

English Literature
Module Descriptions 2019/20
Level H (i.e. Final Year.) Modules

Please be aware that all modules are subject to availability.

If you have any questions about the modules listed in this handbook, please contact
calincominexchange@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

For these modules, strong knowledge of Literature and a near native level of English is required. All applications for Level H modules are subject to Approval by the English Literature department.

Please note that at the time this document has been prepared the following information is provisional, and there may be minor changes between now and the beginning of 2019/20 academic year.

MODULE TITLE	From Cover to Cover: Histories of the Book
MODULE CODE	30651
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	2,500 word blog entry analysing an item from UoB special collections (50%) 2,500 word essay on a topic in book history (50%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 22837, 30631, 29596, 27755, 30637, 30646 or 31944.

DESCRIPTION

Books are about so much more than the text contained within them. Whether manuscript, print or e-book, newspaper or novel, literary bestseller or ‘trashy’ beach-read, they are unique objects – and forms of technology – with individual stories to tell concerning their production and consumption by generations of readers and writers, scribes and printers, publishers and booksellers.

This innovative team-taught module introduces you to an exciting new discipline known as ‘The History of the Book’. Through a series of plenaries delivered by specialists in different periods of English literature, we’ll move from the medieval period to the present day; learn about how scribes copied manuscripts by hand; explore the revolution that came with the introduction of print; and look ahead to the future of books as we move beyond our own digital age. We’ll also explore key issues and topics such as authorship, literacy, editing, publishing, censorship and gender.

Most importantly, this will be a *hands-on*, research-led module. Each week we will work closely with special collections in the Cadbury Research Library and at the end of the module you will write a 2500 word blog entry on an item of particular interest to you as well as a more traditional 2500 word essay on a topic in book history from a list of set questions. You could find yourself writing about a 500 year old richly decorated medieval manuscript, illustrated copies of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, first editions of *Paradise Lost* and *Gulliver’s Travels*, nineteenth-century slave narratives, letters and diaries from the First World War, and rare editions of works by D.H. Lawrence!

MODULE TITLE	Fantasy and fandom: writing back to the medieval in modern fantasy
MODULE CODE	22837
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1,500 word assignment (35%) 2,500 word essay (65%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 30651, 30631, 29596, 27755, 30637, 30646 or 31944.

Please note that this module has extremely limited availability, we would only recommend selecting this module if it is compulsory for your studies.

DESCRIPTION

From heroes and quests to magic and hidden identities, modern fantasy has looked to the literature of the medieval period for inspiration. Yet it has also consistently transformed and reshaped its source material, rewriting the significance of key motifs and ideas in order to address the issues of its own time and place of production. This module will examine the ways in which modern fantasy writing both adopts and adapts the culture, language, characters and narratives of medieval texts, and in so doing identifies its authors as an (albeit diverse) fandom. Although not fanfiction in the strictest terms, modern fantasy writing often shares with it the desire to extend and appropriate the plots and protagonists of earlier texts, and to challenge or re-examine them by writing in an avatar who explores the textual world in a metaphorical representation of the author's own discovery of the original work.

This module will look at forerunners for this in the medieval period in texts such as *Beowulf* and the Arthurian legends, and will encourage students to analyse the communally-driven nature of textual production and circulation in the Middle Ages, as well as the communities of interest which have written fantasy in response, from the late-nineteenth century to the present. We'll think about how fantasy adapts stories from the past, and is then itself adapted into modern film or TV series, graphic novel or game. The module will provide the opportunity to examine a range of fantasy literature, which will include texts from William Morris and J. R. R. Tolkien through to contemporary writers such as George R. R. Martin and Neil Gaiman.

MODULE TITLE	Flourish for the Players (Shakespeare's Contemporaries)
MODULE CODE	30631
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1 x 1,000 word close-reading exercise (25%) 1 x 3,000 word essay (75%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 30651, 22837 29596, 27755, 30637, 30646 or 31944.

DESCRIPTION

Flourish for the Players' will offer students an opportunity to study *the other people* who were writing plays for performance in the age of Shakespeare. Over the semester, we will consider the work of Shakespeare's rivals, his collaborators, and his biggest influences. Taking in examples of both comedy and tragedy (written by anyone but Shakespeare), this module will provide a full sense of the themes, language, and look of English Renaissance drama.

Authors/texts studied on this module *may* include:

Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*

Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II*, *Tamburlaine pt. 1*

John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, *The White Devil*

Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*

Francis Beaumont, *Knight of the Burning Pestle*

John Fletcher, *The Woman's Prize, or The Tamer Tamed*

Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker, *The Roaring Girl*

MODULE TITLE	Modernism in the Magazines
MODULE CODE	29596
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1 x 1000 word close reading analysis (25%) 1 x 3000 word research project (75%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 30651, 22837, 30631 27755, 30637, 30646 or 31944.

DESCRIPTION

This module introduces students to the forums in which the art and literature of modernism was first published; that is, in the pages of the modernist 'little magazines'. On this module, we will examine the development of modernism across a range of literary texts (editorials, manifestos, poems, short stories, essays, serialised novels), as well as focusing on key works by writers such as Wyndham Lewis, Katherine Mansfield, Ezra Pound, Ford Madox Ford, Rebecca West, and James Joyce. We will read these texts alongside the magazines in which they were first published, such as *The New Age*, *Rhythm*, *BLAST*, and *The Egoist*. Studying these magazines in digital form, you will become familiar with the theoretical and methodological approaches adopted in the burgeoning academic field of 'modern periodical studies'. In particular, you will learn how to read magazines as a means of re-contextualising modernist literature, taking into account the importance of various social, political, cultural, and historical contexts. We will also situate modernist literature in a wider interdisciplinary context of experimentation across the arts, examining the significance of visual art and graphic design across magazine culture. In the process, you will become familiar with some of the most important avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century, such as Fauvism, Imagism, and Vorticism. A key feature of this module is its research-led focus. You are encouraged to bring your own research agenda to seminars, seeking out writers and texts that interest you. Over the course of the module, and in consultation with your tutor, you will develop an original research project based on your engagement with this vibrant magazine culture.

MODULE TITLE	The Pre-Raphaelite Circle
MODULE CODE	27755
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1,000 word writing assignment (25%) 10 minute oral presentation with PowerPoint (10%) 2,500 word essay (65%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 30651, 22837 29596, 30631, 30637, 30646 or 31944.

DESCRIPTION

This module focuses on the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, a group of mid-nineteenth century artists and writers, as an entry point to explore a series of art/text movements of the Victorian era. Derided in the press as the “Fleshly School” of poetry, the PRB engaged many of the most pressing debates of literary and artistic production and consumption during the period: the role of craft versus inspiration, the relationship between realism and idealism, the pressures of facing an increasingly vocal public, and the wages of industrialization, among others. In this module, students will consider the ways that that Pre-Raphaelites—as well as the Aesthetes, the Arts and Crafts movement, the Century Guild, and other groups that the PRB inspired—responded to these debates in the various artistic forms they advocated. Texts to include verse by Tennyson, Keats, Browning, Barrett Browning, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, Swinburne, and Wilde; prose by Pater, Ruskin, Arnold, Morris, Beerbohm, and Buchanan; and images ranging from the fine arts to cartoons from the popular periodical press. Further, students will have the opportunity to explore the rich local links to the PRB, including visits to sites such as the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts.

MODULE TITLE	Nineteenth-Century Detective Fiction
MODULE CODE	30637
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	4,000 word essay
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 30651, 22837 29596, 30631, 27755, 30646 or 31944.

DESCRIPTION

This module introduces students to the development of the genre of detective fiction during its nascent period in the nineteenth century. Reading for the module draws on a selection of British and American detective novels, short stories, and non-fiction articles in order to analyse the formal and narrative properties of detective fiction while tracing the key themes and concerns of the genre across their social and cultural contexts. The genre's engagement with and representations of nineteenth-century science and medicine will be considered, as well as the influence of its primary mode of circulation in the periodical press. Students will be led to interrogate the influence of issues such as class, gender, race, and empire upon literary representations of crime and criminal investigations, as well as of criminals and detectives, over the course of the nineteenth century. More broadly, these materials will provide students with an opportunity to reflect upon the typology and characteristics of popular fiction and the split between "high" and "low" literature and its significance in modern culture.

Authors to be studied include but are not limited to: Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, and Arthur Conan Doyle. Secondary materials will include key critical and theoretical contributions to the study of detective fiction.

MODULE TITLE	After the Deluge: Writing and Recovery after the First World War
MODULE CODE	30646
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	4,000 word essay (100%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 30651, 22837 29596, 30631, 27755, 30637 or 31944.

DESCRIPTION

No aspect of British intellectual and artistic life was untouched by the upheavals brought about by the First World War – ‘a crack across the table of History’ as Ford Madox Ford called it. This module looks at responses by some of the most significant writers of the inter-war years as they sought to understand the war’s personal, literary, and cultural significance. It focuses upon four authors who fought at the Battle of the Somme in 1916 and who returned, literally and metaphorically, to make sense of their various war experiences for years afterwards. The module opens with the poetry and autobiographical fiction of Siegfried Sassoon (the Sherston trilogy, 1928-36) and his close friend Robert Graves (*Goodbye to All That*, 1929). It then turns to two of the most challenging, and rewarding, modernist texts of the period: Ford Madox Ford’s multi-volume *Parade’s End* (1924-28), arguably the finest novel about the First World War, and David Jones’s epic prose-poem *In Parenthesis* (1937), a fusion of contemporary history and myth described by T.S. Eliot as a ‘work of genius’. Throughout the module we will explore how these writers reconfigured traditional categories of writing – fiction, memoir, autobiography, chronicle, lyric poetry and verse narrative – as they sought appropriate modes of self-representation, reflection and remembrance. We will make extensive use of the texts that surround these key works, especially the authors’ own letters, diaries and essays, as well as the body of literary criticism they have inspired. Students will also be encouraged to explore wider contexts for these works, including the authors’ literary networks and significant social and political issues such as female suffrage and conscientious objection.

This module may be taken by students who also choose ‘Remembering World War One’ without fear of overlap.

MODULE TITLE	Muslim Women's Popular Fiction
MODULE CODE	31944
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1 x 4,000 word essay (100%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 30651, 22837 29596, 30631, 27755, 30637 or 30646.

DESCRIPTION

This module examines the global turn in popular fiction through a focus on popular and genre writing by Muslim women from the Arab world and beyond. Focusing on writing by women deemed 'popular' rather than 'literary', the module engages with critical readings in gender, religion, race, and genre alongside a range of genre fiction by Muslim women authors (including romance, chick lit, detective fiction, Young Adult, fantasy, autobiography, memoir, and science fiction).

The module has four key themes:

- The global – How is popular fiction marketed, produced, and consumed as a global product?
- Genre – How culturally-specific are literary genres? How do we think about these works in the context of existing genre theory? We will address issues of taste, reception, and readership.
- Women's writing and its development – How does popular writing fit into the tradition of women's writing? How might we rethink the 'tradition'?
- Gender and sexuality – We will conduct guided intersectional readings of texts, drawing on theoretical and critical works.

Authors and texts studied on this module may include:

- Leila Aboulela
- Fadia Faqir
- Nawal El Saadawi
- G. Willow Wilson, *Alif the Unseen* (2012)
- Randa Abdel-Fattah, *Does My Head Look Big in This?* (2005)
- Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis* (2000-2003/2007)
- Mohja Kahf, *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* (2006)
- Rajaa Alsanea, *Girls of Riyadh* (2007)
- Ayisha Malik, *Sofia Khan is Not Obligated* (2015)
- Karuna Riazi, *The Gauntlet* (2017)
- Ausma Zehanat Khan, *The Unquiet Dead* (2015)
- Shelina Zahra Janmohamed, *Love in a Headscarf* (2009)

MODULE TITLE	The Art of Translation
MODULE CODE	32243
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1 x 4,000 word essay (100%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 22332, 29602, 29639, 27046, 29538, 30678, 30670, 30688 or 29643.

DESCRIPTION

Translation is an essential feature of English literature across history. The module, which involves texts in English only and requires no foreign language skills (though you can make use of any that you possess), will help you to appreciate what makes a good translation, and to understand cultural and theoretical issues that affect how translations are made. Just like any other English module, we will be reading English literary texts closely and examining thematic and theoretical issues that arise from them. We will primarily study short pieces of poetry, prose and drama from different (mostly European) cultures and times, always aware of each text's status as a translation.

In early weeks we will practice comparing different English translations of the same work. We will initially work with classic texts have been translated into English numerous times. These may include: Homer's *Odyssey*, *Beowulf*, the Bible, *Paradise Lost* (which has often been translated into 'plain' English), and Michel de Montaigne's *Essays*. Lectures will introduce the work and passages under discussion, and critical and theoretical concepts for analyzing translations. In seminars we will read translations alongside each other, and discuss critical frameworks for reading them (likely to include several from *The Translation Studies Reader*).

In later weeks the module will open out to consider a wider range of ways that translation inspires writers (with opportunity to work on examples of interest to you). We'll think about how gender, politics, empire and religion shape how translations are written and received, and about the relation between translation, imitation and originality. We may study such texts as: Brian Friel's *Translations*, short stories by Lydia Davis, translations of the *Bhagavad Gita* and Robert Lowell's and Elizabeth Bishop's poetry. Structured preparation for the final assignment will be built into our week-to-week schedule.

MODULE TITLE	John Donne and the Metaphysical Poets
MODULE CODE	22332
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1 x 4,000-word essay
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 29602, 29639, 27046, 29538, 30678, 30670, 30688 or 29643.

DESCRIPTION

In his 1921 essay 'The Metaphysical Poets', T.S. Eliot famously observed that, 'A thought to Donne was an experience; it modified his sensibility.' Is this alleged fusion of thought and feeling the hallmark of so-called metaphysical poetry? Or is this apparent synthesis instead 'a kind of discordia concors', as Samuel Johnson put it, in which 'the most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together'? This module sets out to explore the nature, varieties, and influence of metaphysical poetry, taking as its corpus of texts selected poems by John Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Henry Vaughan, Abraham Cowley, Andrew Marvell, Thomas Traherne, Edward Herbert of Cherbury, and others. Through close reading of the subjects, themes, and rhetorical and metrical forms of these works, students will be invited to explore broader questions of literary genre and poetic tradition, politics and religion, sexual and gender relations, and textual transmission and reception (including discussion of the roles of manuscript, print, and the social history of lyric poetry). The module aims to place the writers studied in relation to other contemporary groupings of English poets, such as the Spenserians, the Tribe of Ben, and the Cavalier Poets, as well as considering the reaction to and legacy of metaphysical poetry found in later poetic movements, such as the Augustans, Romantics, and Modernists. Characterised by its often outrageous logic, urgent argumentation, querulous wit, and 'discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike', metaphysical poetry invariably elicits a criticism in kind: from Eliot and Empson, to Vickers, Fowler, Carey, and Ricks. Wide reading of such commentaries will aid students' analysis and evaluation of the poems in question, and even bring into serious question the validity of the term 'metaphysical poetry' itself.

MODULE TITLE	Byron and Keats
MODULE CODE	29602
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1 x 4,000-word essay
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 22332, 29639, 27046, 29538, 30678, 30670, 30688 or 29643.

Please note that this module has extremely limited availability, we would only recommend selecting this module if it is compulsory for your studies.

DESCRIPTION

This module offers students the chance to study in depth the character, writing, and afterlives of two major Romantic poets: George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824) and John Keats (1795-1821). At the heart of the module will be an attempt to get to grips with the two poets' literary careers and achievements: students will come into contact with some of the most flamboyant and affecting poetry in English – writing that is by turns tragic, witty, sensuous, passionate, and tough-minded. But lectures and seminars will also afford time to the poets' lives and letters, their engagement with the events and thinking of their period, and with other writers. Students will be invited to explore the antagonism between the two poets: to what extent did their consciousness of one another drive and colour their individual achievements? How far did surface hostility mask a deeper-lying sympathy and a sense of shared artistic endeavour? The course will close by examining the legacy of each poet's life and work by considering their importance to subsequent writers and the significance of their achievements for our understanding of Romanticism.

Works studied might include:

Byron: *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, *Beppo*, *Don Juan*, *Cain*, shorter poems.

Keats: *The Eve of St Agnes*, *Lamia*, *The Odes*, *The Fall of Hyperion*, shorter poems.

MODULE TITLE	American Frontiers: Nation and Identity in the Nineteenth Century
MODULE CODE	29639
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	4,000 word essay (100%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 22332, 29602, 27046, 29538, 30678, 30670, 30688 or 29643.

DESCRIPTION

The violent encounters and conflicts of the American frontier remain an enduring image of a nation in the process of self-definition. This volatile, unstable space reflects a country that, throughout the nineteenth century, continued to grapple with unresolved questions and anxieties about nationhood, national identity, and who was (and who was not) an 'American'. This module offers students the opportunity to interrogate these questions and anxieties, while exploring the idea that nineteenth-century American literature was itself self-consciously concerned with what an American might be.

We will approach this topic by considering the various different frontiers, thresholds and boundaries with which America contended and which shaped the nation throughout the century. Alongside the western frontier of popular imagination, we'll also think about America's oceanic frontier, the boundaries between the northern and southern states across which civil war played out, the domestic threshold, and the moment of transition into the twentieth century. We'll also approach these terms imaginatively, and explore America's engagement with literary boundaries, as it sought new generic and poetic forms to capture, shape, and give expression to an American voice. Finally, the individual's body itself becomes a threshold and site of conflict – defined, for instance, by its colour, its sex, or its tattoos.

America is a nation that has always reflected on its boundaries – points of definition that are yet porous and unstable. It is at these various thresholds, and in the encounters that took place across them, that we find various kinds of America emerge.

Writers, literature, and individuals to be studied might include: *The Last of the Mohicans*, Charles Brockden Brown, Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, Francis Parkman, Sarah Orne Jewett, Native American writing, captivity narratives, civil war poetry, African American fiction, American gothic, and *Olive Oatman*.

MODULE TITLE	PoMo Historical Fictions
MODULE CODE	27046
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	4,000 word essay (100%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 22332, 29602, 29639, 29538, 30678, 30670, 30688 or 29643.

Please note that this module has extremely limited availability, we would only recommend selecting this module if it is compulsory for your studies.

DESCRIPTION

History – what constitutes the past and the methods we use to explain that past – has always been a close relation of the novel. Both are concerned with telling believable stories and both rely on the power of narrative and the structure of language to convey truth. The genre of historical fiction, so prominent and popular during the early decades of the nineteenth century, was revived in the later years of the twentieth century by writers seeking to test the boundaries and hinterlands of historical subjects and stories to reflect on the difficulties of writing about the past. This revival was no longer interested in presenting the past – as the great German historian Leopold von Ranke described it – “as it actually happened”, but instead challenged the belief that ‘history’ describes a realm which can be accessed in the present in an unbiased and objective way. Rather, such works of postmodern historical fiction are strongly concerned with the idea that versions of the past are contingent on who is telling them, and are subject to the prejudices and partialities of the present. These are issues that are still being hotly debated in theory and criticism across disciplines today – many of the questions contemporary philosophers of history have concerning the nature of knowledge, epistemology and the increasing separation of “event” from “fact” share common ground with the suspicions that postmodernist fictions have for narrative, language and point of view.

PoMo Historical Fictions takes in a wide range of late twentieth century texts, films and theory to reflect on the uses made of historical tropes in postmodern fiction. It sets literary postmodernism in a wider debate about the nature of knowledge and epistemology and introduces students to the history of ideas and to historiography. Moreover, it highlights connections between disciplines, and promotes and encourages vibrant interdisciplinary assessed work.

MODULE TITLE	Guilty Pleasures: Reading the Historical Romance
MODULE CODE	29538
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1,000 word review (25%) 3,000 word essay (75%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 22332, 29602, 29639, 27046, 30678, 30670, 30688 or 29643.

Please note that this module has extremely limited availability, we would only recommend selecting this module if it is compulsory for your studies.

DESCRIPTION

Guilty Pleasures explores the phenomenon and development of the popular historical romance from the start of the twentieth century to the present day. Students will also examine the history of *reading* the romance, from the start of mass-market romance publishing in the 1920s to the recent phenomenon of literary blogging and fandom. Popular romance fiction today accounts for around 13% of the total adult fiction market (of which historical romance in particular has at least a 34% share), with annual sales of over \$1billion. Over 80% of the readers of romance fiction are women, and over 70% of them talk about and recommend the romance novels they are reading. Romance fiction is written largely by women, for women, about women protagonists and about women's experiences and fantasies. Yet it is a genre that is dismissed by the literary establishment as escapist, anti-feminist, and troubling in its romanticizing of male authority and sexual violence. As literary scholars (but perhaps also romance readers ourselves), are we simply to ignore the popular romance, or should we examine and attempt to understand its complicated yet persistent appeal for women readers over the changing contexts of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries? In this module students will read a range of historical 'romance' novels from the Regency romance, to the mid-late twentieth century 'bodice-ripper', to the more recent phenomenon of the hybrid historical fantasia or paranormal/time-travelling romance. Students will analyze the archetypal conventions, narrative structures, plot patterns and themes of the romance genre, exploring the commercial 'category' romance of *Mills & Boon* or *Harlequin*, and the bestsellers of acclaimed 'Queens' of romance such as Heyer and Holt, alongside and in dialogue with examples of the contemporary middlebrow (eg. Gregory), and what might be described as elite or 'literary' romance (eg. Fowles). Applying their literary critical skills to the romance genre, they will explore the formal characteristics, strategies and reworkings of the genre, examining for example the relationship between the concepts of 'history' and 'romance', and of 'authenticity' or verisimilitude and 'fantasy', as these are played out within the historical romance novel. They will also examine and engage with key feminist and postfeminist debates on the gendered status of the romance genre. The module will help students to set their exploration of the romance genre within the context of broader literary and

sociological issues such as the sexual/textual politics of the literary canon, the gendering of critical acclaim, and the disjunction of elite and popular reading practices, as well as questions such as how we define 'good' literature, and how we might negotiate reading critically *and* reading pleasurably at the same time.

Texts studied may vary slightly from year to year but may include: Baroness Orczy, *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (1903); Edith Maude Hull, *The Sheik* (1919); Georgette Heyer, *These Old Shades* (1926) and *Venetia* (1958); Daphne du Maurier, *Frenchman's Creek* (1941); Kathleen Winsor, *Forever Amber* (1944); Victoria Holt, *The Shivering Sands* (1969); John Fowles, *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969); Diana Gabaldon, *Outlander* [Books 1-3: *Outlander*; *Dragonfly in Amber*, *Voyager*, 1991-1993]; Philippa Carr, *The Other Boleyn Girl* (2001).

MODULE TITLE	Neo-Victorianism
MODULE CODE	30678
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1,500 word essay (35%) 2,500 word essay (65%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 22332, 29602, 29639, 27046, 29538, 30670, 30688 or 29643.

DESCRIPTION

This module offers students the opportunity to engage with and think critically about Neo-Victorianism – depictions of the Victorian era in the twentieth century and beyond – and its cultural outputs and offshoots. Encompassing a variety of forms (which may include novels, short stories, plays, films, comics and graphic novels), and genres (which may include the ghost story, detective fiction, and steampunk), this course seeks to introduce students to a range of ways in which the Victorian past has been imagined and re-imagined. Texts might include Patrick Hamilton’s play *Gas Light* (1938), John Fowles’s novel *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* (1969), Susan Hill’s novel *The Woman in Black* (1983), and Guillermo del Toro’s film *Crimson Peak* (2015).

This module will be organised around 10 distinct focuses in terms of subject matter or theme: each week will comprise a 1-hour lecture and a 2-hour seminar on this subject matter. For each week, at least one text (or other cultural product) will be compulsory, and this will be accompanied by at least once piece of set reading. This diversity will allow students to familiarise themselves with and critically respond to depictions of the Victorian world in myriad forms, as well as establishing particular features of individual works upon which they can focus in developing their unique ideas for assignments.

MODULE TITLE	Alternative Facts: Genre, Historicism, and the Fantasy of Other Pasts
MODULE CODE	30670
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1,500 word alternate history exercise (25%) 3,500 word critical essay (75%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 22332, 29602, 29639, 27046, 29538, 30678, 30688 or 29643.

DESCRIPTION

Alternate history closely resembles what historians refer to as **counterfactual history** – the writing of events which did not take place in order to understand those which did. What if Hitler had won? If Kennedy had escaped assassination? If Waterloo had been won by a magician? This module treats its source texts not just as part of the canon of fantasy/SF writings but as invitations to explore the ways we use history in the study of English Literature. Should the literary critic be beholden to the established documentary record, or are there alternative facts to which we have recourse? To probe the workings of science fiction, authorship, and English Studies itself, we're going to try reading – and writing – a range of alternative pasts: we'll discuss what's at stake in them, find ways of theorising our relationship with them, and try to understand the perennial appeal, to scholars and general readers, of the road not taken.

Assessment – A Quick Explanation: 75% of the credit for this module is earned from a 'regular' essay submitted after the end of the course. The other 25% is for a shorter 'alternate history exercise' in which you will come up with your own alternate history scenario and write about it. This is **not** a creative writing exercise and will be marked with that in mind; it's your thinking about what you've come up with, and not the scenario itself, which will be graded. We will do a trial run of this as a group and there will be plenty of class discussion to help you prepare. In short: do not panic about this aspect of the assessment!

Reading: The reading list includes Susanna Clarke's *Jonathan Strange and Mr Norrell*. Examples of other alternate history texts: Robert Harris, *Fatherland*; Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*; William Gibson and Bruce Sterling, *The Difference Engine*; Italo Calvino, *Cosmicomics*; Ted Chiang's short fiction; Jo Walton, *Farthing*; Natasha Pulley, *The Watchmaker of Filigree Street*; Catherynne M. Valente, *Radiance*; Nisi Shawl, *Everfair*; Diana Wynne Jones, *Charmed Life*; and Sarah Perry, *The Essex Serpent*. Note that we will not study as many texts as I have listed here and that no one of them (save the Clarke) is guaranteed to appear!

Content Advice: This module deals – often implicitly and occasionally explicitly – with traumatic incidents from history, including (but not limited to) slavery and the holocaust.

MODULE TITLE	The End of Life As We Know It: The Implications of Digital Technology
MODULE CODE	30688
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1 x 1,000 word analysis of a digital technology (25%) and 1 x 3,000 word essay (75%)
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside modules 22332, 29602, 29639, 27046, 29538, 30678, 30670 or 29643.

Please note that this module has extremely limited availability, we would only recommend selecting this module if it is compulsory for your studies.

DESCRIPTION

Digital Cultures will give students the opportunity to explore the artefacts, effects, and politics of our increasingly digital moment. Each week will focus on a specific technology (e.g. social media, mobile phones, digital currencies, videogames, virtual reality, or search engines) and explore its current and projected impacts, its context of use, and its place in a history of technological development. The module will also investigate the connection between these phenomena and their artistic representations in books, films, television shows, and/or videogames. What role does artwork and discussion in the humanities play in the development, dissemination, and criticism of these new forces in our lives? And what wide-reaching influences might these technologies have as they are ever-increasingly adopted?

Texts on the module may include:

- The Social Network
- Jennifer Egan, Waiting for the Goon Squad
- Snowden
- Donna Haraway, Staying With the Trouble
- Deus Ex
- Bruno Latour, Reassembling the Social
- WestWorld

MODULE TITLE	From Plato to the Postmodern: Theories of Literature and Art
MODULE CODE	29643
CREDIT VALUE	20
ASSESSMENT METHOD	1 x 4,000 word essay
TEACHING METHOD	TBC
SEMESTER	2

Please note: this module is only available to students who are able to demonstrate a comprehensive background in studying English Literature.

Students are unable to take this module alongside 22332, 29602, 29639, 27046, 29538, 30678, 30670 or 30688.

Please note that this module has extremely limited availability, we would only recommend selecting this module if it is compulsory for your studies.

DESCRIPTION

The module provides an account of the development of theories of literature and art from the classical period to the modern day. It will consider the range, type and purpose of conceptual approaches to the arts, and examine how those theories have been applied to specific works. The course will also reflect on the social and cultural background of the selected theories, and will examine the relationship between writings on aesthetics from different eras (such as in the reconfiguration of romantic ideology in some theories of the postmodern).

Texts to be studied may include: Plato, *The Republic*, Aristotle, *Poetics*, Sidney, 'The Defence of Poesy', Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*, Burke, *On the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, Wordsworth, *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*, Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*, Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, Nietzsche, *Birth of Tragedy*, Leavis, *The Great Tradition*, Cixous, 'Laugh of the Medusa', Johnson, *Critical Difference*, Jameson, *Postmodernism*, and Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*.