

## ENGL 4200: *The Matter of Revolution*

### Spring Quarter, 2018

T & R 10:00 – 11:50

Nagel Hall 102

CRN 4463

Early Modern Special Topic

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**Course Description:** This course investigates the legacy of Lucretius' *De rerum natura* (*The Nature of Things*) which sparked radical changes in poetry and science, philosophy and prose, politics and religion during the early modern era (from Europe to England to North America). While our primary focus concerns the 16th and 17th centuries, the scope of our studies covers an international and interdisciplinary field from Classical times through the early modern and into the modern & postmodern eras. We will pay special attention to major and minor schools of thought, cultural developments, texts and topics, and artistic practices that have deep roots in earlier times, such as: atomism and individualism; the poetics of the sublime; metempsychosis and thnetopsychism; materialism and vitalism; and various theories of indeterminacy, contingency, and eidetic making. We will also recover an almost forgotten conversation about *simulacra*. We will engage these matters vis-à-vis contexts of prophecy and protest, reform and revolution. Research projects may include a variety of critical, theoretical, and creative approaches. As with any trans-historical course offered at the graduate-level, the department's policy is that the student's research project may determine the matching distribution requirement and/or program concentration. Students are requested to be prepared to begin discussing these two works at the first class meeting: Lucretius' *The Nature of Things*; and Greenblatt's *The Swerve*.

### Books (required)

Ackroyd, Peter. *Milton in America*. New York: Doubleday, 1997. ISBN: 9780749386252

Cavendish, Margaret. *Paper Bodies: A Margaret Cavendish Reader*. Ed. Sylvia Bowerbank and Sara Mendelson. Toronto: Broadview Press, 2000. ISBN: 9781551111735

Dutton, Danielle. *Margaret the First*. New York: Catapult, 2016. ISBN: 9781936787357

*Eikon Basilike*. Ed. Jim Daems and Holly Faith Nelson. Toronto: Broadview Press, 2006. ISBN: 1551115948

Greenblatt, Stephen. *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern*. New York: Norton, 2011. ISBN: 9780393343403

Howe, Susan. *The Nonconformist's Memorial*. New York: New Directions, 1993. ISBN: 9780811212298

Lucretius. *The Nature of Things*. Trans. A. E. Stallings. New York: Penguin, 2007. ISBN: 9780140447965

Milton, John. *Paradise Lost*. Ed. John Leonard. New York: Penguin, 2000. ISBN: 9780140424393

Philip, M. NourbeSe. *ZONG!* Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 2008. ISBN: 9780819571694

Trapnel, Anna. *Anna Trapnel's Report and Plea; or, A Narrative of Her Journey from London into Cornwall*. Ed Hilary Hinds. Toronto: ITER, 2016. ISBN: 9780866985581

### Books (recommended)

Bowers, Jennifer, and Peggy Keeran. *Literary Research and the British Renaissance and Early Modern Period*. Lanham: Scarecrow, 2010. ISBN: 9780810856974

Brayman Hackle, Heidi, and Ian Moulton, eds. *Teaching Early Modern Literature From the Archives*. New York: MLA, 2014. ISBN: 9781603291569

Rivers, Isabel. *Classical and Christian Ideas in English Renaissance Poetry*. New York: Routledge, 1994. ISBN: 0415106478

### Invitations:

One Notebook @ 25% (100-200 words per class meeting)

Two Assemblages @ 10% (100-200 words each)

Two Écrits @ 25% (5-7 pages each)

One Project\* @ 40% (15-17 pages or the equivalent, depending upon media)

\* One Project involving research. Open topic, media, form and style. The project should engage in some way with your selection of materials from our studies, and should also address contexts and works beyond that scope. Project proposals required.

**Notes on grading:**

1. *The Check System.* I'll be grading your Assemblages and Écrits with a check system that will follow these guidelines. A check plus on all of these will translate into a grade of 4.0 / A for those percentages of your overall grade in the course. Each check will reduce your grade for those components by -0.5. Each check minus, by -1.0; each missing Écrit or Assemblage, by -2.0. If you ever receive less than a check plus, you will have the option to revise and resubmit for a higher grade. Those revisions (attached to the first draft) will be due by the beginning of the next class.
2. *The Point & Letter System.* I'll be grading your Notebook and Project with a point & letter system corresponding to this scale: A (4.0-3.9); A- (3.8-3.5); B+ (3.4-3.2); B (3.1-2.9); B- (2.8-2.5); C+ (2.4-2.2); C (2.1-1.9); C- (1.8-1.5); D+ (1.4-1.2); D (1.1-0.9); D- (0.8-0.5); F (0.4-0).

**Note on attendance:** For each unexcused absence, your final grade will be diminished by -0.5.

**Note on assignments:** Unless otherwise specified, all assignments are due at the beginning of class, as noted on the calendar, in hard copy form: typed, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, citations included (either Chicago or MLA format) and pages stapled. Works that do not conform to these guidelines will be considered late. Late submissions will receive a deduction of -0.5 per day.

**Calendar (subject to swerves):**

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Chaos &amp; Cosmos</b>
T 3/27	Lucretius / Greenblatt
Th 3/29	Assemblage #1 due / Lucretius / Greenblatt / Danielson / Hutchinson
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Chaos &amp; Cosmos</b>
T 4/3	Lucretius / Greenblatt / Danielson / Hutchinson / Rivers & others TBA
Th 4/5	Lucretius / Greenblatt / Danielson / Hutchinson / Rivers & "
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Reform &amp; Revolution</b>
T 4/10	<i>Eikon Basilike</i> / Howe & others TBA
Th 4/12	<i>Eikon Basilike</i> / Howe & "
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Utopias &amp; Dystopias</b>
T 4/17	Cavendish & "
Th 4/19	Cavendish & "
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Utopias &amp; Dystopias</b>
T 4/24	Cavendish / Philip / Dutton & "
Th 4/26	Écrit #1 due / Cavendish / Philip / Dutton & "
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Epic &amp; Empire</b>
T 5/1	Milton & "
Th 5/3	Project proposals due / Milton & "
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Epic &amp; Empire</b>
T 5/8	Milton & "
Th 5/10	Milton & "

**Week 8****Epic & Empire**

T 5/15 Milton / Ackroyd & “  
Th 5/17 Milton / Ackroyd & “

**Week 9****Prophecy & Protest**

T 5/22 Trapnel & “  
Th 5/24 Écrit #2 due / Trapnel & “

**Week 10****Adaptations & Transformations**

T 5/29 & “  
Th 5/31 Assemblage #2 due / & “

**Week 11**

M 6/4 spring quarter final exams begin  
Th 6/7 exams end / Notebooks & Projects due by 6:00 pm