Radios, gramophones, films, telegrams, propaganda—the emergence of new media in the twentieth century had an unmistakable effect on British culture and history. Unsurprisingly, then, it shaped a great deal of what we call "modernist" writing of the late 19th to-mid 20th century, including texts we hardly think of as technologically driven. This seminar will explore the relationship between literature and media, addressing relevant subcategories of literary theory (media studies, cultural studies, postcolonialism, materialism). This will include a reading of *Midnight's Children*, Salman Rushdie's magisterial magical-realist rendering of post-partition India. We may give some attention also to the burgeoning field of "digital humanities" as the latest development in media studies.

**Required Texts for Purchase:** *These editions are strongly preferred.*

- Alfred Hitchcock (dir.), *Sabotage* (watch online at [http://tinyurl.com/amazon-sabotage](http://tinyurl.com/amazon-sabotage))

Please make sure you have a current MLA handbook.

Please check your Islander email daily. If you'd rather use a different email address, be sure to set up automatic forwarding on your Islander account ([https://distance-education.tamucc.edu/assets/forwarding_email.pdf](https://distance-education.tamucc.edu/assets/forwarding_email.pdf)).

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

- To analyze literature at a graduate level.
- To evaluate modern Anglophone literary texts in light of their historical, cultural, and media contexts.
- To acquire facility with media studies and critical theory, thereby engaging in current scholarly debates.
- To draw connections between literature and other art forms.

**Graduate Studies Standards (adapted from the English M.A. Handbook):** Bona fide graduate-school behavior is distinguished in at least four ways:

- Students read weekly assignments on time, completely, to the last page, and they come to the seminar with serious responses and a willingness to discuss.
- Students do not assume that an assignment is legitimate only if it will be tested. The work is done for its own sake.
- Students expect that they will attend 100% of the time, and make home arrangements that this will happen. They don't assume that there are a certain number of allowable "skips."
- Students assume that open and equitable discussion is the soul of a graduate seminar. Everybody participates. Rather than putting the burden on the professor or other students to originate or maintain discussion, students take on the responsibility to keep some seminar members from dominating, and to contribute their share.

**Coursework:**

N.B. All written assignments must be completed to pass the course. *Incomplete will not be given* except in a severe, ongoing, documented emergency, cleared with the Department Chair or the Director of Graduate Studies.

**Seminar Paper (35%):** 12-15 pages ≈ 3500-4500 words, double-spaced, *MLA format*, plus endnotes and Works Cited. A well-researched, well-written essay in which you identify a specific problem in relation to your text(s), develop an argument through rigorous historical/theoretical thinking and close reading, and explain the critical stakes of your thesis. While the paper itself should be 12-15 pages, *there is no limit on endnotes; use them to identify critical background that may not fit in the body of the essay, but that demonstrates a depth of reading to buttress your analysis.*
"Statement of Hope" (Paper Proposal), with Annotated Bibliography (10%). To set up the final paper, I will ask for a paper proposal (1000+ words) proposing a paper topic: explain what problem you want to investigate and what critical intervention or claim you might make. It doesn't need to be fully figured out at this point, but it should be narrow enough to be researachable. In addition, you'll attach an annotated bibliography, listing ≥ 4 sources (from beyond the syllabus) with a brief note (3-4 sentences each) about what each one might offer your research. (Your actual seminar paper should include more than four sources, but come up with at least four for this assignment.)

Oral Book Report and Written Book Review (25%): In pairs you will give a 10-minute oral report (time limit is firm) on a scholarly book or article relevant to the text under discussion. These books will be placed on course reserve in the library. Your task for the oral report is to offer an overview of the book's major arguments, implications, and critical stakes. You needn't lead us through chapter by chapter of everything it says; rather, give us a sense of the book's major problem(s) and interventions. This is not the place to argue or take issue with the book—that can (and should) come in the written book review—but to elaborate its claims.

Within two weeks of the oral report, each of the presenters will individually write a book review (~1500 words), accounting for the book's major claims and evaluating their persuasiveness. You should aspire to professional standards of critical incisiveness and clarity. We'll look over a review or two together in class to see some strategies for writing and organizing them. I encourage you also to read around in relevant journals (e.g. Modernism/Modernity; Journal of Modern Literature, Modern Drama, MLQ), to get a sense of what reviews consist of and how they're put together—but I don't encourage you to read other reviews of your book. Approach it with a fresh eye.

Lesson Plan (15%): Discussions of teaching are central to our intellectual work. Each seminarian will produce a lesson plan for a primary text from our syllabus. How would you teach this text to an undergraduate or high school class? What would be your guiding concepts, themes, or questions, and how would you implement them? Even if teaching modernism isn't your life goal (poor sap!), teaching a text contributes vitally to one's understanding of it. Each lesson plan should run roughly 1200 words (in outline form or in prose—up to you), and should include:

(a) A definition of audience and logistics, e.g. "a college class on modern poetry; we would spend three hour-long class sessions on The Waste Land." Or whatever.

(b) An explanation of objectives for the class; what you want them to take away from the unit. This may include understanding of the specific text at hand, broader historical/theoretical/conceptual topics (e.g. "What is modernism," "how did literature change post-WWII," "What is postcolonialism," etc.), and/or more "skills-based" components (e.g. a particular skill of close reading).

(c) A broad outline of the larger unit, and an elaboration of one specific lesson. For example, if you're spending three sessions on The Waste Land, identify broadly what each of those three sessions would do, and then flesh out your specific plan for one of them. E.g. "On the first day, I would have them explain the poem's narrative by doing such-and-such. On Day 2, which I elaborate below, we'd "close-read" "Game of Chess" so as to accomplish [yada-yada]. The final session would be spent studying critical responses to the poem so as to accomplish [blah-de-blah]." Then spend the bulk of the assignment explaining Day 2.

(d) A breakdown of how you would use your time (defined in [a]). Include any background information, discussion questions, or in-class exercises you would use to guide the class. A lesson plan often has "detachable parts" that you might not use, but that you could have available if they suit the flow of the class.

Post this lesson plan to Blackboard within two weeks of our last discussion of the text (e.g. a lesson plan on Dracula should be posted by Feb. 20). Others will be invited to respond online with suggestions, adaptations, etc. You have your choice of any text and any topic. If you would like to attach additional documents (e.g. a group-work exercise), you may, but the main document should explain what you're doing and why.

Participation (15%): If you are not ready to argue, write, converse, and "close read" specific passages, then you are not prepared for class. It is incumbent on every member of the seminar to make her- or himself heard, and to let others be heard as well. I may occasionally require brief postings to our Blackboard forum, to prepare or extend our class discussions. These postings are required unless otherwise specified. Please see the attendance policy below (p.3).

*** Note on Readings: Readings listed as "recommended" consist of theoretical or historical context that will deepen your understanding of the issues under discussion. I urge you to read as many of these as you can. They will help not only in this class, but down the line, particularly when writing an exam in British or American literature (which will expect considerable depth and breadth of knowledge in the field).
Policies:

Respect and Anti-Discrimination. Be nice. Express disagreements respectfully, and take others' disagreements in good faith. Respect the diversity of the classroom. Personal attacks or hate speech on any grounds, including (but not limited to) race, gender, class, sexual/affectional orientation, religion, age, or disability, are unacceptable in this class.

Open Door Policy: You are welcome and encouraged to contact me at any time to discuss course material, ideas for assignments, paper drafts, etc. Email is usually the best way to get in touch with me quickly. Whenever possible, ask for help in advance, rather than after the fact, so that I can do my part to help.

Attendance: Barring a severe emergency, documented with the Division of Student Engagement and Success (studentaffairs.tamucc.edu), absence from more than one class session will result in a total loss of participation credit. Please do not take this to mean that you have a "free absence." Your attendance at every seminar is fully expected.

Late Work: Extension requests will be granted if—and only if—requested at least 48 hours in advance of the deadline. Email me with a proposed alternate due date; once that due date is agreed upon, it is final, and I will hold you to it. Unexcused late work will not be accepted without an extension granted in advance. Exceptions will be made only for emergencies documented with the Student Engagement and Success.

Academic Misconduct: English graduate students are expected to "conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty" (TAMUCC Graduate Catalog). Academic Misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, multiple submissions, complicity, fabrication, falsification, and misrepresentation, in addition to "any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion" (Student Code of Conduct, Article III.1, Academic Misconduct). Any incident of academic misconduct in this class will result in an automatic F for the course, and will be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs with my recommendation for formal disciplinary action. Be aware that "accidental" plagiarism is still plagiarism and ignorance of the rules is not an excuse. If you are in doubt about what you're doing, it is your responsibility to speak with me before submitting the assignment.

You are permitted to solicit coursework advice from fellow seminarists, within reason (e.g. you can't actually write each other's papers, but editing/peer-reviewing is ok). Include a brief acknowledgment at the end of your paper, e.g. "Thanks to Mike Jones for his revision suggestions"; this is both good manners and standard scholarly practice.

Grade Appeals: As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at <http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm>. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact Student Engagement and Success.

Veterans/Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom, or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance.

Academic Advising: Upon entering the MA Program in English, each student is assigned a faculty mentor by the Graduate Coordinator. You should meet with your faculty mentor every semester to develop a degree plan and monitor your progress toward graduation. Your faculty mentor can also answer questions and provide information about the comprehensive examination, other degree requirements, Ph.D. programs, and career opportunities. To finalize your degree plan and register for graduation, you must also meet with the Graduate Student Academic Advisor in the Academic Advising Center for the College of Liberal Arts (Driftwood 203E; 361.825.3466).
Schedule:

Readings marked (x) will be made available on Blackboard. Bring required readings with you to each class.

Wed., Jan. 23
Introductions. What are media? In class: excerpts from Raymond Williams and Marshall McLuhan.
Recommended: Tony Bennett (no, not the singer), "Theories of the Media, Theories of Society" (x)

Wed., Jan. 30
Bram Stoker, Dracula. Read as much as possible, but at least the first half (pp.5-190)

Wed., Feb. 6
Finish Dracula.
Jennifer Wicke, "Vampiric Typewriting" (x).
Book Report: Friedrich Kittler, "Dracula's Legacy," "Gramophone, Film, Typewriter" (x)

Wed., Feb. 13
Henry James, In the Cage (x); "On In the Cage" (x)
Look at a book review (TBA) as a class.
Recommended: C. Marvin, from When Old Technologies Were New (x); J.C. Rowe, "Gender, Sexuality, and Work in In the Cage" (x)
Book Report: Mark Goble, Beautiful Circuits

Wed., Feb. 20
Conrad, The Secret Agent (all).
Recommended: S. Chatman, "Ironic Perspective: Conrad's Secret Agent" (x)

Wed., Feb. 27
Conrad, cont.
Hitchcock, Sabotage (watch online before class; http://tinyurl.com/amazon-sabotage).

Wed., Mar. 6
T.E. Hulme, "Romanticism and Classicism" (x)
Recommended: Brooks and Armstrong essays in the Norton volume (185-210, 275-80); M. Levenson, excerpt from The Genealogy of Modernism (x)
Book Report: Lawrence Rainey, Revisiting The Waste Land

Spring Break

Wed., Mar. 20
Virginia Woolf, Between the Acts (all)
Book Review: Jed Esty, A Shrinking Island

Wed., Mar. 27
Ezra Pound, The Pisan Cantos. Observe the notes at the back of the book, but don't get buried in them. The music played in Canto 75 can be heard here: http://tinyurl.com/JanequinOiseaux
--- "A Few Dos and Don'ts," "Retrospect" (s).
Recommended: Guidebooks on The Cantos by George Kearns, William Cookson (on reserve). (The Wikipedia entry on Pound's Cantos falls in the "not as bad as expected" category.)
Recommended: Ronald Bush, "Art Versus the Descent of the Iconoclasts" (x)
Book Review: Chris Bush, Ideographic Modernism

Friday, March 29: "Statement of Hope" and Annotated Bibliography due, via email.
Wed., Apr. 3 (The Cruelest Month)
Pound, cont.
F.T. Marinetti, *Radia, The Futurist Manifesto* (x)
Book Review: Marjorie Perloff, *The Futurist Moment*
Book Review: Tim Campbell, *Wireless Writing in the Age of Marconi*

Wed., Apr. 10
Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (Book One)

Wed., Apr. 17
Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (Book Two)

Wed., Apr. 24
Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (Book Three)
Read *either* Aaron Worth, "All India Becoming Tranquil: Wiring the Raj" *or* Deepa Chordia, "Taking on the Tone of a Bombay Talkie" (both linked online)
Book Review: Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*

Wed., May 1 ("It is the month of May... for me..."
Beckett, *Krapp’s Last Tape*, Cascando, Film, Quad (read and watch/listen online).
Book Review: Michael North, *Machine-Age Comedy*

Seminar Paper Due Date TBA.