

ENGL 39003, Special Topics: Meaningful Mundanity in American Prison and Reentry Films

Teacher: L. Sparks

PLEASE NOTE: The reading and viewing materials for this course may cover a number of difficult topics, including different forms of abuse, other forms of violence, self-harm, substance use disorders, mental health struggles, and parent-child separation.

Reading Materials Required:

Assigned readings will be primarily made up of articles or book chapters, available to class members through links in Blackboard. The primary textbook will be Dawn K. Cecil's *Prison Life in Popular Culture: From The Big House to Orange Is the New Black* (available through the "Library Resources" link in our course's Blackboard, at the top of the Content page.)

Possible Films to Be Viewed in Class (in full or in part) or Assigned to be Watched Outside of Class (final list TBD):

Apart (documentary film)
Beyond the Wall (documentary film)
The Farm: Angola, USA (documentary film)
Jacinta (documentary film)
Life after Lockup (documentary film)
Mothers of Bedford (documentary film)
O.G. (dramatic film)
Orange Is the New Black (select episodes from dramatic series)
Oz (select episodes from dramatic series)
Rectify (select episodes from dramatic series)
Shawshank Redemption (dramatic film)
Sing Sing (dramatic film based on a true story)
Tre Maison Dasan (documentary film)
The Unforgivable (dramatic film)

In addition, students will be asked to view a number of short videos available online through *The New York Times* website (nytimes.com) and PBS.org.

Description: The main goal of the course is to encourage analysis and evaluation of the strategies being applied in popular culture (specifically, documentaries, dramatic movies, and news clips) that engage, inform, or otherwise influence the public—especially those with no direct experience of being imprisoned—regarding a range of issues related to incarceration practices and imprisoned or reentering individuals in the U.S. The main question guiding course discussion will be “How effectively does film communicate the severe and complex barriers being faced on a daily basis by U.S. prisoners and returning citizens?”

Essays, exams, and other major requirements: Students will regularly submit short responses that focus on the films and readings assigned for the course. There will be a final exam.

ENGL 5173 Medieval Romance Workshop

Teacher: M. Long

Textbooks Required:

[all texts provided online]

May Intersession, MTWRFS 1:00-4:20

This course is open to all graduate students: MFA, MA, and PhD, of any discipline. Each day we will read, discuss, and debrief a lesser-known late-medieval romance, usually in Middle English but sometimes in modern translation. Significant studio time is built into each day for students to develop their portfolios with guidance from me. These may include lesson plans; translations; fiction/poetry/dramatic/visual treatment; or a bibliography & research proposal. Each day, we will also lightly workshop these daily projects. At the end, you'll have mastered an important genre of late-medieval literature, and you'll also have developed a portfolio of several compelling projects to draw from for your own teaching, research, or creative endeavors.

We're reading only my favorite texts. Most likely at time of writing:
selection of *lais* from Marie de France;

Sir Launfal;

Sir Orfeo;

Amis and Amiloun;

Sir Gowther;

Silence;

N-Town: Betrothal and Nativity

King of Tars

Essays, exams, and other major requirements for graduate students: daily class participation; daily in-class additions to your portfolio; final portfolio due at end of course

MA advisory codes:

Generalist A: satisfies Medieval Literature and Culture requirement.

Specialist 4: satisfies Gender and Sexuality requirement.

Specialist 5: satisfies Medieval Literature requirement.