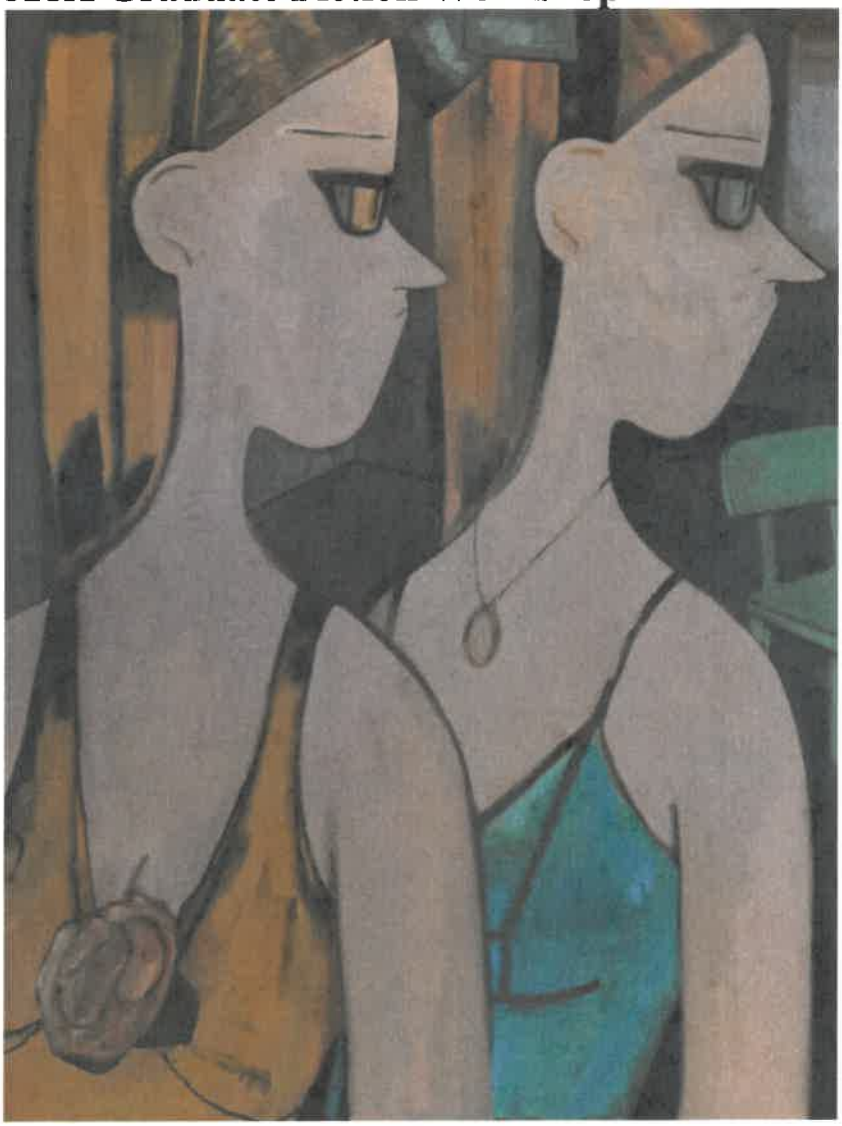
618A Graduate Fiction Workshop—Professor Parravani



Our once-weekly excavation of language and form in fiction will be a rigorous but enjoyable class, one intended to inspire, energize, and motivate you. We will focus on reading and writing short stories, autofiction, and excerpts of novels. Our work will consist of workshopped pieces, peer feedback, generative exercises, and outside reading of contemporary fiction. In this class we'll proceed from the idea that a writer must understand what's working well within a piece to know how to make it better, or even to *want* to make it better. Every piece must be considered on its own terms, rather than according to some predetermined idea of what a work must be. Workshop is a forum for risk-taking; every piece we examine is a piece in progress, though polished. We will endeavor to master these elements of fiction: sound; punctuation; line construction; point of view; intuition; narrative arc; characterization; place; risk; thematics, tonality; intent vs. delivery; aesthetic structure; wants and needs, and effect. And editing. Don't forget editing. The most important part! Each workshop participant will have three opportunities for critique, according to the deadlines set in our week-by-week course planner. By the end of the course, you will have mastered tone, pacing, plot, and sentence construction in your fiction.

618B Graduate Nonfiction Workshop—Professor Parravani

Our nonfiction workshop will focus on weekly conversations about the various elements that make nonfiction prose storytelling shine: point of view; intuition; narrative arc; characterization; place; risk; thematics; tonality; aesthetic structure; confession; morality; shame; and familial and romantic order. Each student will have three opportunities for discussion of work (essays or book excerpts). In addition to writing, we will undertake the weekly study of contemporary memoir and essays, and draft book proposals for our semester projects.

ENGL 631: Studies in Nonfiction Prose, Pamphlet Cultures

Professor Christine Hoffmann
Mondays, 7:00 – 9:50
cehoffmann@mail.wvu.edu

English 631 undertakes advanced study in the genre of nonfiction. We will focus our investigation of the genre on **the cheap print of early modern pamphlet culture**, concentrating on the outlaw, outcast, outspoken and/or generally outrageous figures of the 16th and 17th centuries. The prose devoted to these figures promised "strange ***and*** true" reports of their secret languages, obscure rituals, impassioned complaints and providential confidences.

That "***and***", we'll come to see, is important. To encounter the conventions of this peculiar genre is to encounter the convolutions of Renaissance social politics. Pamphlets, on the surface, offer portraits of **rogues, malcontents, deviants, criminals and demonized others**, but they are formally a space where the compatibilities between the elite and the underclass are exposed. ***"He that cannot dissemble cannot live,"*** writes the 16th-century pamphleteer Robert Greene in one of his popular cony-catching pamphlets. These pamphlets serve a dual function, introducing cony-catchers (who specialized in cheating victims, or *conies*, at cards) as figures of both danger and romance. Moreover, the identities of victim and criminal are always overlapping in Greene's descriptions of London's criminal underbelly. In mystifying the notion of what it is to live uprightly, Greene suggests that the process by which an honest citizen (or an honest reader) lives honestly may require certain strategies of dishonesty.

COURSE TOPICS

- **Rogues and Sturdy Beggars**
- **Shrews and Gossips**
- **Witches**
- **Monstrous Births and Fashion Monsters**
- **Hacks and Railers**

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate skill in reading and analyzing 16th- & 17th-century British nonfiction.
2. Understand the major formal conventions of pamphlets & the cultural/historical contexts of pamphleteering.
3. Exhibit proficiency in research methods and respond to scholarly conversations within early modern scholarship.
4. Compose well-supported, persuasive, and creative interpretations of course texts.

ENGL 680—Introduction to Literary Research
Spring 2027
Prof. Adam Komisaruk
M 4:00-6:50 PM

This course is designed to introduce students to the research and writing skills necessary for advanced study in English. While research and writing skills will continue to be developed in other courses, this course provides an explicit foundation for understanding the expectations for and forms of research. ENGL 680 covers three areas:

Research methods: locating, evaluating, and incorporating information from a variety of primary and secondary sources

- Navigating the databases
- Resources and strategies for archival research
- Mapping and joining a scholarly conversation

Genres of academic writing: understanding the expectations conventions of academic genres

- Documenting sources
- The art of the abstract, the conference paper, the academic article, the funding proposal
- The public humanities

Textual studies: understanding the technologies of the transmission of texts

- Histories of the book
- Analytical and descriptive bibliography
- Textual criticism, editorial theory, editorial practice

Course activities will center partly on a set text and partly on projects corresponding to individual student interests. The following will most likely be required:

Wendy Belcher, *Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks*, 2nd ed. (Chicago)
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818), ed. MacDonald and Scherf, 3rd ed. (Broadview)
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818/1831), ed. Stuart Curran (Romantic Circles online)
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (drafts), ed. Charles Robinson (Shelley-Godwin Archive online)
MLA Handbook, 9th ed. (MLA)
Williams and Abbott, *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies*, 4th ed. (MLA)

PhD students must take either ENGL 680 or ENGL 606 (Introduction to the Digital Humanities). MA students must take either ENGL 680 or ENGL 682 (Recent Literary Criticism). Questions and comments are invited: akomisar@wvu.edu

ENGL 771: 20th Century British and Irish Studies
Spring 2027
Tuesdays, 4:00pm - 6:50pm

Ireland and the Sea

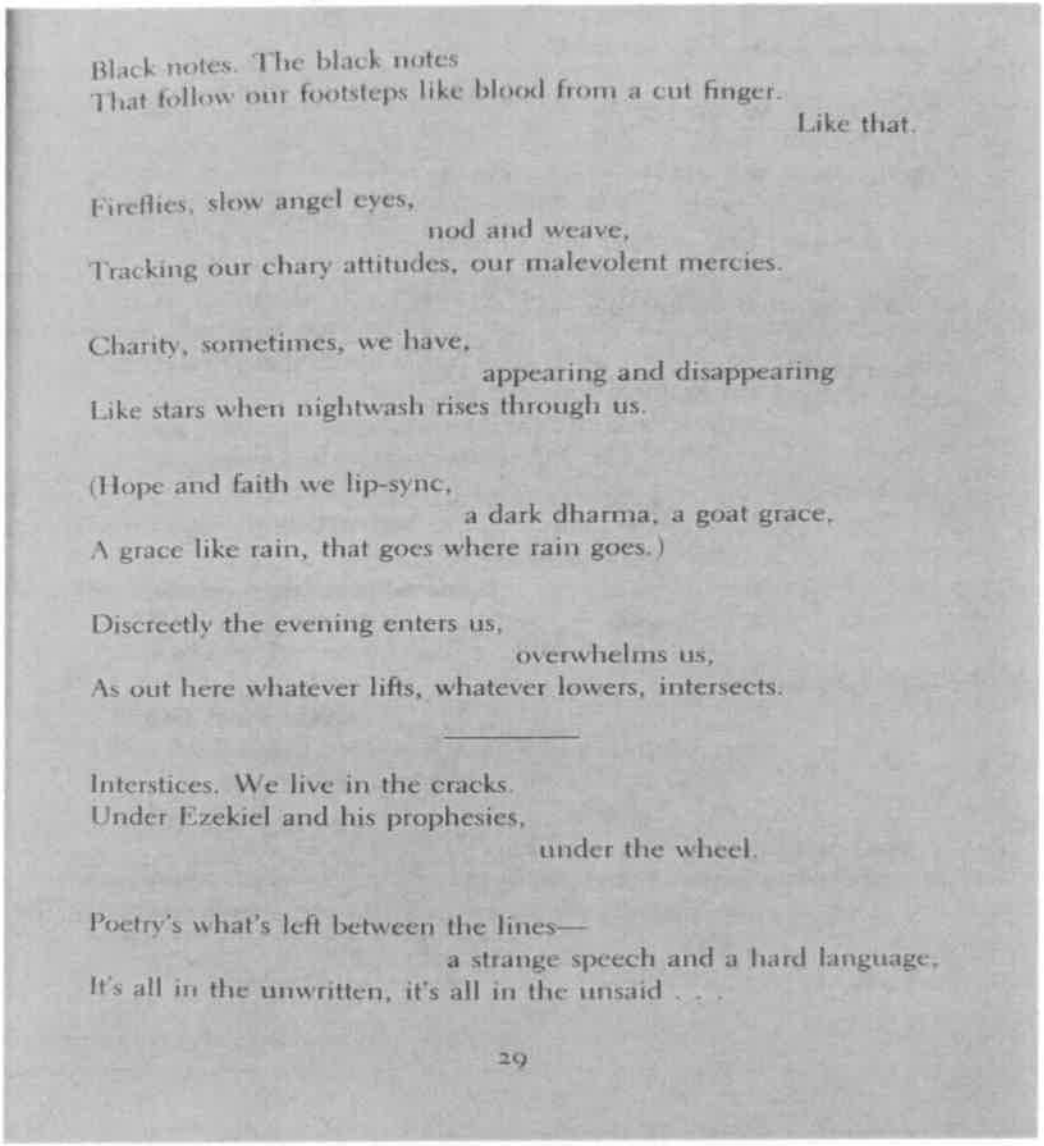
Jack B. Yeats, "Men of Destiny" (1946; oil on canvas). National Gallery of Ireland. The painting depicts three fishermen securing a boat at Rosses Point, County Sligo.

"Do not make bold with the sea" (*Ná déan dánaíocht ar an bhfarraige*) warns the Irish proverb, the sea that Buck Mulligan proclaims "the snotgreen, the scrotumtightening sea" in the opening pages of James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922). Drawing on recent work in the Blue Humanities, Oceanic Studies, and Irish literature's engagement with what Nicholas Allen has called hydrocolonialism, this seminar will explore the imaginative, political, ecological, and symbolic significance of the sea in 20th and 21st century Irish literature. As island geography, colonial border, route of migration, site of labor, and space of myth, the sea occupies a central place in Irish cultural history and literary form. We will explore how Irish writers use maritime settings and imagery to engage questions of nationhood, modernity, exile, gender, memory, environmental change, and transnational exchange. Readings will include works by W.B. Yeats, J.M. Synge, James Joyce, Kate O'Brien, Elizabeth Bowen, Seamus Heaney, Joseph O'Connor, John Banville, Sinéad Morrissey, among others. Thoughts on what we should read? Contact me at lgweihman@mail.wvu.edu.

ENGL 618: Poetry Workshop: On Style

Spring 2027, Wednesdays, 4-6:50 p.m.

Professor Mary Ann Samyn



Black notes. The black notes
That follow our footsteps like blood from a cut finger.
Like that.

Fireflies, slow angel eyes,
nod and weave,
Tracking our chary attitudes, our malevolent mercies.

Charity, sometimes, we have,
appearing and disappearing
Like stars when nightwash rises through us.

(Hope and faith we lip-sync,
a dark dharma, a goat grace,
A grace like rain, that goes where rain goes.)

Discreetly the evening enters us,
overwhelms us,
As out here whatever lifts, whatever lowers, intersects.

Interstices. We live in the cracks.
Under Ezekiel and his prophesies,
under the wheel.

Poetry's what's left between the lines—
a strange speech and a hard language,
It's all in the unwritten, it's all in the unsaid . . .

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(excerpt from "Poem Almost Wholly in my Own Manner" by Charles Wright)

What's style? How does it develop? What makes it change?
This time around, we'll consider poets' early/middle/late styles;
poetic movements and styles; house styles of journals and publishers; your style(s).

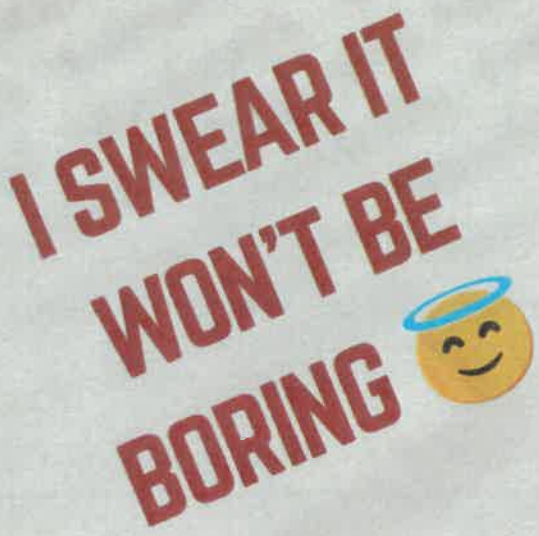
Questions? Please email me: maryann.samyn@mail.wvu.edu

WEDNESDAYS 4:00-6:50 PM

ENGL 602: EDITING

Editing? You mean, **RIVETING**? In addition to basic principles of technical editing, we will cultivate skills that improve our own writing practices, position us to take on freelance work, encourage us to shape knowledge and influence progress in a field of study, and prepare us for talking to our own editors more productively.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:



- **Basic editing skills**, from developmental editing to copy editing and proofreading
- **Rhetorical approaches** to grammar, usage, and style
- **Writing frameworks** for ensuring cohesion, alignment, ethical research and citation, and much more
- **Project management strategies** which are all the rage these days

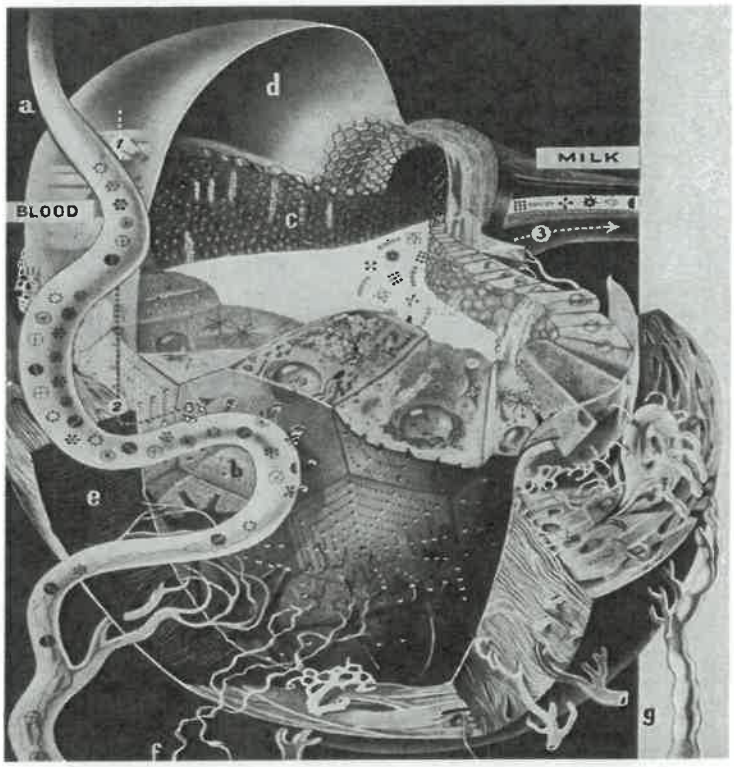
For more info: Contact Dr. EBC @ erin.carlson@mail.wvu.edu

"Writing Science for Public and Scientific Audiences"

WRIT 408/508 | Spring 2027| Weds 4-6:50pm | Instructor: Prof. Catherine Gouge

How does science become credible, controversial, persuasive, and public?

This course is designed for students interested in how science is communicated, debated, and understood within scientific communities and by broader publics. Students from the sciences, humanities, and professional fields are all welcome.



Course Description

"Writing Science" explores how scientific knowledge is communicated, debated, and made persuasive. We will examine writing for both scientific and public audiences and consider how language, evidence, expertise, and communication practices shape what people know and believe about science.

Throughout the semester, we will investigate several questions: Why do scientific controversies emerge? What happens when scientific disagreement moves into public debate? How do scientists and other writers establish credibility and authority? How can science be communicated effectively across different audiences? And how do writing and rhetoric help shape scientific knowledge itself?

What We'll Read

Readings will draw from writings studies, science studies, health and medical humanities, and science communication and rhetoric, including work on scientific controversy, contested illness, scientific writing, expertise and credibility, and feminist approaches to science studies. Authors will include Michae Harker, Emily Schone, Joshua Schimel, Leah Ceccarelli, and Lawrence Prelli.

Course Format

WRIT 408 and WRIT 508 is a dynamic, interdisciplinary class of advanced undergraduate and graduate students. Students will share reading, writing, and discussion assignments and complete work appropriate to their level. Because the course depends on discussion and collaborative inquiry, students should be prepared to read thoughtfully, participate actively, and contribute their own disciplinary perspectives and interests.

English 782: Current Directions in Literary Study
Aesthetics and Formalism

The concept of form casts a long shadow over the history of literary criticism. On the one hand, we want to teach our students the fundamentals of formal analysis of literature. On the other hand, one can still detect a sense in areas of our field that excessive attention to form is somewhat embarrassing, even backward—a holdover from the old days of New Criticism, now nearly out of living memory. Form, it seems, is something to be learned just to be abandoned, a way station en route to more intellectually promising destinations.

Against this reflexive position, this course wagers that form can still be useful to us, and in fact might be more useful than ever. We will consider recent scholarly efforts to place form front and center in the study of literature and culture. We will give particular attention to approaches that aim to use the vocabulary of formalism—and of aesthetics, the area with which talk of form is most closely associated—to make arguments with political stakes. In addition to some classics of formalism and aesthetic theory, such as Kant on judgment and Adorno on artistic autonomy, we will read thinkers such as Fredric Jameson on the "poetics of social forms," Sianne Ngai on capitalist form and aesthetic judgment, Fred Moten on fugitivity and the disruption of form, Anna Kornbluh on realist form and social space, and Eugenie Brinkema on the formal qualities of affect.

Mitch Therieau

Thursdays 4:00-6:50