



AF/LT 314 THE LITERATURE OF CHANGE
IES Abroad Cape Town

DESCRIPTION:

This course considers how the pen has been used as both weapon and tool across decades of South African social activism, looking at writings that both enact and impact social and societal change. Covering a swathe of South African history both during and post-Apartheid (1948-1991), the course explores classic texts from poetry to playwriting, but also touches on the genres of non-fiction, journalism and memoir. Overall, it presents a snapshot of some of the most powerful, established literature in the South African protest canon, while extending critical enquiry into fresh and exciting contemporary explorations of identity and culture right up until the present date.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

ADDITIONAL COST: None, though when applicable, students will be made aware of *optional* group extra-curricular theatre trips, which will be additional cost to be covered by students that are interested.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

One lecture and one two-hour workshop per week

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Participation – 10%
- Weekly in-class tests on critical reading content – 10%
- Take-home midterm essay – 25%
- Term paper – 35%
- Zine project – 20%

Course Participation

Students are required to attend one lecture and workshop weekly, where the lecture introduces a thematic concern and the workshop provides space for group discussion and engagement, where appropriate, in related practical tasks. Course readings should be done in advance of the weekly lecture. Students should be prepared to be quizzed on elements related to the readings in short-answer tests during weekly workshops.

Students will, however, be required to do more than simply complete the readings and attend the contact sessions. They will be asked to engage thoughtfully and openly with the material and come to class prepared to respectfully question, engage and explore concepts raised. Optional extracurricular class visits to watch relevant theatre, slam poetry or literary discussion will be offered, as scheduling permits.

Weekly in-class test on critical reading content

Ten short answer formative assessments on required readings

Take-home midterm essay

3500-word take-home midterm essay focusing on a selected aspect of an Apartheid-era protest text covered in class and its socio-political impact. This paper should demonstrate independent research through citation of appropriate secondary source material and close critical analysis skills.

Term Paper



3500-word paper focusing on a selected aspect of contemporary literature studied in class and its relevance to, and position within, contemporary South African society. This paper should demonstrate independent research through citation of appropriate secondary source material and close critical analysis skills.

Zine project

Students will work on creating individual 3000 word zines, using excerpts from South African protest literature to reflect creatively on themes and personal connections these elicit. Creative approaches may include, but are not limited to the use of artwork, poetry, diary-style entries and cartoons. Whilst marks will be awarded for overall creative effect, the assessment emphasis will be more content-focused than artistic. Students will be rewarded for demonstrating an understanding of the visual and stylistic elements of the zine genre as well as a thoughtful, creative response to their chosen literary stimuli. Since the zine’s purpose will be to explore intertextual responses within differing social contexts, it will be important for the creation process to be semester-long and collaborative.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Identify, critique and compare a range of South African protest literature
- Analyse literary techniques in South African protest writing, relate them to socio-historical context
- Evaluate stylistic arguments around literature of protest
- Critique the concept of a South African protest canon
- Connect socio-historical conditions with textual outputs
- Evaluate the centrality of narrative to formation of self / nation

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is **mandatory** for all IES classes, including all course-related trips. **Excused absences** are permitted in the cases of documented illness, a family emergency or when class is held on a recognized religious holiday traditionally observed by a particular student. In this case an IES Abroad **Excused Absence Form** and supporting documents must be submitted to the Academic Manager at least 24 hours before the class. For illness, the **Excused Absence Form** must be submitted to the Academic Manager within 24 hours after the class with a doctor’s note.

More than two unexcused absences will result in **two percentage points (2%)** being deducted from the final grade for every additional unexcused absence thereafter.

Any exams, tests, presentations, or other work missed due to student absences can only be rescheduled in cases of documented medical emergencies or family emergencies. If a test is missed during an unexcused absence they cannot be made up.

It is the student’s responsibility to contact the lecturer and request information on the missed class as well as any relevant reading or homework information.

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Assignments
Week 1:	<p>Marking our Parameters</p> <p>Session 1: What is literature? What implicit value and political associations might we hold around genre? In discussing the kinds of texts and social change we will – and will not – be covering in this course, we will attempt to unpack and recognize underlying academic, personal and social biases. Does change-enabling literature have by default to be authored, or might it also be</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakespeare Unlimited Podcast Series. Folger Shakespeare Library. <u>Shakespeare Unlimited: Episode One.</u>

	<p>appropriated? What were the conditions under which literature was produced / consumed in South Africa? The lecture will serve to outline the course’s concerns and how we will tackle the very broad subject.</p> <p>Session 2 & 3: Workshop</p> <p>The workshop for this week will be dedicated to understanding the impact of Apartheid as a total system: one that controlled every aspect of state, but which was most successful in its disruptions of the everyday. It will contextualize the world in which an act like writing could take on life-changing implications.</p> <p>Whilst remaining cognizant that Apartheid cannot be seen as isolated from the colonial violence and subjugation preceding it, we will take stock of major Apartheid legislation and chart flashpoint resistance moments as part of a mental map and timeline that we will continue to populate as the course progresses. In group project work, we will unpack Apartheid petty and major legislation, charting an essential overview of nearly five decades of policy through the more playful means of adapted Monopoly.</p>	<p><u>are-unlimited/robben-island-shakespeare</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sepamla, Siphon. 1976. The Black Writer in South Africa Today: Problems and Dilemmas in <u>Soweto Poetry: Literary Perspectives</u>. Pp 115 – 121. • Mzamane, Mbulelo. 1978. “Literature and Politics Among Blacks in South Africa” in <u>Soweto Poetry: Literary Perspectives</u>. Pp 150 – 156. • Ngugi wa Thiong'o, “The Language of African Literature” in <u>Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature</u>, 1986. Pp 4 – 34. <p>Deliverables</p> <p>Quiz</p>
<p>Week 2:</p>	<p>SA Black Conscious-ness: the pen and the sword</p> <p>Session 4: The lecture will focus on black consciousness as a vital movement of change. Nelson Mandela described activist and writer Steve Biko as “the spark that lit a veld fire across South Africa.” The lecture for this week will focus on that spark, introducing students to some of Biko’s BC writing through his pseudonym ‘Frank Talk’.</p> <p>Biko’s mobilization of black political consciousness provided the powerful ideological backbone to South African protest writing of all genres and must prove our starting point.</p> <p>Session 5 & 6: Workshop. Discussion: practicalities of resistance, consequences of writing. Screening and</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biko, Steve. ‘The Definition of Black Consciousness’ in <u>I Write What I Like</u>. Pp 48 – 53. • Biko, Steve. ‘White Racism and Black Consciousness’ in <u>I Write What I Like</u>. Pp 61 – 66. • Biko, Steve. ‘Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity’ in <u>I Write What I Like</u>. Pp 87 – 98. • Biko, Steve. ‘On Death’ in <u>I Write What I Like</u>. Pp 152-153.

	<p>discussion of clips from the documentary ‘The Life and Death of Steven Biko.’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Life and Death of Stephen Biko (documentary). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MoNGCSgWQEQ <p>Deliverables</p> <p>Quiz</p>
<p>Week 3</p>	<p>Apartheid Protest Poetry</p> <p>Session 7: South Africa is famous for its struggle poetry – easily disseminable and memorized texts that packed a powerful rhetorical punch. We will consider some leading examples of these and their origins in the Black Consciousness movement. We will also discuss poetry as a genre and how it might be uniquely suited to encouraging social resistance.</p> <p>Session 8 & 9: Workshop</p> <p>Close textual analysis, thematic discussion. Guest speaker Q&A (one of Rustum Kozain / Kelwyn Sole / Blaq Pearl)</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Becoming Black: Wopko Jensma and Black Consciousness Poetry’ in Pucherova, Dobrota. 2011. <u>The Ethics of Dissident Desire in Southern African Writing</u>. WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, Trier. Pp 21 – 28. • General resource: Badilisha Poetry Exchange. http://badilishapoetry.com/countries/south-africa/ <p>Deliverables</p> <p>Quiz</p>
<p>Week 4</p>	<p>Beating the Drum</p> <p>Session 10: What is journalism’s place within the SA literary canon? In considering the debate between art and craft, we will look at the possibilities of interdisciplinary work – the possibilities presented by the in-between. Here we will explore a history of Drum Magazine, which was at the heart of popular resistance and consciousness-raising, and created a platform for journalists, photojournalists and short story writers to significantly influence public opinion as well as to disseminate much-valued information. In opening up a</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapman, Michael. More Than Telling a Story: Drum and its Significance in Black South African Writing in Chapman, Michael. 2001. <u>The Drum Decade: Stories from the 1950s</u>. Pp 183 – 232. • Matshikiza, John. Introduction in Chapman, Michael. 2001. <u>The</u>

	<p>short form platform midway between fact and fiction, we will discuss how it became a platform for the development of the South African short story genre.</p> <p>Session 11 & 12: Workshop Discussion: the subversive power of the popular. Archival analysis. Introduction to the Zine genre with guest zine expert Matthew Barge.</p>	<p><u>Drum Decade: Stories from the 1950s</u>. Pp ix – xii.</p> <p>Deliverables</p> <p>Quiz</p>
<p>Week 5:</p>	<p>Protest Theatre</p> <p>Session 13: Theatre has historically been a particularly powerful form of protest text, with its ephemeral nature particularly well suited to powerful, mobile political statement that conveniently left no trace. Here, we will need to spend some class time considering text and embodiment: how we can define a text – particularly in the case of protest theatre, which was often borne out of devised rather than individually authored work and which often depended so heavily on embodied cues that may leave no formal traces in archival documentation of photograph or written script.</p> <p>Session 14 & 15: Workshop</p> <p>Small group work and class exercises around embodied storytelling.</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ngema, Mbongeni; Simon, Barney and Mtwa, Percy. 1983. <u>Woza, Albert!</u> Modern Classics. <p>Deliverables</p> <p>Quiz</p>
<p>Week 6</p>	<p>Textual Author-ity</p> <p>Session 16: We take time to consider shifting concepts of authorship and text around the genre of plays. Particularly we will unpack the cult of personality that playwrights often enjoy (with specific reference, in this case, to Athol Fugard) in contrast with the demands of audiencing, devised work processes and social impact.</p> <p>Session 17 & 18: Workshop</p> <p>Collaborative storytelling project and ongoing zine creation.</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fugard, Athol; Kani, John and Ntshona, Winston. 1976. <u>Sizwe Bansi is Dead</u>. Viking. <p>Deliverables</p> <p>Quiz</p>

<p>Week 7:</p>	<p>Languaging Transitions</p> <p>Session 19: This week functions as a pause – a reflection on transition, both in terms of politics and our course focus. What happened in the lead up to the 1994 transition? What were some of the major post-Apartheid social markers of change? What kinds of change did South Africans experience? How might anxiously changing times require reflection or distillation and what literary forms proved most adept at offering this?</p> <p>Session 20 & 21: Workshop</p> <p>A screening of clips from the <u>Afrikaaps</u> documentary (https://vimeo.com/110661285) will lead into a discussion of reclaiming language and changing perceptions.</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ndebele, Njabulo. 1994. “Turkish Tales and Some Thoughts in South African Fiction” in <u>The Rediscovery of the Ordinary</u>. Manchester University Press. Pp 17 – 40. https://vimeo.com/110661285 <p>Deliverables</p> <p>Quiz</p> <p>Essay One due end of week</p>
<p>Week 8:</p>	<p>Speaking Truth to Power</p> <p>Session 22: While honouring the important role played by anti-Apartheid literature, I would like to suggest that protest writing is a strong Southern African tradition that never ended, but merely adapted to political conditions: moving genre and aesthetic according to need and conditions.</p> <p>Post-Apartheid, then, we consider the rise of non-fiction: the politically devastating gonzo writings of Richard Poplak and the crucial role of citizen-led journalism in a time of dying print media, state capture and ‘fake news’ with The Daily Vox and GroundUp.</p> <p>We will also consider the role of academia in challenging power structures.</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poplak, Richard (Daily Maverick). 12 December 2013. <u>Fog Donkey: The Only Honest Man in a Stadium of Fools</u>. Available online: https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2013-12-12-fog-donkey-the-only-honest-man-in-a-stadium-of-fools/#.WeYcISN97R0. Finlay, Alan (The Conversation). <u>The State of South African Journalism: There’s Good News and there’s Bad News</u>. Available online:

	<p>Session 23 & 24: Workshop</p> <p>Class discussion, reportage, creation of zine.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://theconversation.com/the-state-of-south-african-journalism-theres-good-news-and-theres-bad-news-76027 • Munusamy, Ranjeni (Daily Maverick). 2017. <u>Betrayal of the Promise: the Anatomy of State Capture</u>. Available online: https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2017-05-26-betrayal-of-the-promise-the-anatomy-of-state-capture/#.Wej_5CN97R0. • Mark Swilling et al. July 2017. <u>The Betrayal of the Promise: How South Africa is Being Stolen</u>. Available online: http://47zhcvti0ul2ftip9rxo9fj9.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Academic-Presentation-25_07_2017-1.pdf. (for reference only – students are not expected to read this report in its entirety). <p>Deliverables</p> <p>Quiz</p>
<p>Week 9</p>	<p>Africa Rising: from exclamation to interrogation in theatre of the new South Africa</p> <p>Session 25: This week’s class will explore the shifting representation from closed Apartheid societies to open contemporary questions in literature. The role of theatre in contemporary SA will particularly be analyzed: the rise of the Afrikaans festival, the fall of mainstream ticket sales etc.</p> <p>Session 26 & 27: Workshop</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kreuger, Anton. “It’s Just Changed Colour? Clowning With Parodies of Religion, Race and Nation in Woza Albert! and Woza Andries? In Holdsworth, Nadine (ed). 2014. <u>Theatre and National Identity: Re-Imagining Conceptions of Nation</u>. Routledge, New York.

	<p>Guest speaker Q&A (potentially Mike van Graan). Reflection on our own cultural consumption habits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woza Andries? Unpublished script. <p>Deliverables</p> <p>Quiz</p>
<p>Week 10:</p>	<p>Fallism: performative politics and politicised performance</p> <p>Session 28: The lecture will seek to contextualize the Fallism movement’s centrality to the decolonization debate and discuss how performance, both on and off the stage, is vital to its ability to enact change.</p> <p>Using the theory of Paul Connerton, we will particularly consider how and why societies need to hold memory and the difference between embodied and inscribed commemoration.</p> <p>Session 29 & 30: Workshop</p> <p>Guest Speaker Q&A (potentially Ameera Conrad)</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fall. Junkets Playscript Series. • Connerton, Paul. 1989. How Societies Remember. Cambridge University Press. Selected excerpts. <p>Deliverables</p> <p>Quiz</p>
<p>Week 11:</p>	<p>Memoir and identity: Understanding self-change in changing times</p> <p>Unpacking ‘whiteness’</p> <p>Session 31: A consideration of the searing critical examinations of whiteness in Antjie Krog’s <i>Country of My Skull</i>. Framing discussion around the politics of personal reflections on race and culture.</p> <p>Session 32 & 33: Workshop</p> <p>TRC footage, accounts, ways of dealing with past. Memorialization. Exploration of online archival material and group conversation around representation and holding trauma.</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Krog, Antjie. 1999. Country of My Skull. Vintage. (281 pages)

<p>Week 12</p>	<p>Memoir and identity: Understanding self-change in changing times</p> <p>Unpacking ‘blackness’</p> <p>Session 34: Explorations around exile and return. Belonging and leaving, diaspora and ‘authenticity’. Class as a forgotten narrative</p> <p>Session 35 & 36: Workshop</p> <p>Discussion around telling the story: narrative shaping, trajectory and the pull of the heroic journey. Writing for change after ‘happily ever after’.</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Msimang, Sisonke. 2017. <u>Always Another Country</u>. Jonathan Ball, Cape Town. (352 pages)
<p>Week 13</p>	<p>Consolidation</p> <p>Session 37: Wrap up of course themes. What urgent change is still needed post-Apartheid? How might literature play a role in this?</p> <p>Session 38 & 39: Workshop</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to consider how they, themselves, have changed through their time immersed physically and culturally in South Africa. They will work creative expression of this through a group presentation and sharing of their course zines.</p>	<p>Deliverables</p> <p>Final essay due</p> <p>Zines due</p>

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

(Dependent on the performances at the time)

- A poetry slam visit
- Baxter Theatre
- Khayalitsha Makukhanye Art Room
- Theatre Arts Admin Collective
- Fugard Theatre

Please note it is impossible to blend these into the session chart prior to theatre calendars being released. Visits will have to be informally allocated – at worst, students will be given a month’s warning.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Badilisha Poetry Exchange. <http://badilishapoetry.com/countries/south-africa/>
- ‘Becoming Black: Wopko Jensma and Black Consciousness Poetry’ in Pucherova, Dobrota. 2011. *The Ethics of Dissident Desire in Southern African Writing*. WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, Trier. Pp 21 – 28.
- Biko, Steve. ‘Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity’ in *I Write What I Like*. Pp 87 – 98.
- ---. ‘On Death’ in *I Write What I Like*. Pp 152-153.
- ---. ‘The Definition of Black Consciousness’ in *I Write What I Like*. Pp 48 – 53.
- ---. ‘White Racism and Black Consciousness’ in *I Write What I Like*. Pp 61 – 66.

- Chapman, Michael. 'More Than Telling a Story: Drum and its Significance in Black South African Writing' in Chapman, Michael. 2001. *The Drum Decade: Stories from the 1950s*. Pp 183 – 232.
- Connerton, Paul. 1989. *How Society Remembers*. Cambridge University Press. Selected excerpts.
- *The Fall*. Junkets Playscript Series.
- Finlay, Alan (The Conversation). *The State of South African Journalism: There's Good News and there's Bad News*. Available online: <http://theconversation.com/the-state-of-south-african-journalism-theres-good-news-and-theres-bad-news-76027>
- Fugard, Athol; Kani, John and Ntshona, Winston. 1976. *Sizwe Banzi is Dead*. Viking.
- Kreuger, Anton. "It's Just Changed Colour? Clowning With Parodies of Religion, Race and Nation in Woza Albert! and Woza Andries?" In Holdsworth, Nadine (ed). 2014. *Theatre and National Identity: Re-Imagining Conceptions of Nation*. Routledge, New York. Pp 19 – 40.
- Krog, Antjie. 1999. *Country of My Skull*. Vintage.
- Matshikiza, John. 'Introduction' in Chapman, Michael. 2001. *The Drum Decade: Stories from the 1950s*. Pp ix – xii.
- Msimang, Sisonke. 2017. *Always Another Country*. Jonathan Ball, Cape Town.
- Munusamy, Ranjeni (Daily Maverick). 2017. *Betrayal of the Promise: the Anatomy of State Capture*. Available online: https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2017-05-26-betrayal-of-the-promise-the-anatomy-of-state-capture/#.Wej_5CN97R0
- Ndebele, Njabulo. 1994. "Turkish Tales and Some Thoughts in South African Fiction" in *The Rediscovery of the Ordinary*. Manchester University Press. Pp 17 – 40.
- Mzamane, Mbulelo. 1978. "Literature and Politics Among Blacks in South Africa" in *Soweto Poetry: Literary Perspectives*. Pp 150 – 156.
- Ngema, Mbongeni; Simon, Barney and Mtwana, Percy. 1983. *Woza, Albert!* Modern Classics.
- Poplak, Richard (Daily Maverick). 12 December 2013. *Fog Donkey: The Only Honest Man in a Stadium of Fools*. Available online: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2013-12-12-fog-donkey-the-only-honest-man-in-a-stadium-of-fools/#.WeYclSN97R0>.
- Sepamla, Siphon. 1976. *The Black Writer in South Africa Today: Problems and Dilemmas in Soweto Poetry: Literary Perspectives*. Pp 115 – 121.
- Swilling, Mark et al. July 2017. *The Betrayal of the Promise: How South Africa is Being Stolen*. Available online: http://47zhcvti0ul2ftip9rxo9fj9.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Academic-Presentation-25_07_2017_-1.pdf.
- wa Thiong'o, Ngugi. 1986. "The Language of African Literature" in *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. Pp 4-34.
- *Woza Andries?* Unpublished script.

Online Podcast

- Shakespeare Unlimited Podcast Series. Folger Shakespeare Library. Shakespeare Unlimited: Episode One. <https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited/robben-island-shakespeare>

Documentaries

- The Life and Death of Steven Biko <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MoNGCSgWQEQ>
- Afrikaaps <https://vimeo.com/110661285>