

Preliminary Web Course Description

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

School of English and Theatre Studies

Course Code: ENGL 6691	Course Title: Interdisciplinary Studies	Date of Offering: Fall 2023
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Course Instructor:	Course Format: Seminar
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Brief Course Synopsis:

River/Ocean/Island: The Timeplaces of the Circum-Atlantic World

This course approaches questions of empire and colonialism from two directions. First, students will be reading a series of texts (plays, poems, prose narratives) that have dominated critical discussion of British imperialism over the last three decades. In order to allow for a certain level of depth, the course focuses on the circum-Atlantic world from the founding of the Royal African Company to the advent of the American Civil War. We will be paying attention to how intercultural relations, violence, and relations of exchange with non-European populations have been crucial for the constitution of Europe itself, of capitalism, and many of the structural developments that have come to define social norms in the wake of the enlightenment. Second, attention will be paid to counter-discourses and forms of resistance as they are articulated not only in these more canonical texts, but also in cultural productions that are in effect writing back to empire both in the past and in our current moment. We will be considering work by John Akomfrah, Yinka Shonibare, Kara Walker, M. NourbeSe Philip and other contemporary practitioners, who I would argue offer a place in the present from which to imagine the legacy of imperial fantasy otherwise. Throughout the course we will be moving back and forth between textual and visual materials, so in that regard the course offers an introduction to working at the interstices of text and image.

Methods of Evaluation and Weight:

Close Reading Assignment	15%
Podcast/Archive Assignment	20%
Object/Visual Culture Assignment	25%
Final Paper	35%

Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.)

Tentative list of texts:

Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*

J.M. Coetzee, *Foe*

Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*

M. NourbeSe Philip, *Zong!*

Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*

Frances Brooke, *The History of Emily Montagu*

+ materials on Courselink

This course counts towards the following distribution requirement(s) for students who registered at the University prior to the Fall of 2018:

Information about mode of delivery (synchronous/asynchronous/other details):

*Students who registered at the University of Guelph after Fall 2018 must fulfill the “new” major and minor requirements. Students who registered at the University of Guelph prior to Fall 2018 must fulfill the requirements of the Calendar in effect when they first enrolled unless they have filed a Schedule of Studies Change Request to change to the 2018-2019 calendar. For more information, please consult the major and minor checklists at <https://www.uoguelph.ca/arts/sets/undergraduate/english/current-student-information>.