

**Undergraduate Course Description Packet**  
**January Intersession 2021**  
**Updated:10/22/21**

**ENGL 3283-002 Topics in Popular Culture and Popular Genres**  
**ENGL 4933-006 Studies in Popular Culture and Popular Genres**  
**Topic: “The Films of the Coen Brothers”**

**Teacher:** M. K. Booker

**Textbooks Required:** Digital textbook will be supplied free of charge.

None.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this course will be to provide a cultural history of the films of Joel and Ethan Coen, from *Blood Simple* (1984) through *The Ballad of Buster Scruggs* (2018). We will pay special attention to the engagement of the Coens’ with alternate reality versions of various American settings, as well as their engagement with their cultural predecessors in film and other media.

**Papers:** Due to the nature of intersession courses, no formal essay will be required. All students will be required to submit brief writing assignments on a daily basis throughout the duration of the class.

**Exams:** A final exam will be given.

**ENGL 4853, Studies in African American Literature and Culture: *Octavia’s Brood: Octavia Butler and the Afro Futurist Aesthetic***

**Teacher: C. Bailey**

**Textbooks Required:**

Butler, Octavia. *Wildseed*. ISBN 978-0446676977

Butler, Octavia. *Kindred*. ISBN 978-0807083697

Butler, Octavia. *Bloodchild*. ISBN 978-1583226988

Due, Tananarive. *The Between*. ISBN 978-0060927264

Womack, Ytasha. *Afrofuturism*. ISBN 978-1613747964

**Description:** Octavia Butler has often been called the “grand dame” of science fiction and with this in mind, this course seeks to explore some of her most critically acclaimed and most popular novels. In addition to unearthing the importance of Butler’s contributions to science fiction, African American literature, and modern American literature more generally, the course will explore some of the major characteristics of the Afrofuturist movement and its influence on literature, music, fashion, and art. The course will introduce students to contemporary black women writers whose works have been influenced by Butler’s oeuvre. Other texts that will be explored include films in the horror noir genre, a genre strongly influenced by Afrofuturism. We’ll watch Janelle Monae’s visual album *Dirty Computer*, select episodes of HBO’s *Lovecraft Country*, and listen to several podcasts related to Afrofuturism to show how pervasive the movement has become in popular culture.

**Requirements:** one multimodal presentation, daily response papers, final exam