

(Spring 2017)

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Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30-3:30pm,  
Thursday 2:30-4pm, and by appointment

## The New Southern Studies

(ENGL686-01) THURSDAY 4PM-6:45PM IN HUM220



It all started when Houston Baker Jr. and Dana Nelson called for a “new southern studies” in a special issue of the journal *American Literature* published 2001—or so the story goes. Not surprisingly, it’s actually more complicated than that. Nonetheless, the study of southern literature and culture has changed dramatically in the last fifteen years. The “old” southern studies was wedded to a vision of southern culture inherited from the Southern Agrarians and New Critics like Allen Tate and Cleanth Brooks. Their (markedly white, straight, male) South was defined by the burdens of defeat, memory, time, and history. In contrast, the New Southern Studies is skeptical of, even hostile to, such constructions of southern culture. It seeks to replace outdated ideas of southern melancholy with anti-exceptionalist and anti-essentialist critical frameworks. In place of the monolithic South of old, the New Southern Studies has surveyed a proliferation of micro-“Souths”: Native Souths, Queer Souths, Latin@ Souths, Poor Souths, Urban Souths, Global Souths, Neoliberal Souths, Undead Souths, Hollywood Souths, and many, many other Souths. This course will track the sea changes in southern cultural studies that have occurred since 2001 and examine a range of texts that question, deconstruct, or redefine what it means to be “southern.”

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<sup>1</sup> Photograph by Ruddy Roye (<http://time.com/ruddy-roye-instagram/>).

Students can expect to:

- Acquire a broad familiarity southern literature and culture
- refine their abilities to analyze literature, both in reading and writing
- learn the basics of graduate-level research in the discipline of English
- gain a basic understanding of the range of archival resources and incorporate secondary sources into an argument of their own
- become familiar with theoretical approaches to literature and cultural studies across the curriculum.

Please be aware that some of the texts we'll be discussing this semester may feature graphic depictions of violence, sexuality, nudity, racism, and foul/offensive language. If you find reading and discussing such content objectionable, then you should probably take another course.

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## Readings

### Textbooks at the Bookstore

- Scott Romine & Jennifer Rae Greeson *Key Words for Southern Studies* (“*Keywords*” on the reading schedule) (978-0820349626)
- Jesamyn Ward *Men We Reaped* (978-1608197651)
- T. Geronimo Johnson *Welcome to Braggsville* (978-0062302137)
- Jeff Vandermeer *Annihilation* (978-0374104092)
- Colson Whitehead *The Underground Railroad* (978-1524736309)
- Arli Russel Hochschild *Strangers in Their Own Land* (978-1620972250)
- Robert Gipe *Trampoline* (978-0821421536)
- Monique Truong *Bitter in the Mouth* (978-0812981322)
- Kiese Laymon *Long Division* (978-1932841725)

### Films/Videos

- *Atlanta* (entire first season) (available for purchase on Amazon, YouTube, and iTunes)
- *Southern Comfort* (Free on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH0L3wIV0hg>)

### Readings Posted on Blackboard

- Houston Baker and Dana Nelson “Preface: Violence, the Body, and ‘The South.’” *American Literature* 73.2: (2001): 231-244.
- Michael Kreyling excerpt from *Inventing Southern Literature*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998.
- Barbara Ladd “Literary Studies: The Southern United States, 2005.” *PMLA* 120.5 (2005): 1628-1639.
- Barbara Ladd “Reply,” “Forum: The State of United States Southern Literary Studies.” *PMLA* 121.2 (2006): 550-552.
- Jon Smith “Letter to the Editor,” “Forum: The State of United States Southern Literary Studies.” *PMLA* 121.2 (2006): 549-50.
- Kathryn McKee and Annette Trefzer et al “The U.S. South in Global Contexts” *American Literature* 78.4 (2006): 691-244.

- Leigh Anne Duck “Southern Nonidentity.” *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies* 9.3 (2008): 319-330.
- Michael Bibler et al. “Adjust Your Maps: Manifestos from, for, and about United States Southern Studies.” *PMLA*. 131.1 (January 2016): 153-196.
- Monica Miller excerpt from *Being Ugly: Southern Women Writers and Social Rebellion* Forthcoming from Louisiana State University Press, May 2017.
- Zachary Vernon “Toward a Post-Appalachian Sense of Place.” *Journal of American Studies* 50.3 (2016): 639-658.
- Scott Herring excerpt from *Another Country: Queer Anti-Urbanism*. New York: New York University Press, 2010.

**Recommended Books**

- Gregory Colon Semenza *Graduate Study for the Twenty-First Century: How to Build an Academic Career in the Humanities* (978-023003333)

Grades

**Distribution**

- 20% Participation (in class/on Facebook/attending events)
- 10% Presentation
- 70% Research Project:
  - 10% Annotated Bibliography
  - 10% Close Readings
  - 10% Conference Length Paper
  - 40% Article Length Research Paper

**Scale**

A plus and minus grading system will be used in accordance with College policy:

- A + (100% - 97%)
- A (96.9% - 93%)
- A - (92.9% - 90%)
- B + (89.9% - 87%)
- B (86.9% - 83%)
- B - (82.9% - 80%)
- C + (79.9% - 77%)
- C (76.9% - 73%)
- C - (72.9% - 70%)
- D + (69.9% - 67%)
- D (66.9% - 63%)
- D - (62.9% - 60%)
- F (below 60%)

Assignments

Save all graded assignments until your course grade has officially been entered with the registrar.

**Participation:** Please note that participation makes up a significant portion of your course grade. Course instruction requires your attention and active engagement, not only your presence. If you want to earn a high participation grade, then you should come prepared to every class—that means bringing appropriate note taking materials and the texts we’ll be discussing that day—and contribute to class discussion by posing and answering questions, sharing observations and ideas, and proposing arguments. In short, you should talk regularly and relevantly. Laptops, tablets, and cellphones are not allowed in class.

In addition to our usual class time, this course has several other activities and events that require your participation.

- At least one meeting with me to discuss your research project. This meeting may be scheduled any time during the semester, but I have also worked one week into our schedule.
- This class is linked with another graduate seminar on the New Southern Studies that is being taught by Erich Nunn at Auburn University this semester. Our courses have similar assigned readings and assignments, and Dr. Nunn, along several other southern studies scholars, will visit our class in March. A Facebook group will link both courses. The purpose of the group is to provide a convenient way of sharing and discussing the latest media and criticism on the South. To join the group, search for “The New Southern Studies Spring 2017” on FB. All group members must be approved by me. If you would like to friend me on FB, please do not do so until final grades have been entered with the registrar at the end of the semester.
- A symposium on contemporary southern literary studies will be held on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Speakers include Katie Owens-Murphy (University of North Alabama), James A. Crank (University of Alabama), Erich Nunn (Auburn University), and Jeremy Wells (Indiana University-Southeast). Attendance is required.
- The Louisville Conference for Literature and Culture After 1900. Several southern studies scholars will be presenting their work, including Ryan Heryford, Merinda Simmons, Daniel Cross Turner, Ben Wilson, and Monica Miller. Dr. Miller will be joining us for class while she’s here. You are required to attend one of the panels below.

H-6 Poetics and Politics of Recovery: History, Memory, and Race  
 Saturday 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM  
 Room: Humanities 113  
 Chair: Amy Clukey, University of Louisville

1. Ryan Heryford, California State University, East Bay  
 “Off the Face of the Earth: Oceanic Assemblages and Ecocritical Imperialism”
2. Jane Wong, University of Washington  
 “Our Barter: Contemporary Asian American Women Poets and the Digital Humanities”
3. Merinda Simmons, University of Alabama and Daniel Turner, Coastal Carolina University  
 “Pragmatizing the Peripheral: Rethinking Primitivism in Faulkner’s ‘Red Leaves’”

4. Lisa Propst, Clarkson University  
“Recovering Stigmatized Voices? Recuperative Histories and Self-Reflection in Marina Warner’s *From the Beast to the Blonde* and *Stranger Magic*”

I-1 Black Atlantic Intellectuals and their Contexts

Saturday 2:45 PM – 4:15 PM

Room: Humanities 101

Chair: Benjamin Wilson, University of Kentucky

1. George Phillips, Franklin College  
“Power after the Anthropocene: Geophysical Force, Mediation, and George Lamming's Pebbles”
2. Benjamin Wilson, University of Kentucky  
“The Fateful Southern Voyages of Joseph Conrad, Virginia Woolf, and Charles W. Chesnutt: Southern Degeneracy on Both Sides of the Atlantic”
3. Peter Kalliney, University of Kentucky  
“C.L.R. James and the Aesthetic Cold War”

I-8 Flannery O’Connor: Texts, Contexts, and Intertexts

Saturday 2:45 PM – 4:15 PM

Room: Humanities 207

Chair: Mark Graybill, Widener University, Flannery O’Connor Society

1. David Griffith, Interlochen Center for the Arts  
“The Tiger in the Room: Re-examining Flannery O’Connor’s Politics in the Age of Islamophobia”
2. Monica Miller, Georgia Tech  
“Working Women in the World of O’Connor”
3. Catherine Bowlin, Georgia College and State University  
“There’s no place quite like home’: Region and Place in O’Connor’s and Huston’s Versions of *Wise Blood*”
4. Mark Graybill, Widener University  
“It’s a Hard World for Little Things’: *The Night of the Hunter*, *Wise Blood*, and *The River*”

**Presentation:** For your presentation, choose a literary critical or theoretical book that you will teach to the class from the list provided. I will likely ask you follow up questions on parts of the book that you don’t cover during your presentation. Monographs will be chosen from the following list:

- Scott Romine, *The Real South: Southern Narrative in the Age of Cultural Reproduction*
- Erich Nunn, *Sounding the Color Line: Music and Place in the Southern Imagination*
- Martyn Bone, *The Postsouthern Sense of Place in Contemporary Fiction*
- Melanie Benson Taylor, *Reconstructing the Native South: American Indian literature and the Lost Cause*
- Leslie Bow, *Partly Colored: Asian Americans and Racial Anomaly in the Segregated South*
- Claudia Milian, *Latining America: Black/Brown Passages and the Coloring of Latino/Latina Studies*
- Jon Smith, *Finding Purple America: The South and the Future of American Cultural Studies*

- Jeremy Wells, *Romances of the White Man's Burden: Race, Empire, and the Plantation in American Literature 1880-1936*
- Deborah Cohn, *History and Memory in the Two Souths: Recent Southern and Spanish American Fiction*
- Jennifer Rae Greeson, *Our South: Geographic Fantasy and the Rise of National Literature*
- John Lowe, *Calypso Magnolia: The Crosscurrents of Caribbean and Southern Literature*
- Zandria Robinson, *This Ain't Chicago: Race, Class, and Regional Identity in the Post-Soul South*
- Michael Bibler, *Cotton's Queer Relations: Same-Sex Intimacy and the Southern Plantation 1936-1968*
- Matthew D. Lassiter and Joseph Crespino, *The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism*
- Lisa Hinrichson, *Possessing the Past: Trauma, Imagination, and Memory in Post-Plantation Southern Literature*
- Eric Gary Anderson, Taylor Hagood, and Daniel Cross Turner, eds. *Undead Souths: The Gothic and Beyond in Southern Literature and Culture*
- Tison Pugh *Precious Perversions: Humor, Homosexuality, and the Southern Literary Canon*

Remember that most of the class has not read the book you're presenting on and is relying on you to *teach* its central arguments. Clarity is important. Intellectual grandstanding is worse than useless. Your presentation must cover at least three points:

1. Teach us the broad critical framework of the book: what conversation is the author responding to? Who are her interlocutors? How does she differentiate herself from them? What is her argument and method? What literary or cultural texts does she discuss? It's better to provide one or two important concepts from the book that your classmates might find useful, rather than try to cover every argument about every text that the book makes.
2. Come up with an example of your own that either supports the book's argument or contests it, either from our course readings or your own readings. This can be a historical, cinematic, cultural, or literary example.
3. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the book. Critical books are hard to write, so I'm not asking you to tear it to shreds. Rather, what about the critic's argument works? What doesn't? What did she do really well? What might she have addressed that she didn't? How might this area of research expand in the future?

You must distribute a handout to the class, which should include an outline or script for the presentation, a copy of the table of contents of the critical book, and a works cited sheet. You must also turn in two copies of this handout to me—one for me to keep and one to grade and hand back. The presentation should be 15-20 minutes. You may divide this time as you like, but please remember to keep things as lively as possible while maintaining a scholarly tone and remaining on task—there's nothing worse than a monotonous, boring, or off topic presentation. I encourage you to be creative: you might share interesting quotes, pictures, or play video clips.

**Research Project:** This course will culminate with an article-length research paper. This major project is divided into several stages. Guidelines for each assignment will be distributed in class.

Here is a general outline for the research project. First, you will select a topic from this course to conduct research on. You will then read ten *scholarly* sources on that text and write an annotated bibliography on those sources. Once you have a sense of the critical discourse, you will do some brainstorming writing to help get your own argument going. This will consist of several close readings, a polished draft of your introduction, and a working bibliography.

The research paper will then be graded in two phases: you will turn in a *polished*, but incomplete draft of at least 10 full pages (you may write a complete draft if you choose). I will grade it and provide extensive comments for revision. You will then turn in a revised and expanded final draft of at least 20 pages in a portfolio along with all of your work from this course (don't forget to save all your writing). This paper should engage with course themes and join the critical discussion on a particular text or, better yet, a group of texts from our reading list. Ideally, the research paper will emerge out of your academic interests, and I will help you develop your individual research agenda throughout the semester. All topics must be approved by me before assignments are turned in.

## Policies

**Attendance:** You can't participate and learn if you're not in class. Regular attendance is required. If you miss more than two weeks of the course (a total of two classes), you will automatically fail the course. Excessive tardiness (more than two classes) will also result in a lowered final grade.

I will only make allowances for excused absences – that is, an absence which relates to an approved university activity or which is caused by illness (supported by medical verification that expressly indicates that you could not attend class due to illness). Absences cannot be excused for work-related or family-related reasons. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation for an excused absence within one week of missing class. Students with excused absences are required to come to class all days that they are not ill or not participating in university events.

**Makeup Policy/Late Work:** Late work will not accepted.

**Formatting Policy:** Everything you submit in this class must be formatted in 12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced, with one inch margins. All homework must also meet minimum page requirements. If you are assigned to write a 10 page draft, then you must write at least 10 *complete* pages—not 9 pages, not 9.5 pages. Papers that are not formatted correctly or do not meet minimum page requirements will receive an automatic "D" and will not receive comments.

**Scholarly Sources Policy:** Only peer-reviewed, scholarly sources may be used for all assignments in this course. Your assignment grade will be dropped a letter grade for each non-scholarly source you use on it.

**Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:** Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts. Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions, automatically fail the plagiarized assignment, and will be reported to the appropriate university officials for possible further disciplinary sanction.

TL;DR: don't plagiarize.

**Disability Access:** The University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admission without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualification as determined by University policy or state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about physical access, please do not hesitate to contact me. Students who have a disability or condition which may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria are encouraged to contact the Disabilities Resource Center (852-6938). Where possible, the DRC will provide appropriate documentation for students and will advise instructors of additional student needs.

**Library Research Assistance:** This course includes a library research component. Librarians are available to help you think through the research process and find relevant information sources, including peer-reviewed, scholarly articles. To schedule an appointment with a librarian or ask a research question, click on **Ask a Librarian** on the library homepage at [louisville.edu/library](http://louisville.edu/library). You can also visit the Reference Department in person on the first floor of Ekstrom Library. You are required to use the MLA Bibliography database—available through the library website—for your research paper assignments.

**Title IX/Clery Act Notification:** Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any other nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sex discrimination violate University policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain *confidential* support from the PEACC Program (852-2663), Counseling Center (852-6585), and Campus Health Services (852-6479). To report sexual misconduct or sex discrimination, contact the Dean of Students (852-5787) or University of Louisville Police (852-6111).

Disclosure to **University faculty or instructors** of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on campus, in a University-sponsored program, or

involving a campus visitor or University student or employee (whether current or former) is **not confidential** under Title IX. Faculty and instructors must forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the University’s Title IX officer. For more information, see the Sexual Misconduct Resource Guide (<http://louisville.edu/hr/employeerelations/sexual-misconduct-brochure>).

**Recording Policy:** I put considerable time and effort into designing and constructing this course, its materials, class discussion, and activities: it is my intellectual property. You may not record in audio, video, still photography, or any other medium any portion of this class for personal or public use without written permission from the professor. Violation of this rule may result in your removal from the course with an assigned grade of “F.”

Schedule	
<p>The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus when necessary to meet learning objectives, to compensate for missed classes, or for similar reasons. Changes will be announced in class, on blackboard, or by university email.</p>	
<p>Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Houston Baker and Dana Nelson “Preface: Violence, the Body, and ‘The South’.” <i>American Literature</i> 73.2: (2001): 231-244.</li> <li>• Barbara Ladd “Literary Studies: The Southern United States, 2005,” <i>PMLA</i> 120.5 [2005]: 1628-1639.</li> <li>• Jon Smith “Letter to the Editor,” “Forum: The State of United States Southern Literary Studies,” <i>PMLA</i> 121.2 (2006): 549-50.</li> <li>• Barbara Ladd “Reply,” “Forum: The State of United States Southern Literary Studies,” <i>PMLA</i> 121.2 (2006): 550-552.</li> <li>• Kathryn McKee and Annette Trefzer et al “The U.S. South in Global Contexts” <i>American Literature</i> 78.4 (2006): 691-244.</li> </ul>
<p>Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michael Kreyling <i>Inventing Southern Literature</i> excerpts</li> <li>• Leigh Anne Duck “Southern Nonidentity” <i>Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies</i> 9.3 (2008): 319-330.</li> <li>• Michael Bibler et al. “Adjust Your Maps: Manifestos from, for, and about United States Southern Studies” <i>PMLA</i>. 131.1 (January 2016): 153-196.</li> <li>• <i>Atlanta</i> complete first season</li> </ul>

Thursday, January 26 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colson Whitehead <i>The Underground Railroad</i></li> <li>• <i>Keywords</i>: Intro and Part I pp. 1-72</li> </ul>
Thursday, February 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arli Russel Hochschild <i>Strangers in Their Own Land</i></li> <li>• <i>Keywords</i>: Part II pp. 73-140</li> </ul>
Thursday, February 9 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• T. Geronimo Johnson <i>Welcome to Braggville</i></li> <li>• <i>Keywords</i>: PART III pp. 141-224</li> </ul> <p><b>ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE</b></p>
Thursday, February 16 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesamyn Ward <i>Men We Reaped</i></li> <li>• <i>Keywords</i>: Part IV pp. 215-278</li> </ul>
Thursday, February 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monica Miller excerpt from <i>Being Ugly: Southern Women Writers and Social Rebellion</i></li> <li>• <i>Keywords</i>: PART V pp. 279-366</li> </ul> <p>Dr. Monica Miller will be joining us for class</p> <p>NO OFFICE HOURS TODAY</p> <p><i>The Louisville Conference for Literature and Culture After 1900</i> will be held this weekend. Attendance at one of the southern studies panels is required.</p>
Thursday, March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jeff Vandermeer <i>Annihilation</i></li> </ul>
Thursday, March 9 <sup>th</sup>	<p><i>The South Now</i> Symposium will begin at 4pm. After the symposium, class will begin in HUM220 at 5:30.</p> <p><b>CLOSE READING DUE</b></p> <p>Today is the last day to withdraw from courses</p>
Thursday, March 16 <sup>th</sup>	Spring Break

Thursday, March 23 <sup>rd</sup>	NO CLASS. Required meetings will be held earlier in the week on Monday and Tuesday.
Thursday, March 30 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monique Truong <i>Bitter in the Mouth</i></li> </ul> <p>VERY IMPORTANT: I will be presenting at the American Conference for Irish Studies in Kansas City during our normal class period, so class will be held on another day of this week. Day and time TBA.</p> <p><b>CONFERENCE PAPER DUE</b></p>
Thursday, April 6 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert Gipe <i>Trampoline</i></li> <li>• Zackary Vernon “Toward a Post-Appalachian Sense of Place.” <i>Journal of American Studies</i> 50.3 (2016): 639-658.</li> </ul>
Thursday, April 13 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kiese Laymon <i>Long Division</i></li> </ul>
Thursday, April 20 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Southern Comfort</i> documentary</li> <li>• Scott Herring excerpt from <i>Queer Anti-Urbanism</i></li> </ul>
<p>ARTICLE-LENGTH RESEARCH PAPER DUE Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup> in my mailbox in 315 Bingham Humanities Building by 2pm. Late papers will not be accepted. <u>No exceptions.</u></p>	