ENGL 492B Senior Honours Seminar (Research)
Instructor: Mary Chapman
Title: Slavery and Its Aftermath in the Literary Imagination
Fridays 3-5 Buch D 229
Office Hours Wednesdays 1-2 and by appointment
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The “peculiar institution” of Slavery—its origins, assumptions, and abolition—has been a “grand inspiration” to many American writers, both popular and canonical, inspiring texts in a range of genres, including sentimental, gothic and experimental fiction, autobiography, polemic and poetry. This seminar will examine, among other things, the tactics and effects of nineteenth-century abolitionist writing (Melville, Stowe, Jacobs, Douglass); the nostalgic fantasies of Reconstruction (Faulkner); and twentieth-century “re-memories” of African-American history by contemporary African-American authors (Morrison).

Reading List:
- Herman Melville, Benito Cereno
- Harriet Beecher Stowe, Uncle Tom’s Cabin
- Harriet Jacobs, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl
- Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (copy)
- Stephen Crane “The Monster” (copy)
- William Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!
- Nella Larsen, Passing
- Toni Morrison, Beloved
- Poetry selections from the Harlem Renaissance and beyond (copy)

Assignments:
- Presentation (20-minute well-researched presentation on a topic cleared with me in advance) 15%
- Participation (regular attendance, contribution to discussion, and timely reading of the assigned texts) 15%
- Research proposal (150 words) with annotated bibliography of at least two sources (submitted electronically March 17th) 15%
- Research paper (due April 2nd) 55%

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<th>Date &amp; Topic</th>
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<td>January 11</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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| January 18 Slave Narratives | Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass [http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/Literature/Douglass/Autobiography/](http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/Literature/Douglass/Autobiography/)
<p>|              | Giles, “Narrative Reversals and Power Exchanges: Frederick Douglass and British Culture”, American Literature. Vol. 73, no. 4 (December 2001) (Packet) |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>January 25</td>
<td>Sentimental Fiction</td>
<td>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</td>
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| February 1 | Fictionalized Autobiography  | Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl  
Karen Sanchez-Eppler, “Bodily Bonds” (packet)                                    |
| February 8 | Pro- or Anti-Slavery?        | Benito Cereno  
| February 15| Post-Bellum fiction         | Crane, “The Monster” (packet)  
Wikipedia definition of “double consciousness”  
| February 29| Passing Narratives           | Passing                                                                          |
| March 7    | Historical Novel            | Absalom, Absalom!                                                                |
| March 14   | Music                        | Blues (packet)                                                                   |
| March 28   | Harlem Renaissance Poetry    | Langston Hughes “The Negro Speaks of Rivers”  
http://www.eecs.harvard.edu/~keith/poems/rivers.html  
| April 4    | Cont’d                       | Claude McKay “Harlem Dancer” http://www.bartleby.net/269/76.html  
“America” http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/america-2/  
Countee Cullen “Heritage” http://web-facstaff.sas.upenn.edu/~jenglish/Courses/Spring02/104/Cullen_Heritage.html  
“Yet Do I Marvel” http://www.english.upenn.edu/~hbeavers/281/cullen-marvel.html |
| April 11   | Contemporary Fiction        | Beloved                                                                           |
Recommended Online resources:
http://www.mtsu.edu/~vvesper/afam.html
http://digital.nypl.org/schomburg/writers_aa19/toc.html Schomburg Collection of African American Women’s Writing
http://www.accd.edu/sac/english/bailey/aframlit.htm Chronology of African-American literature
http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/wpa/wpahome.html American Slave Narratives
http://www.geocities.com/afam_literature/

Recommended Reading
Mitchell, Angelyn, ed. Within the Circle: An Anthology of African American Literary Criticism from the Harlem Renaissance to the Present.