Prof. N. Daly  
Office: D411, Newman

ENG41660: Transatlantic Literature (Semester 2, 2014/15)  
Tuesday, 4pm, J208

The idea of a ‘national literature’ has a number of problems from a theoretical perspective, but it is also open to scrutiny in historical terms. In this light, this course will track the ways in which English and American authors, among others, operated transatlantically in the 19th and early 20th centuries. We will look at American authors in England and follow a few visitors to America, to consider how the two saw each other and used each other as literary raw material. Such literary transactions took place against a changing geopolitical backdrop, from the years of British dominance, to the rise of what one might consider the American Empire, and the idea of the ‘Special Relationship’. We will look at the work of such figures as Washington Irving, Dion Boucicault, Henry James, the Imagistes, and P.G. Wodehouse; and assess the international dimension of such diverse phenomena as Blackface Minstrelsy, Aestheticism and Imagism. At the end of the course we will consider how more recent versions of the transatlantic imagination work, from Ballard’s refraction of America’s place in the European imaginary in Hello America to the aristocratic fantasies of Old Europe of The Princess Diaries.

Assessment: 5000-word essay. Due Friday, May 1, 2014, by 12 noon.

Texts will include:
Washington Irving, The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. (1819-20) [online, or from Campus bookshop]
Charles Dickens, American Notes (1842) [excerpts, available online]
Dion Boucicault, The Octoroon (1859) [available online]
George Barr McCutcheon, Graustark (1901) [available online]
Henry James, The Ambassadors (1903) [campus bookshop]
--, The American Scene (1907) [excerpts] [online]
Des Imagistes (1914) [work by Ezra Pound, H.D., W. Carlos Williams, Amy Lowell] [available online]
Short fiction by P.G. Wodehouse (“Jeeves and the Chump Cyril”, “Jeeves and the Unbidden Guest”, “Jeeves and the Hard-boiled Egg”, “The Artistic Career of Corky”) [see Blackboard]
J.G. Ballard, Hello America (1981) [bookshop]
The Princess Diaries (Dir. Garry Marshall, Disney, 2001).

Week 2 Dion Boucicault, The Octoroon. Transatlantic melodrama
Week 3 Popular and Elite Transatlanticism: Minstrelsy and Aestheticism
Week 4 George Barr McCutcheon, Graustark. Imaginary Europes and aristocratic fantasy.
Week 5 Henry James, The Ambassadors. Europe as Self-Development.
Week 6 Henry James, The American Scene, excerpts, and “The Jolly Corner” Transatlantic nightmares.

Week 7 Des Imagistes. International Modernism

Two week study break: March 9-22
March.

Week 8 P.G Wodehouse, stories. Transatlantic comedy.
Week 9 J.G. Ballard, Hello America and The Princess Diaries

Some Background Reading (further reading will be indicated on Blackboard)


Roundtable on Kate Flint’s The Transatlantic Indian, and Kate Flint, Response: Transatlantic Studies and The Transatlantic Indian *Victorian Studies* 52.2 (Winter 2010): 269-279


Online resources include the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* website at the University of Virginia, the Modernism Lab at Yale, the Victorian Plays Project at Worcester, the Library’s 19th Century Newspaper Database, and the database of *British Theatre, Music, and Literature: High and Popular Culture*. 