

## ***Fall/Winter 2019-2020***

**AP/EN 3440 6.0A (Y)**

### ***Contemporary Literature***

**Course Director:**

Marcus Boon  
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**Delivery Format:**

Fully Online

**Time:**

N/A

**Description:**

In this course, we will explore the relationship between contemporary literature and the Internet -- and the forms of life that have emerged around it in the last few decades. In the first semester we'll read a series of classic modernist and contemporary prose works, and explore the ways in which we can read them as allegories of life after the Internet. We will examine such topics as alienation, homelessness and exile; the figure of the storyteller in a time of fragmentary or distracted consciousness; fiction and reality in a post-truth era; technology and the human; intimacy, anonymity and disclosure. Authors will include Franz Kafka, Amos Tutuola, George Orwell, Clarice Lispector, Octavia Butler, Mohsin Hamid, Chris Kraus and Tao

Lin.

In the second semester, we will take a more experimental approach, exploring the forms that literature takes today on the actual internet, for example looking at fan fiction, Twitter and Instagram, crowdsourced fiction and more. We will consider how literature adapts (or not) to instantaneous global distribution; reduced attention spans; surveillance; new forms of collectivity; marketing, branding and neoliberal self-packaging; artificial intelligence and the problem of originality; posthumanism and precarity. While maintaining a firm focus on the problem of writing, and the specific powers and problems of the written word, we will develop ways of understanding and navigating the complex and diverse worlds that literature is a part of today.

**Category:**

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**Historical Requirement:**

N/A

**Requirements:**

Weekly forum comments on a discussion topic related to the week's readings.

25% per semester, Total: 50%

2000 word research paper on an assigned topic w. brief presentation in last class of semester. 15% per semester, Total: 30%

End of semester exam. 10% per semester, Total: 20%.

**Reading List:**

Archive of our Own, <http://archiveofourown.org/>  
Octavia Butler, *Parable of the Sower*  
Latoria Cuboniks, *The Xeno-Feminist Manifesto*  
William Gibson, *Pattern Recognition*  
Mohsin Hamid, *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*  
Byung Chul Han, *In the Swarm*  
N. Katherine Hayles, *Electronic Literature: New Horizons for the Literary*  
Franz Kafka, *The Trial*  
Rupi Kaur, *Instagram account*  
Chris Kraus, *I Love Dick*  
Clarice Lispector, *The Hour of the Star*  
Tao Lin, *Shoplifting from American Apparel*  
Tao Lin and Mira Gonzalez, *Selected Tweets*  
Yoko Ono, *Grapefruit*  
George Orwell, *1984*  
Kristen Roupenian, "Cat Person"  
Amos Tutuola, *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*  
Vernor Vinge, *True Names*

**Open To:**

Year 3 and 4