

## **GNSE Winter 2017 Course Descriptions**

### **Nineteenth-Century American Mass Entertainment**

**CRES 18805 (=HIST 18805, AMER 18805, GNSE 18805)**

**Course description:** Popular culture filters, reflects, and occasionally refracts many of the central values, prejudices, and preoccupations of a given society. From the Industrial Revolution to the advent of feature films in the early twentieth century, American audiences sought both entertainment and reassurance from performers, daredevils, amusement parks, lecturers, magicians, panoramas, athletes, and photographers. Amidst the Civil War, they paid for portraits that purportedly revealed the ghosts of lost loved ones; in an age of imperialism, they forked over hard-earned cash to relive the glories of western settlement, adventure, and conquest in Buffalo Bill's Wild West. Mass entertainment not only echoed the central events of the age it helped shape them: from phrenology as the channel for antebellum convictions about outward appearance (and racial identity), to the race riots following Jack Johnson's boxing ring victory over Jim Jeffries. Many of these entertainment forms became economic juggernauts in their own right, and in the process of achieving unprecedented popularity, they also shaped collective memory, gender roles, race relations, and the public's sense of acceptable beliefs and behaviors. This lecture course will examine the history of modern American entertainment over the course of the long nineteenth century. Requirements include careful reading, active and thoughtful participation, and written assignments.

**Instructor:** Amy Lippert

**Days & Times:** TTh 3:00-4:20

### **Gender, Sexuality, Security Culture, and Protest in Post 3-11 Japan**

**GNSE 20441/30441 (=EALC 20441/30441)**

**Course Description:** As seen in the visual artist Rokudenashiko's recent conviction for obscenity for disseminating artistic portrayals of her own vagina, contemporary Japan has faced a heightened level of monitoring and policing, both by the state and in other less formalized realms of society, of marginal and subversive expressions of gender and sexuality. Our primary texts come from popular culture, film, visual art, and literature, which have provided lightning rods for controversy and protest in this charged climate. This course investigates the fraught relationship between marginal expressions of gender and sexuality on the one hand, and society's notions of security and safety on the other. Whose safety matters? How do women and other minorities use artistic production, within and alongside the realm of popular culture, to advocate for their own conceptions of safety and what it might mean? From the erotic performance of feminine agency found in soft-core pornographic pink films, to the slippage between fantasy and reality found in the staged violence of women's pro-wrestling, to the eco-feminism of activist Ishimure Michiko, and beyond, this course will explore the state of gender, femininity, and sexual politics in Japan, from the 1960s on into the present day.

### **Philosophies of Environmentalism and Sustainability**

**GNSE 22204 (=MAPH 32209, ENST 22209, HMRT 22201, PHIL 22209)**

**Course description:** Some of the greatest ethical and political challenges confronting the world today are related to environmental issues: for example, climate change, loss of biodiversity, the unsustainable use of natural resources, and other threats to the well-being of both present and future generations. Using both classic and contemporary works, this course will highlight some of the fundamental and unavoidable philosophical questions informing such environmental issues. Can a plausible philosophical account of justice for future generations be developed?

What counts as the ethical treatment of non-human animals? What does the term "natural" mean, and can natural environments as such have moral standing?

**Instructor:** Bart Schultz

**Days & Times:** MW 1:30-2:50

**Modern Disability Histories: Gender, Race, and Disability (=HIST 29318)**

**GNSE 23106**

**Course description:** The course seeks to introduce students to disability histories in modern Europe and the US. It will examine some of the ways in which the norm of able---bodiedness has shaped history in the 19th and 20th centuries, and worked to exclude those defined as disabled. Understanding disability as one of the constitutive categories of modern subjectivity, rather than simply a medical state, the course will consider disability together with race, gender and sexuality to explore how these systems have worked together to produce an imagined, historically contingent *norm*. Readings will be mainly from the US and Western Europe, and topics will include, but are not limited to, “freak” shows in late 19th century, the impact of the WWI on male bodies and the category of disability, eugenic movement and euthanasia programs of interwar and Nazi Europe, postwar Thalidomide scandal, and the impact of consumer culture on the aesthetics of bodies.

**Instructor:** Michaela Appeltova

**Days & Times:** MW 10:30-11:50 in Room 103

**Religion and Postcolonial Feminism**

**GNSE 23107**

**Course description:** This course examines issues of gender, sexuality, and race as they intersect with questions of religion in post-colonial discourses. The study of global religions have been transformed in important ways by encounters with postcolonial and feminist scholarship; similarly, the persistent interest in religious forms of life have shaped how scholars think about gender, sexuality, and feminism in postcolonial contexts. In this course, we will explore how these dialogues between feminism, postcolonial studies, and religious studies may inform and transform our understandings of categories like “women” and “religion.” Questions explored will include: why have women’s bodies and forms of religious dress become charged sites of these negotiations? What assumptions concerning moral agency, freedom, and public/private space invest these sites with meaning in the first place? Why does the sensibility of being modern and politically progressive depend so heavily on particular representations of the appropriate roles and behaviors of women and religion? And how has religion become racialized in its sexual and gendered dimensions?

**Instructor:** Daniel Schultz

**Days & Times:** TTh 1:30-2:50 in Room 003

**Virginia Woolf**

**GNSE 23400 (=ENGL 23400, FNDL 24011)**

**Course description:** Along with a number of Woolf’s major works, students read theoretical and critical texts that give a sense of the range of contemporary approaches to Woolf.

**Instructor:** Lisa Ruddick

**Days & Times:** TTh 9:00-10:20

### **Anthropology of the Body**

**GNSE 25112 (=ANTH 45100, ANTH 25100, CHDV 25100, CRES 25112)**

**Course description:** Drawing on a wide and interdisciplinary range of texts, both classic and more recent, this seminar will variously examine the theoretical debates of the body as a subject of anthropological, historical, psychological, medical and literary inquiry. The seminar will explore specific themes, for example, the persistence of the mind/body dualism, experiences of embodiment/alienation, phenomenology of the body, Foucauldian notions of bio-politics, bio-power and the ethic of the self, and the medicalized, gendered, and racialized body, among other salient themes.

This seminar is a collaborative exercise that is only as good as the contribution of each participant. Attendance, preparation, and participation are essential to the quality of everyone's seminar experience. In this seminar, the assigned readings correspond to the general theme of the week's seminar. The weekly session is organized as follows: during the first hour, two students will participate in co-leading a critical discussion of the required readings for that day. We will then take a short break, and the remainder of the class will be a general lecture and discussion fleshing out the major debates and significance of the week's theme.

**Instructor:** Sean Brotherton

**Days & Times:** T 1:30-4:20 (Haskell 101)

### **Woman/Native**

**CRES 27013 (=ENGL 27003, CMLT 27003, GNSE 27013)**

**Course description:** This course reads works of postcolonial literature and theory in order to consider the entanglements of the figures of "women" and "natives" in colonial as well as postcolonial discourse. We will discuss topics such as the persistent feminization of the profane, degraded, and contagious bodies of colonized natives; representations of women as both the keepers and the victims of "authentic" native culture; the status (symbolic and otherwise) of women in anti-colonial resistance and insurgency; and the psychic pathologies (particularly nervous conditions of anxiety, hysteria, and madness) that appear repeatedly in these works as states to which women and/as natives are especially susceptible. And we will ask whether a theoretical concept such as écriture feminine, which identifies forms of literary production that register the specific traces of female difference, is meaningful in the context of embodied experience that is raced as well as gendered.

**Instructor:** Sonali Thakkar

**Days & Times:** MW 3:00-4:20 (Room TBD)

### **Afrofuturism**

**CRES 27506 (=GNSE 27506, ENGL 27506, HIST 29515)**

**Course description:** Afrofuturist creative and theoretical production has exploded in recent years, emerging as a significant intellectual framework for understanding the history of race and identity, the legacies of colonialism, theories of science and technology, and the making of the modern world. While the term "Afrofuturism" was not coined until the 1990s and remains a controversial label, this course traces the historical roots and contemporary expressions of this diverse global genre (or set of genres). Taking a transdisciplinary approach, we will examine the contexts and debates that shaped and were shaped by works of speculative fiction, science fiction, and futurism from across Africa and the African diaspora. Topics include slavery and emancipation, empire and decolonization, pan-Africanism, theories of modernity and technoculture, the Cold War and the making of the "Third World," Civil Rights, as well as connections to related genres such as Indigenous Futurism and Silkpunk. We will take an

intersectional approach to consider not only race but other categories of identity such as gender, sexuality, class, and ability. Texts include secondary critical analysis as well as global music, film, literature, and visual artforms created from the 19th through the 21st century, including works from Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia and across the global African diaspora, particularly the United States. Students will leave the course with knowledge of major Afrofuturist themes and related works as well as improved critical reading, speaking, research, and writing skills. Evaluation is comprised of a combination of oral discussion, critical reading and response, written assignments, independent research, and in-class presentation.

**Instructor:** Emily Lord Fransee

**Days & Times:** Th 1:30-4:20 (Room 103)

**Gwendolyn Brooks: Poetry and Politics**

**GNSE 27507 (=CRES 27507, ENGL 27009)**

**Course Description:** This course is a comprehensive survey of the work of Chicago writer and activist Gwendolyn Brooks (1917-2000) and an exploration of the artistic and social movements to which she contributed. Brooks was among the most preeminent African American poets of the twentieth century, and she was celebrated during her career as the voice of the social and political concerns both of Black Chicago and of the African Diaspora. In this course we study Brooks's poetry, from the social realism of *A Street in Bronzeville* (1945) to the later political poetry of *Riot* (1968) and *Children Coming Home* (1991); her prose fiction, including the autobiographical novella *Maude Martha* (1953); and her memoirs. Along the way, we use close reading to examine Brooks's aesthetic transformations from high modernism to what she called "versejournalism" and a late, vatic public poetry; and we situate Brooks's writing in its historical contexts to study her involvements in anti-Jim Crow social protest, Black Arts Movement race nationalism, and Pan-African transnationalism. As a class we will visit sites of importance to Brooks and her life and work in Chicago (e.g., the South Side Community Art Center), and we will invite several speakers to help us understand how Brooks's work touched social and political life in and beyond Chicago.

**Instructor:** Andrew Peart

**Days & Times:** TTh 4:30-5:50

**Colloquium: Social Movements in Chicago, 1950–2010**

**GNSE 48700 (=HIST 48700, CRES 48700)**

**Course description:** This class will introduce students to four social movements in twentieth-century Chicago through archival materials, scholarship, and memory: Puerto Rican empowerment, radical feminism, gay rights, and police accountability to Black communities. The premise of this class is threefold: (a) to apply key concepts in the study of social movements to local examples; (b) to propose movement-building as equivalent to electoral political consolidation as exemplifying Chicago public life; and (c) to sample the scope and depth of primary sources related to local social activism, so as to suggest future research projects for enrolled students.

**PQ:** Upper-level undergraduates with consent of instructor.

**Instructor:** Adam Green

**Days & Times:** Wed 9.30–12.20

**Colloquium: Africa and the Slave Trade**  
**GNSE 50002 (=CRES 50002, HIST 50002)**

**Course description:** This graduate course explores major historiographic debates in precolonial African history from the fourteenth through the eighteenth centuries. We will examine the intertwined political, religious, and economic systems at work in the continent antecedent to European contact. Then we will investigate the emergence of the slave trade and consider its operation and ramifications. Themes of study include the uses and limitations of oral, archaeological, and textual sources of history; Christianity, Islam, and state-craft; definitions and practices of slavery; the relations of gender, kinship, and warfare to enslavement; cultural transformations, creations, and recreations; and the making of the Atlantic World. While assignments will consist of historiographic essays, we will also spend time consulting and interpreting primary sources.

**Instructor:** Emily Osborn

**Days & Times:** Thu 1:30 PM-4:20 PM

**Colloquium: Immigration and Assimilation in American Life**  
**GNSE 60300 (=AMER 60302, HIST 60302, LACS 60302)**

**Course description:** This course explores the history of immigration in what is now the United States, starting with the colonial origins of Spanish, French, Dutch, and English settlements, the importation of African slaves, and the massive waves of immigrants that arrived in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Additionally, we will study the adaptation of these immigrants, exploring the validity of the concept of assimilation, comparing and contrasting the experiences of the "old" and "new" immigrants based on their race, religion, and class standing.

**Instructor:** Rámon Gutiérrez

**Days & Times:** W 9:30-12:20