to ethnicity, identity, and difference, and their modern reception. Did the Greeks and Romans have a concept of "race?" How did they understand the differences they saw between themselves and other peoples they encountered in the Ancient Mediterranean? How did they express those differences in their literature and art? We will use primary sources to investigate Greek and Roman understandings of ethnic difference and attitudes to "foreign" peoples (e.g. Persians, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Gauls and other Northern Europeans). We will also consider how those ancient ideas have impacted modern society, with a particular look at the study of race by classical scholars working in the last few decades. No previous knowledge of or background in classics or ancient history is required. All readings will be in English translation. Assessment will be through participation in class discussion, papers, and a final exam (essay-based).

**Zen Buddhism & Radical Approaches to the Arts
Lazer, H M 2:00-4:50 BUI 301-007 CRN 46379**

The course will involve an introduction to Zen Buddhism, relying on Shunryu Suzuki's classic *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching*, and Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. We'll learn and practice zazen (sitting meditation). Through the lens

of Zen practice, we will explore a range of experimental arts/artists, with particular emphasis on contemporary music, performance art, environmental art, dance, conceptual and found art. Artists we might consider include George Quasha, John Cage, Andy Goldsworthy, Norman Fischer, Linda Montano, Marina Abramovic, John Coltrane, Anthony Braxton, and Kazuaki Tanahashi. Students will both discuss the art we examine and make some related art works of their own. And we'll do our best to learn to be present.

American Wilderness and the National Parks
Schwab MW 10:00-11:15 BUI 301-004 CRN 44583

This course offers a broad survey of attitudes towards America's natural landscape and the gradual emergence of conscious efforts both to preserve and to exploit the American wilderness. We shall address several questions: What is the relationship between humans and the natural world? Why has nature been viewed variously as a "garden," a "wilderness," a pastoral ideal, and a menace? What is the tension between nature and technology (or progress)? Nature and culture? The countryside and the city? Why and how did American leaders decide to set aside certain areas of "wilderness" as national parks and wilderness areas? How and why have these designated areas been and continue to be threatened by developers?

History of Cuban Culture
Schwab TR 10:00- 11:15 BUI 301-005 CRN 44584

This course will survey and analyze Cuban history from 1492 to the present. Among the major topics will be the development of the close relationship between the United States and Cuba; the reasons why Cuba with its abundant resources--both natural and human--has failed to achieve sustained political and economic stability; why the "Cuban Revolution," led by Fidel Castro, came to power in 1959 and why it has endured to the present.

Intermedia Intersections in the Arts
Dewar MW 11:00- 12:15 BUI 301-006 CRN 45740

This interdisciplinary seminar explores intermedia intersections in 20th and 21st century art and music through lectures, discussions and interactions with a wide range of artists' works and writings. We will examine the cultural and historical roots of intermedia art, the outpouring of experimentation and new art forms in the 20th century, and the postmodern pastiche of the digital realm in the 21st century. Spanning work from around the world, from urban streets to rural villages, we will explore examples from the visual arts, dance, music, film and architecture to learn how and why artists work with and combine different media. In addition to engaging with a variety of artistic works, we will discuss the cultural, philosophical, theoretical, and compositional issues that meet at intermedia junctions.