



OPTIONAL LITERATURE MODULES (PERIOD A-B)

The Art of Crime

Teachers: Joakim Wrethed

Module description

Everyone knows that stories are imaginary. Whatever effect they might have on us, we know they are not true, even when they tell us truths more important than the ones we find elsewhere.

Paul Auster *The Locked Room*

This module is generally built around the seminars in which I hope that we will have interesting and stimulating discussions about the literature and films we have engaged with before each occasion. I wish to stress the importance of coming to the seminars well prepared. All of the seminars are constructed in such a way that active participation is a requirement. We will discuss the module content both in smaller groups and in the whole class. There will be plenty of space for your individual performance, but you will also have to engage with the ideas and views of your teacher and your fellow students. We will focus on the theme of crime, but also on various sidetracks as they appear during the module's progression. The aim of this module is to examine the complicated relation between art and crime. There will be a historical dimension mirrored in the narratives selected, but there will also be aspects of the module that focus on crime in fiction as a philosophical issue and a mass culture phenomenon. We will read classics as well as less well known detective and crime fiction and we will also work with other media. Together we will explore different sides of the phenomenon and hopefully our joint efforts will enable us to discern patterns that lead us in various exciting directions. Please note that the module is designed to stimulate your own capacity to read, observe, argue, draw conclusions and form your own understanding by means of the module content. Key concepts and ideas will grow out of our seminar discussions. Your own creativity as readers and your ideas about art and crime will ultimately constitute the core of the module.

Required reading / viewing

- American Psycho*, 2000. Directed by Mary Harron.
 Auster, Paul. *The New York Trilogy*. London: Faber and Faber, 2011.
 Black, Benjamin. *Christine Falls*. London: Picador, 2011.
Bound, 1996. Directed by the Wachowski siblings.
 Chandler, Raymond. *The Big Sleep*. London: Penguin, 2011.
 Christie, Agatha. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*. London: Harper/Collins, 2002.
 Cornwell, Patricia. *Postmortem*. London: Sphere, 2007.
CSI Miami, 2002 (season 1, part 1). The first episode and another one of your own choice.
 Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan. *The Sign of Four*. London: Penguin, 2005.
 Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Purloined Letter" and "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" in *Selected Tales*, Oxford World's Classics, 2008.
 Scaggs, John. *Crime Fiction*. Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2005.
 Shakespeare, William. *Macbeth* [Arden Shakespeare second series]. London: Methuen, 2003.
Sherlock (A New Sleuth for the 21st Century), 2010 (Series 1). Directed by Paul McGuigan.

OPTIONAL LITERATURE MODULES (PERIOD C-D)

Shakespeare in Theory, in Print, and on Stage

Teacher: Irina Rasmussen

Module description

The aim of this module is to help undergraduate students to develop advanced skills for reading and analyzing English-language literature. Students will study literary texts in English from specific historical, critical or generic perspectives and will learn advanced analytic methods, as well as theoretical perspectives. The module comprises a number of seminars, all of which involve active participation from the students. The students will read primary texts and secondary material before each seminar. They will discuss the material in class, using seminars as occasions to reflect upon and voice their ideas about their reading of primary texts and understanding of the secondary material. The final examination will be comprised of two written assignments.

More specifically, this module will explore William Shakespeare's plays from the major genres of tragedy, comedy, history, and lyric poetry. Our main focus will be on what defines Shakespearean dramatic form and how the plays capture new understandings of sexuality, political authority, Englishness, and social class. The course will introduce key debates in Shakespeare studies and the major critical approaches to Shakespeare such as new historicism, cultural materialism, feminism, and psychoanalysis to ask how his literary works validate these critical approaches, but also to attend to the ways these different interpretations and the media of print and stage affect Shakespeare's texts.

Required reading / viewing

Primary Texts

Reading will include a selection of 1800–2000 pages from the following list.

1. William Shakespeare. *The Sonnets* (any edition) 1593–1608
2. ---. *Henry IV, Part I* (any edition) 1596–97
3. ---. *Julius Caesar* (any edition) 1599
4. ---. *The Merchant of Venice* (any edition) 1596–97
5. ---. *Twelfth Night* (any edition) 1601–02
6. ---. *Hamlet* (any edition) 1600–1601
7. ---. *King Lear* (any edition) 1605–1606

Secondary Readings

Selection from:

1. Dutton R. and Howard J.E. *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works*. 4 vols. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003. (abbreviated as *ACSW*) (all chapters are available electronically at SUB)

The assigned essays on literary criticism will be available as handouts or electronic texts (for the specific titles, see the schedule below).

Electronic Resources

On *Original Pronunciation*:

<http://www.openculture.com/2013/09/what-shakespeare-sounded-like-to-shakespeare.html>

The British Novel after WWII

Teacher: Marina Ludwigs

Module description

No selection of novels can do justice to the astonishing variety, vigor, and innovation that characterizes British novel of the post-World War II era. This course attempts to cover various historical periods, genres, points of focus by several influential authors. Throughout the course, we will read a number of British novels that span the period of seven decades, starting from the postwar realism of the “Angry Young Men” generation through the modernist-postmodernist experimentation of the sixties through nineties, finishing with two postmillennial novels (still difficult to characterize). One of the selection criteria is the novels’ importance to their own period. We will read mostly, but not exclusively, books that “made a splash,” were seen as topical, and were, in other ways, noticed, written and talked about by the critics and the public at the time or soon after their publication. In asking ourselves in what ways these books are reflections of the *zeitgeist* of their time, we will read literary-historical materials and representative critical articles on the texts themselves. In our discussion, we will turn to topics of cultural and aesthetic history, tracing the trajectory of changing tastes, concerns, and the economic and technological conditions, as well as the evolution of the novelistic form.

The module comprises eight two-hour seminars, all of which involve active participation from the students. The students will read primary texts and secondary material before each seminar, using these meetings as occasions to reflect upon and voice their ideas about their reading of primary texts and understanding of the secondary material. They will be given discussion questions and asked to answer one of them in writing as homework. The final examination will be comprised of written assignment(s).

Required reading

Primary Texts:

Kingsley Amis, *Lucky Jim*, 1954
Alan Sillitoe, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, 1958
Muriel Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 1961
Colin Wilson, *The Mind Parasites*, 1967
Iris Murdoch, *The Black Prince*, 1973
Ian McEwan, *Enduring Love*, 1997
Julian Barnes, *The Sense of an Ending*, 2011
Kazuo Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 2021

Secondary Readings:

The Cambridge companion to British Fiction Since 1945, 2015, online [selections].
A Companion to British and Irish Novel: 1945-2000, ed. Brian W. Shaffer, 2005, online [selections].
Carpenter, Humphrey, *Angry Young Men: A Literary Comedy of the 50ies*, 2002 [selections/handouts].
Gasiorek, Andrzej, *Post-War British Fiction: Realism and After*, 1995, [handouts].
Stenseke, Jakob, “The Morality of Artificial Friends in Ishiguro’s *Klara and the Sun*,” *Journal of Science Fiction and Philosophy*, vol. 5, 2022 [handout].
Wallen, James Ramsey, “The Evils of Banality: Shallowness, Self-Realization, and Closure in Julian Barnes’s *The Sense of an Ending* and Oscar Wilde’s *De Profundis*.” *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, 58:4 (2017), pp. 325-339 [handout]