
English 5303 Objects of Phantasy in Early Modern Literature and Culture

Professor: Grant Williams
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Office: DT 1813
Seminar Location: DT 1816
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Summary

This course will consider the place of fantasy in early modern English literature and culture, represented primarily by late sixteenth-century texts. It tries to sustain a historical and theoretical argument against the view that fantasy circulates outside “material reality.” To that end, it explores the social force of fantasies along with their objects in a range of genres from plays to poems.

Course Description

When we speak of fantasy in this period, we refer to at least two subjective phenomena: the faculty of “phantasy,” or imagination, that is, a region of the brain identified by the period’s medical and psychological discourse, and the imagery or phantasms produced by that region. Seminars will examine both kinds of fantasy, recognizing that the phantasy fabricates fantasies, but fantasies also fabricate the phantasy, so to speak. In other words, early modern writers created fantasies about mental interiority that framed and managed their phantasms.

Why study fantasy from the Elizabethan period? As a national project, English literature and poetics were only emerging at this time and thus writers were grappling with the role that phantasy plays in literary production. The period reveals a different yet fascinating aspect to our modern conceptualization of the imagination. Various institutions—the state, the church, and education—regarded the 5 outer senses and the two inner senses (the common sense and the imagination) with deep suspicion. In particular, early modern psychology depicted phantasms as breeding cognitive disorder, which could jeopardize the subject’s ability to reason and behave ethically. The force of phantasy in the early modern period should not, then, be equated uncritically with the wonder of the romantic imagination, but be understood as a potential source of anxiety and fear whenever thinking or writing took place.

Moreover, fantasy was not merely a volatile subjective or phenomenological phenomenon; it involved, according to one of the course’s main arguments, *objects*—actual things placed before the senses and visible, touchable, transmittable to individuals. Early modern fantasies, in other words, participated in the real. This seminar will investigate the diverse objects of fantasy in a variety of early modern literary texts from Spenserian romance through Shakespearean comedy and revenge tragedy to narrative poetry and selected sonnets. Fantasy’s objects will also take us to many different intellectual currents of the period, including the art of memory, Petrarchanism, lovesickness, and neoplatonism.

To help us think through fantasy's objects in literature and culture, we will leverage the writings of contemporary psychoanalytic and cultural theorists, who will enrich and nuance our critical vocabulary, challenge our preconceptions about the pre-modern imagination, and teach us new ways to read the phantasm. These theorists will help us to broaden our conceptualization of fantasy from an interior, essentially private phenomenon to a political and ideological force that shapes and even constitutes social reality. This graduate seminar will strive to make the case that phantasms are not the pathological whims and figments of the individual mind but contribute forcefully to the larger currents and flows of early modern culture.

CuLearn

The course is managed with the CuLearn Website. What each week's seminar is all about may be found at this address: <https://www.carleton.ca/culearn/>. It is your responsibility to open up a CuLearn account, because without it you won't be able to participate in the course. There you can find your grades, email contact, special handouts, and weekly seminar guide sheets. This last type of document outlines the forthcoming seminar in detail. It explains the topics to be discussed, the primary and secondary materials to be read, and the kind of questions to be explored. In short, it will help you prepare for seminar and organize what we discuss in seminar.

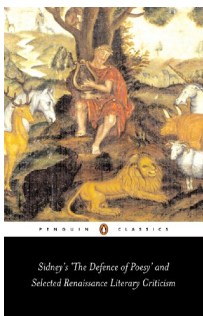
Course Design

Seminar activities and assignments have been developed with an eye to helping you compose an excellent research paper. This paper will draw upon a sufficient base of primary materials from the period, will engage a theoretical question or deploy theoretical language from the course's secondary readings, and will build upon scholarly criticism dealing with the paper's main literary texts:

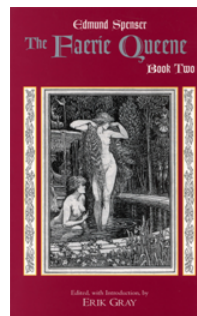
1. the EEBO assignment will assist you in drawing upon archival materials
2. the presentation will allow you to cut your teeth on some psychoanalytic and philosophical readings about fantasy
3. the annotated bibliography will encourage you to gather timely and productive criticism on early modern literary texts.

These three assignments will provide you with valuable feedback before you write your research paper, steering your thinking in the right direction.

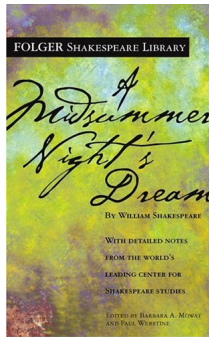
Primary Text Books and ARES



Sidney's "The Defence of Poesy" and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism. Ed. Gavin Alexander. Penguin, 2004.



Spenser's *Faerie Queene Book Two*. Ed. Erik Gray. Hackett Publishing, 2006.



Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
 Ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine.
 Washington Square Press, 2004. Folger Shakespeare Library.



Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi and Other Plays*. Ed. René Weis. Oxford World Classics, 2009.

Please use these inexpensive and readily available editions. I am still arranging to have a book "printed on demand": if I can't get Lodge's *Rosalind*, I will add another major text to the syllabus. The course's remaining readings--a collection of poems, essays, and excerpts from theorists--will be accessible through Ares, which you can access through the library or CuLearn. Over the course of the term, I may change some of the readings on Ares, especially if I can find more beneficial selections.

Schedule

<u>Week</u>	<u>Seminars and Topics</u>
Sept. 10	Introduction to Course
Sept. 17	Defending the Imagination in Early Modern Poetics
Sept. 24	The Art of Memory and Phantasy in Spenser
Oct. 1	Spenser's Chimeras and the Abject Maternal
Oct. 8	Dream Images and the Law of the Father in <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>
Oct. 15	Part Objects and Kleinian Envy in Shakespeare and Webster
Oct. 22	Melancholy Objects in <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>
Nov. 5	The Fancy--Love's Imagination in Lodge's <i>Rosalind</i>
Nov. 12	Petrarchanism and Fetishism in Marston's "Pygmalion" and Other Poems
Nov. 19	The Courtly Lady and Masochism in Elizabethan Sonnets
Nov. 26	Sublimation in "Ovid's Banquet of Sense"
Dec. 3	The Production of Desire in Marlowe's "Hero and Leander"

Assignments

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Date Due</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>%</u>
1. EEBO Assignment	Oct. 8	Bibliographic Data + 500-750 words	10
2. Presentation on Theoretical Question	Assigned Seminar	1750 words (15 min.)	10
3. Two Responses	Assigned Seminars	250-500 words (2.5-5 min.)	10
4. Annotated Bibliography	Nov. 5	2500 words	20
5. November Interview	November		5
6. Research Paper	Dec. 10	4500-5000 words	45

EEBO Assignment

This assignment is a hunting and gathering activity that will lay the foundation for a layer of your final paper's research. The research that you will do will also contribute to the seminar's overall exploration of a specific topic. Each student will submit the bibliographic data for the assignment in a spreadsheet provided by the instructor and, when finished with the hunting and gathering, will hand in a summary statement of 500-750 words, detailing the patterns, observations, and insights you found in the collected material.

Presentation on Theoretical Question

Please consult with me before you start working on your seminar presentation. The seminar presentation is to be read from a fully written paper, not from notes. It will provide a discussion of a theoretical question distributed in advance. The paper will be between 1700-1750 words. You should practice reading it aloud so that you spend no longer than 15 minutes presenting. For the benefit of the class, please supply each seminar member and the instructor with a paper copy or if you wish an electronic one. When finished reading your presentation, you will receive responses from two peers.

Two Responses

For each presentation, there will be two responders. A responder may either ask a series of questions or generate a commentary on the presentation. The response will be graded simply on both its intelligent engagement with the presentation and with the texts the presentation is based upon. The impetus for having formal responses is to encourage focused feedback on the presentation. Such feedback helps the presenter and the class, not to mention the instructor.

Annotated Bibliography

The annotated bibliography will be based upon the direction of your research for this class. In other words, the bibliography and the seminar presentation should mutually reinforce one another or build upon one another with an eye to your research essay. The bibliography should have 8 entries, either an article or a chapter from a book—in a few cases, an entire book. The annotated bibliography will be comprised of secondary criticism on your topic and/or primary texts. In a few cases, you can include new theoretical texts. Each annotation should be between 200 and 250 words. Introducing your annotated bibliography will be a summary statement (500 words) outlining your research paper's intended thesis. *Please do not include any of the texts on the syllabus, either primary or secondary, in your annotated bibliography.*

November Interview

Before you can write your research paper, you must meet with me for an interview about your intended research paper. The better prepared you are for the interview the higher the grade for this assignment. Ideally, you should set up your appointment in early November, for late November will not allow you to act on my suggestions.

Research Paper

Please do not select your paper topic before consulting with me. The paper must draw upon the secondary criticism analyzed in the annotated bibliography, the theory dealt with in the presentation as well as elsewhere, and the materials collected for the EEBO exercise. That said,

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you are expected to build upon the research already done for your annotated bibliography, so there must be a new set of items in your research essay's final bibliography. The research paper must be 4500-5000 words in length—neither longer, nor shorter.

Copyright

Carleton University is committed to compliance in all copyright matters. Noncompliance is a violation of the Canadian Copyright Act. In addition to any actions that might be taken by any copyright owner or its licensing agent, the University will take steps against any breach of this policy.

In Canada, copyright for a work is given automatically to the creator of the work. The work does not need to be marked or declared as copyrighted in order to be copyrighted. The majority of works in Canada are copyrighted. It is important for students to understand and respect copyright. Copyright determines your usage rights for a particular work, which includes textbooks, web pages, videos and images, both electronic and hard copy.

Students may not photocopy entire or major portions of books or other works, even if it is only for their personal use. Fair dealing makes some allowances for copying small portions of works. See Carleton's Fair Dealing Policy for more information. If journal articles or portions of works are available through the library, either as hard copies or electronically, students may make a single copy for their personal use. Students may not distribute copies of works that are under copyright. For more information, please see the Carleton's Fair Dealing Policy and the library's copyright website: www.library.carleton.ca/copyright.

Note on Plagiarism and Lost Essays

Carleton University maintains a strict policy on all forms of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is an instructional offence, which may result in an F in a course or even expulsion from a course. Assignments must be original work that has been produced by the student only for the course; that is, the same assignment cannot be recycled for another course. All referencing must be complete and accurate for both direct and indirect quotations. Cases of academic dishonesty will be treated very seriously and dealt with according to the regulations outlined in the Carleton Graduate Calendar. To ensure that assignments and essays are not lost, students are required to keep an extra hard copy of their assignment before submitting it to the instructor. In the event that any questions arise concerning the sources and documentation of any written assignments, students should also keep all their research notes and drafts until the completion of the course.

Requests for Academic Accommodations

For Student with Disabilities

Contact Paul Menton Centre (ext. 6608) to obtain *letters of accommodations*.

For Religious Observance

To be worked out on individual basis with instructor. Consult Equity Services Website or an Equity Advisor (ext. 5622) for Policy and list of Holy Days (www.carleton.ca/equity)

For Pregnancy

Contact Equity Services (ext. 5622) to obtain *letters of accommodation*.