

Department of English
Graduate Seminars – Fall 2007

060.629 Literature, Religion, and British Modernity – During **Th 1 - 4 pm**

This course will examine a number of key British theological, devotional and literary texts from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century (Hooker to George Eliot) in order to consider the ways in which religion structured literature in the period.

060.651 19th Century Realism: Theory and Practice – Anderson **T 2 - 5 pm**

This course will use three major novels of the nineteenth-century (*Bleak House*, *Middlemarch*, and *The Way We Live Now*) as the occasion to explore key debates on realism. The course will address theories of the novel's rise and consolidation, major accounts of the role of the novel in nineteenth-century British society and culture, and discussions of the transition from realism to modernism. We will also closely assess how the relation between politics and aesthetics is configured by different theorists and critics of the novel, paying especial attention to the effects of a fundamental tension between liberal and radical aesthetics.

060.665 Whitman and Dickinson – Cameron **Th 8:30 - 11:30 am**

We shall consider questions particular to each of these major nineteenth-century American poets. For instance: how does Whitman reconcile the need for formal universals with the emotional attachment to substantive particulars? How does he unite the erotic and the political? And how does Dickinson find a language for what is "inner than the bone," for private experience? How does she render legible the off-the-map quality of the experiences her poems chart? We shall also consider questions that draw the two poets together: for instance: why do Dickinson and Whitman treat their finished poems as essentially provisional, subject to rethinking and rewriting? How does each revise metrical and formal norms and, differently, construct a vocabulary that redefines the very nature of the poetic subject? What does it mean to be a poet both with and without the sanction of one's culture?

060.691 Modernism and the Place of Utopia – Mao **T 9 am – 12 pm**

In this course, we will consider modernist and proto-modernist representations of two kinds of ideal places: the comfortable home (ancestral house, cozy cottage, pleasant refuge) and utopia. Naturally, a leading question will be how visions of a more just, more efficient, or more beautiful society are grounded in experiences of present domesticity. But we will also examine tensions between the here of the inhabited house and the there of a perfected world, reflect on broken homes and dystopias, and pursue larger questions pertaining to the trajectory and definition of modernism. Of special interest will be writers such as Forster, Huxley, and Wells, who produced both utopian (or dystopian) fictions and narratives turning on great houses or beloved homes. Other authors we might visit include Hyde, Joyce, Pater, Waugh, West, Wharton, Woolf, and Yeats. We will also read in a number of critics and theorists, among them Gaston Bachelard, Walter Benjamin, Michel de Certeau, Michel Foucault, Fredric Jameson, and Vincent Pecora.