

LS 800: Reflections on Reason and Passion – The Making of the Modern I

Fall 2019 | Dr. Sasha Colby

Course Outline:

How did we get here? This is a question asked with various inflections, from the wondering to the incredulous in a time often accused of being fixated on the ‘perpetual present.’ There are many roads to the modern, some of which will be explored in LS 800 and some in LS 801. This semester, we will focus on the influence of the ancient Greeks and eighteenth and nineteenth century England, Europe, and North America as major influences that shaped the emergence of modernity. In turn, we will also examine how these influences have been re-interpreted in our own global ‘post-modern’ moment. Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to engage critically and creatively in analyzing and responding to the readings. In order to create effective comparisons across time and space, we will use the themes of ‘reason and passion’ to shape our survey.

Required Texts:

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 0-87220-591-6
Sappho | <i>*Poetry</i> |
| 019506167
Sophocles | <i>*Antigone</i> |
| 0679722068
Mann | <i>*Death in Venice</i> |
| 0224059734
Carson | <i>*The Autobiography of Red</i> |
| 978-1-57062-527-5
Rumi | <i>*Love is a Stranger</i> |
| 0140449744
Plato | <i>*Phaedrus</i> |
| 978-0-19-953716-7
Shelley | <i>*Frankenstein</i> |

0385667833 **Things Fall Apart*
Achebe

0805202412 **Illuminations*
Benjamin

9780920079447 **The Rez Sisters*
Highway

9780140109627 **All that is Solid Melts into Air*
Berman

9780811222921 **Antigonick.*
Carson

9780199536009 **Mrs. Dalloway*
Woolf

Online:

Euripides, *The Bacchae* <http://records.viu.ca/~johnstoi/euripides/euripides.htm>

Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues" <http://swcta.net/moore/files/2012/02/sonnysblues.pdf>

Rossetti, "Goblin Market" <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44996/goblin-market>

Morris, "Useful Work versus Useless Toil" <https://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1884/useful.htm>

Adichie, "The Danger of the Single Story" https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

Clarke, "Privilege" (to be distributed)

Didion, "Goodbye to All That" <http://essaysspring13.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/files/2013/04/Joan-Didion-Goodbye-to-All-That.pdf>

Nietzsche, "On the Use and Abuse of History for Life" <http://la.utexas.edu/users/hcleaver/330T/350kPEENietzscheAbuseTableAll.pdf>

Pater, "Introduction" and
"Conclusion" <http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/pater/renaissance/preface.html>

"Maya Lin: A Strong, Clear Vision" - library or
YouTube: https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=FWGXGTK_5k0&list=PLouDbLp_2vk3RYQPzuMc41DdxvKbjSjc8&index=3&t=0s

Mary Shelley letters (to be
distributed)

Petrarch and Ovid Materials- PDF

Breton, "Manifesto of
Surrealism" <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~freeman/courses/phil330/MANIFESTO%20OF%20SURREALISM.pdf>

Assignments:

Reason and Passion Presentations (10%): Everyone will have the opportunity to introduce one of the course texts the week before we discuss it. You should "set the scene" for your classmates by introducing (briefly) the author, the book, and its importance within two minutes (try not to get bogged down in too many biographical details). The rest of your presentation should be devoted to how this text responds to the themes of reason or passion or both. Try to be concise and direct in drawing out the relevance to our course. **Presentations should be 7 minutes.**

Essay 1: Argumentative close-reading (20%): The first essay assignment is designed to get you thinking critically and writing well about one or two of the texts we have encountered thus far. It is a close-reading, which is to say that it is about your interpretation of the text and should not involve outside sources. It is also an argumentative paper which means essays should have a thesis statement that is followed through during the course of the paper. The paper should be 4-5 pages.

Essay 2: Argumentative close-reading or personal essay (40%): The second essay offers you a choice. You can either continue to work on argumentative close-readings or you can try a second type of essay, the personal or "phenomenological" essay similar to Didion's "Goodbye to All That" or Austin Clarke's "Privilege." In this case, research, personal observation, and a central course text are woven together. The paper should be 6-7 pages.

Re-Telling (20%): A significant course focus will be on the way stories, themes, and ideas recur in a new form under new conditions in particular times in history. For this assignment, you will "re-tell" one of our course texts in a way that can be presented in the final class. A one-page statement of intent should accompany your re-telling.

Participation (10%): Participation involves both sharing your informed, prepared arguments and opinions at the dinners and in class as well as creating dialogue by encouraging and building on the comments and contributions of others.