

GRMN1060-401

COML1060401, GSWS1060401

Fulfills Arts & Letters Sector (all classes)

The Fantastic and Uncanny in Literature: Ghosts, Spirits, and Machines

Liliane Weissberg

Fall 2022

MW 1:45 PM-3:15 PM

WILL 1

Do we still believe in spirits and ghosts? Do they have any place in an age of science of technology? Can they perhaps help us to define what a human being is and what it can do? We will venture on a journey through literary texts from the late eighteenth century to the present to explore the uncanny and fantastic in literature and life. Our discussions will be based on a reading of Sigmund Freud's essay on the uncanny, and extraordinary Romantic narratives by Ludwig Tieck, E.T.A. Hoffmann, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Prosper Merimee, Villiers de Isle-Adam, and others.

While you are not required to wear masks in other university buildings, I ask that everyone continue to wear masks in our classroom. I know that masks might feel awkward, but I also know that wearing masks plays a role in showing respect for each other's health and comfort.

The course will count towards the major or minor in Comparative Literature, Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, as well as the minor in Psychoanalytic Studies.

Syllabus

Wednesday, August 31 Introduction: Enlightenment, Catholicism, and the New Scientific Progress

Monday, September 5 The English Gothic Novel: Castles and Labyrinths
Horace Walpole, The Castle of Ortranto (1764)
(further material on canvas)

Wednesday, September 7 Ghosts and Romance
Horace Walpole, The Castle of Ortranto
(Anna and John Aikin, "On the Pleasure Derived from Objects of Terror, with Sir Bertrand, a Fragment" on canvas)

Monday, September 12 The German Turn: From Castle to Ruin to Fragment

Friedrich Schlegel, Athenaeum fragments
(selections), Novalis, Pollen (selections)
(texts and further material on canvas)
Heinrich von Kleist, "The Beggarwoman of Locarno" (1810)
(text and further material on canvas)

Wednesday, September 14 The World Below

Ludwig Tieck, "Eckbert the Blonde" (1797)
(text and further material on canvas)

Monday, September 19 Sexual Mysteries

Heinrich von Kleist, "The Marquise of O***" (1808)
(further material on canvas)

Wednesday, September 21 The West! A New Continent

Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Huntly (1799)
(further material on canvas)

Monday, September 26 Natives and Settlers

Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Huntly

first term paper due

Wednesday, September 28 The Psychological Dimension

E.T.A. Hoffmann, "The Sandman" (1816); *Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny" (1919)*
(texts and material on canvas)

Monday, October 3 Human Invention

Mary Shelley, Frankenstein (1818)
(further material on canvas)

Wednesday, October 5 no class: Yom Kippur

Monday, October 10 Religion

Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Minister's Black Veil" (1832)
(text and further material on canvas)

Wednesday, October 12 Human Perfection

Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Birth-Mark" (1843)
(text and further material on canvas)

Monday, October 17 The Undead I

Edgar Allan Poe, "Ligeia" (1838)
(text and further material on canvas)

Wednesday, October 19 **Special session:** Screening of Alfred Hitchcock, Psycho (1960)

Monday, October 24 **Doubles**
Edgar Allan Poe, "William Wilson" (1839)
(text and further material on canvas)

Wednesday, October 26 **France!: Archeological Past**
Prosper Mérimée, "The Venus of Ille" (1837)
(text and further material on canvas)

Monday, October 31 **The East! Human and Animal**
Prosper Mérimée, "Lokis" (1869)
(text and further material on canvas)

second term paper due

Wednesday, November 2 **Inventors and Inventions**
Villiers de Isle-Adam, Tomorrow's Eve (1886)
(further material on canvas)

Monday, November 7 **The Perfect Woman (Again)**
Villiers de Isle-Adam, Tomorrow's Eve

Wednesday, November 9 **The Irish Colony**
Bram Stoker, Dracula (1897)
(further material on canvas)

Monday, November 14 **Special session:** Screening of F.W. Murnau, Nosferatu (1922)

Wednesday, November 16 **Night Shows**
Angela Carter, Nights at the Circus (1984)
(further material on canvas)

Monday, November 21 **Feminist Creatures**
Angela Carter, Nights at the Circus

Wednesday, November 23 **no class**
(Thursday-Friday class schedule shifted to Tuesday/Wednesday)

Monday, November 28 **The Undead II**
Toni Morrison, Beloved (1987)
(further material on canvas)

Wednesday, November 30 **American History I**
Toni Morrison, Beloved (1987)

third term paper due

Monday, December 5 American History II
George Saunders, Lincoln in the Bardo (2017)
(further material on canvas)

Wednesday, December 7 Beyond the Grave
George Saunders, Lincoln in the Bardo (2017)

Monday, December 12 Salon of Ghosts and Spirits: Exhibition of Creative Work

Creative Project Due

Books Assigned for Class (stories and secondary material are placed on canvas):

Horace Walpole, The Castle of Otranto, Oxford UP (also available as pdf on line)
Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Huntly, Penguin Books (also available as pdf on line)
Mary Shelley, Frankenstein, Oxford UP (also available as pdf on line)
Villiers de l'Isle Adam, Tomorrow's Eve, University of Illinois Press
Bram Stoker, Dracula, Norton Critical Editions (also available as pdf on line)
Angela Carter, Nights at the Circus, Viking Press
Toni Morrison, Beloved, Vintage Editions
George Saunders, Lincoln in the Bardo, Random House

Requirements:

Attendance in class and recitation sessions; three brief scholarly papers of ca. 5-7 pages (see deadlines above); a creative project (fictional interview with an author or literary figure discussed in class).

Liliane Weissberg's Office Hours: on zoom, by appointment: lweissbe@sas.upenn.edu