

**EN 4332 3.0**

**Edgar Allan Poe**

**M | W 4-7 BC 325**

**Course Director: Samantha Bernstein**

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**June 17: Social and Aesthetic Contexts**

Romanticism in a transatlantic context; social upheavals; the Beauty debates.

**June 19: Romanticism: Influences and Departures**

**Readings:**

“The Raven”; “Eldorado”; “Annabel Lee”; “Letter to B—”; “Philosophy of Composition”

**June 24: The Gothic**

**Readings:**

“Ligeia”; “The Fall of the House of Usher”; “Berenice”

**Presentations:**

Jenny Webb, “Fantastic Desire: Poe, Calvino, and the Dying Woman”

Matthew A. Taylor, “Edgar Allan Poe’s (Meta)physics: A Pre-History of the Post-Human”

Elisabete Lopes, “Unburying the Wife: A Reflection Upon the Female Uncanny in Poe’s Ligeia”

**July 1: The Gothic**

**Readings:**

“The Tell-Tale Heart”; “The Black Cat”; “The Imp of the Perverse”

**Presentations:**

E. Arthur Robinson, “Poe’s ‘The Tell-Tale Heart’”

Dan Shen, “Edgar Allan Poe’s Aesthetic Theory, the Insanity Debate, and the Ethically Oriented Dynamics of ‘The Tell-Tale Heart’”

Vicki Hester, Emily Segir, “Edgar Allan Poe: ‘The Black Cat’ and Current Forensic Psychology”

### **July 3: Detective Fiction**

#### **Readings:**

“The Murders in the Rue Morgue”; “The Masque of the Red Death”; “The Purloined Letter”

#### **Presentations:**

Lawrence Frank, “‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue’: Edgar Allan Poe’s Evolutionary Reverie”

Alexandra Urakova, “‘The Purloined Letter’ in the Gift Book: Reading Poe in a Contemporary Context”

Stephen Bertman, “Kindred Crimes: Poe’s ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue’ and Doyle’s *The Sign of Four*”

### **July 8: The Short Story**

#### **Readings:**

“MS Found in a Bottle”; “The Pit and the Pendulum”; “The Man of the Crowd”

#### **Presentations:**

Donald Barlow Stauffer, “The Two Styles of Poe’s ‘MS Found in a Bottle’”

Jennifer R. Ballengee, “Torture, Modern Experience, and Beauty in Poe’s ‘The Pit and the Pendulum’”

J. Gerald Kennedy, “The Limits of Reason: Poe’s Deluded Detectives”

### **July 10: Literary Culture**

#### **Readings:**

“The Balloon Hoax” (online); “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar”; “Exordium” (Handout)

On Magazine Editing, Reviewing, and the Literary Scene (Broadview, pp. 527-536)

#### **Presentations:**

Gavin Jones, “Poor Poe: On the Literature of Revulsion”

Jonathan Auerbach, “Poe’s Other Double: The Reader in the Fiction”

Linda Patterson Miller, “Poe on the Beat: ‘Doings of Gotham’ as Urban, Penny Press Journalism”

## **July 15: Adventure, Narrative Structure, and the Sublime**

### **Readings:**

The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket, pp. 51-121 (Preface – Chapter 7)

### **Presentations:**

Robert L. Carringer, “Circumcription of Space and the Form of Poe’s *Arthur Gordon Pym*”

Grace Farrell Lee, “The Quest of Arthur Gordon Pym”

Kent Ljungquist “Descent of the Titans: The Sublime Riddle of *Arthur Gordon Pym*”

## **July 17: Journey into the Mind**

### **Readings:**

Pym, pp. 122-177 (Chapter 8 – 14)

### **Presentations:**

Richard Kopley, “The Hidden Journey of Arthur Gordon Pym”

A.A. Markley, “The Godwinian Confessional Narrative and Psychological Terror in *Arthur Gordon Pym*”

## **July 22: Race**

### **Readings:**

Pym, pp. 178-247 (Chapter 15-25)

### **Presentations:**

David Faflik, “South of the ‘Border,’ or Poe’s *Pym*: A Case Study in Region, Race, and American Literary History”

## **July 24: Poe’s legacy**

### **Readings:**

None! Watch *The Pit and the Pendulum* (1961) – available on YouTube

### **Essay due**

## **July 29: Final Test**

Two hours, short answer and essay.

**Requirements:**

<b>Seminar Presentation</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Comparative Essay (6-7 pages)</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Final Test</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Informed Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Course Texts:**

*Edgar Allan Poe: Selected Poetry and Tales* (Broadview)

*The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* (Broadview)

\*\* All presentation articles are available on JSTOR through the York library.

**Presentation (25%)**

Prepare a ten-minute summary and analysis of your chosen article, and then use the article to lead a discussion for another five minutes. These articles will provide theoretical frameworks for our discussions, and might help direct you toward an area of interest for your comparative essay.

**Summarize:** What is the author's main argument? Outline the thesis and summarize the arguments they make in support of it. Pull three or four quotations that best convey the author's central claim, and give examples of aspects of the texts the author uses as proof. (3 marks)

**Apply:** Provide further examples from the week's readings, and others if you wish, that illustrate or draw upon the author's argument. Use specific quotations from Poe to illustrate, contradict, or engage with the author's argument. (3 marks)

**Analyse:** Did you find the argument convincing? Why or why not? Did you find the text helpful or interesting in conversation with the texts and concepts we have discussed? (2 marks)

**Discuss:** Pose a discussion question to the class that proceeded from your reading. This can be something that perplexed you and to which you want to crowd source some answers, something you found interesting that you want to explore further, an avenue to make connections between texts and ideas, or whatever you think will lead to a lively conversation! (2 marks)