

**“To Be or Not to Be”:
Becoming and Unbecoming from Shakespeare to Wilde**
Fall 2013

Professor: Edward Kozaczka
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Days: TBA

Room: TBA
Time: TBA



Course Description

This course looks to literature to trace the inception and development of the modern self from 1600 to 1900. We will learn how selfhood was defined in various ways, paying close attention to why and how these definitions shifted over the course of 300 years. We will historicize terms such as the “conscious” and the “unconscious,” considering how they relate to embodiment while keeping a focus on how literature facilitates processes of remembering and forgetting, embodying and disembodying, becoming and unbecoming. How does literature produce—and implement—criteria for selfhood, and how do these assessments form a “normative” self that defines itself against—and oppresses—marginal forms of being and knowing? Which articulations of selfhood remained—and remain—on the periphery, and which have we forgotten entirely? What do we do when the models of selfhood that we have inherited foreclose certain modes of experience, and how can a refusal to be—or an insistence on unraveling and unbecoming—shift the paradigms of modern ontologies and reclaim alternative logics of self and experience? To answer these questions, we will turn to various genres including drama, lyric poetry, film, art, and the novel. To inform our readings of the literature—by Shakespeare, Donne, Barker, Behn, Defoe, Swift, Lewis, Austen, Marquis de Sade, and Wilde—we will turn to philosophical works by Hobbes, Locke, Hume, and Kant as well as to periodical essays, ballads, and historical tracts. To contextualize our readings, each week students will present oral reports on topics that relate to that week’s themes. Some examples of report topics are: the shift from feudalism to capitalism, The Scientific Revolution, theories of intuition, Gothic art, and the novel’s relationship to individualism. The point of these reports is to place our texts in a variety of contexts: history, nationalism, religion, adaptation, science, and aesthetic theory.

Course Requirements

You must satisfactorily complete the following:

- One seminar paper (10-15 pages)
- One 20-minute oral report
- Weekly blog entries (approx. 200-300 words in length)
- Regular attendance and active participation in class discussions and workshop activities
- Comprehensive final examination

Required Texts and Materials

- Austen, Jane. *Persuasion*. New York: Oxford, 2008
- Barker, Jane. *The Galesia Trilogy*. Ed. Carol Shiner Wilson. New York: Oxford, 1997.
- Blake, William. *The Complete Poetry and Prose*. New York: Anchor Books, 1988.
- Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*. New York: Penguin, 2001.
- Donne, John. *The Complete Poetry and Selected Prose*. New York: The Modern Library, 2001.
- Lewis, Gregory. *The Monk*. Peterborough: Broadview, 2003.
- Marquis de Sade. *Justine*. New York: Oxford, 2013.
- Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. New York: Penguin, 2001.
- Swift, Jonathan. *The Writings of Jonathan Swift*. New York: Norton, 1973.
- Wilde, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Mineola, NY: Dover, 1993.
- Access to the *Oxford English Dictionary*

Course Blog

You are expected to make weekly contributions to the course blog. Some weeks I will post a question for you to reflect on, other weeks I will post a passage and ask you to “close read” it, and occasionally I will ask you to free-write on one of your readings. Posts should be between 200 and 300 words. You are allowed to skip one week of blogging, and I suggest you use your skip strategically (i.e., use it during midterms week). In addition to writing a 200-300-word entry, feel free to post relevant (and appropriate) pictures, videos, links, etc. This is YOUR blog, so have fun with it.

Feedback on Essays

My primary objective in the course is to see significant development in your writing and critical approach to literature. Therefore, your improvement and consistent diligence will be important factors in determining your final grade. Typically, I will respond briefly to an early draft of your writing, or set up a conference with you to discuss your work. At midterm, you will submit a draft of your seminar paper, and I will carefully respond to it, noting what you have done well and possible strategies for improvement. You will then have the rest of the semester to revise.

Grade Breakdown

Class Participation	10%
Oral Report	20%
Weekly Blog	15%
Seminar Paper	35%
Final Exam	20%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Assignments DUE	Class Meetings	Topics	Readings DUE	Oral Reports
1			Early Modern Models of Selfhood	Shakespeare: <i>Hamlet</i> , Act I	
2			Soliloquy	Shakespeare: <i>Hamlet</i> , Acts II-V	Soliloquy and Selfhood
3			Religion and Self-Effacement	Donne: "The Good-Morrow," "The Extasie," "Selfe Love," "I am a little world made cunningly," "Batter my heart, three-person'd God"	Masochism & Religion
4			Lyric Poetry Experimental Novels	Barker: <i>Love Intrigues</i> and selected poems	Glorious Revolution & Jacobite Identity
5			Nationalism, Colonialism, Empire	Defoe: <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> Locke: excerpts from <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i>	The Novel and Individualism
6			Satirist as Moralist Irony	Swift: <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> , Books 1 and 2 Excerpts from <i>The Spectator</i>	First British Empire
7			Production of Knowledge Empiricism	Swift: <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> , Books 3 and 4 Hume: excerpts from <i>A Treatise of Human Nature</i>	The Scientific Revolution

8			Masochism and Unraveling the Self	Marquis de Sade: <i>Justine</i>	The French Revolution
9	Draft of Seminar Paper Due		Poetry and Unbecoming	Blake: <i>Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Songs of Innocence and Experience</i>	Theories of Intuition
10			The Gothic Novel Grotesque Subjects	Lewis: <i>The Monk</i> (first half)	Gothic Art
11			Affect & Identity Supernatural	Lewis: <i>The Monk</i> (second half)	The Supernatural Eighteenth Century
12			Body Memory	Austen: <i>Persuasion</i>	Anticipating Proust
13			Screening the Self	FILM: <i>Persuasion</i> Kant: excerpts from <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i>	Kantian Faculties and Kant's Notion of the Genius
14			Narcissism Intertextuality & Mutual Embodiment	Wilde: <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i>	Allusion in <i>Dorian Gray</i> (Plato and Shakespeare)
15			Final Exam Review		
	Seminar Paper Due		Final Exam: TBA		

COURSE POLICIES

Essay Submissions

All essays must be submitted TWO ways:

1. **DURING:** You must turn in a hard copy of your essay with all prewriting/drafts attached using a paper clip. The essay and the prewriting materials must be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date.
2. **AFTER:** You must e-mail me a copy of your essay by 11:59pm on the due date—
edward.kozaczka@gmail.com

Attendance Requirements

It matters that you come to class on time, every day. If you are repeatedly late, it will hurt your participation grade. Since we only meet once a week, you are only allowed to miss one class without penalty. If you miss two classes, you will earn a zero for participation (10% of your final course grade). You cannot pass the course if you miss more than two classes. Typically, excessive tardiness, early departure, or lack of preparation will result in your being marked absent. If you know you will be absent, ask me if you can arrange to turn in work in advance. If you experience a crisis that prevents you from completing your work, speak to me about it, or ask an appropriate campus official to document your crisis situation. You would be wise to “bank” your free absence for everyday illnesses or other events (failed alarm clocks, transportation problem, trips out of town, etc.).

Deadline Extensions

To pass the course, you must turn in all major assignments. You may not turn in late homework assignments, but you may arrange to turn them in advance of your absence. If you anticipate needing a deadline extension for a formal assignment, you may request one *a week in advance of due dates*. I have the right to deny deadline extensions, and/or implement appropriate penalties when you turn in late work.

Classroom Participation

I expect you to be in every class, on time, fully prepared. Invest yourself in readings and discussions—doing so will pay off in your writing. You should make an effort to add your voice to discussions during *every* class.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

This is straightforward: any violation of the Academic Honesty Code constitutes plagiarism, which can result in failure of the course or suspension from the University.

Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible.

Staying in Touch

I'm always here to help, so please contact me if you have questions, concerns, or difficulties. Check e-mail daily so I can stay in touch with you, too.