

ITALIAN STUDIES (ITAL)

*** ITAL 020a / HUMS 020a, Six Pretty Good Dogs** Simona Lorenzini

We all have heard the phrase “Dogs are man’s best friends.” For thousands and thousands of years there has been an indissoluble friendship between man and dog, an unwritten covenant, a symbiotic relationship that has no equal in the animal world. Why do we consider them our ‘best friends’? And is this always true? If not, why do we sometimes fear dogs? What role have dogs played in our understanding of being human? This course explores images of dogs in 20th-21st Italian literature through six main categories: a man and his dog; dogs and inhumanity; dogs and exile; dogs and children; dogs and folktales; dogs and modern bestiary. We discuss and close read a variety of texts, which are representative of different strategies for reflecting on the self and on the ‘other’ by unpacking the unstable relationship between anthropomorphism, personification, and humanization. Hopefully, these texts impel us to understand how profoundly the animal is involved in the human and the human in the animal. This course is part of the “Six Pretty Good Ideas” program. All readings in English. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU 1½ Course cr

*** ITAL 030a / HUMS 033a, Six Pretty Good Knights** Alessandro Giammei

What do Batman (the Dark Knight) and Orlando (Charlemagne’s wise paladin) have in common? What is the thread that connects the Jedi knights of *Star Wars* and those that sat around king Arthur’s round table? How did medieval history and Renaissance poetry inform the expanded universes of superhero movies and fantasy literature, along with the inexhaustible fan-fiction that further extends and queers them? Chivalry, as a code of conduct and a network of symbols, inspired some of the most entertaining stories of the so-called Western canon, blurring the divide between high and popular culture. It offered storytellers (and nerds) of all ages a set of norms to question, bend, and break – especially in terms of gender. It challenged the very format of books, re-defining for good concepts like literary irony, seriality, and inter-mediality. This seminar proposes six pretty good trans-historical archetypes of fictional knights, combining iconic figures such as Marvel’s Iron Man and Italo Calvino’s Agilulfo, Ludovico Ariosto’s Bradamante and *Game of Thrones*’ Brienne of Tarth, Don Quixote and the Mandalorian. By analyzing together their oaths, weapons, armors, and destinies we aim to develop reading and writing skills to tackle any text, from epic and scholarship to TV-shows and comic-books. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU 0 Course cr

*** ITAL 110a, Elementary Italian I** Staff

A beginning course with extensive practice in speaking, reading, writing, and listening and a thorough introduction to Italian grammar. Activities include group and pairs work, role-playing, and conversation. Introduction to Italian culture through readings and films. Conducted in Italian. L1 1½ Course cr

*** ITAL 130a, Intermediate Italian I** Staff

The first half of a two-term sequence designed to increase students’ proficiency in the four language skills and advanced grammar concepts. Authentic readings paired with contemporary films. In-class group and pairs activities, role-playing, and conversation. Admits to ITAL 140. Conducted in Italian. ITAL 120 or equivalent. L3 1½ Course cr

ITAL 150a, Advanced Composition and Conversation: Anna Iacovella

Discussion of social, political, and literary issues in order to improve active command of the language. Development of advanced reading skills through magazine and newspaper articles, essays, short stories, films, and a novel; enhancement of writing skills through experiments with reviews, essays, creative writing, and business and informal Italian. Classroom emphasis on advanced speaking skills and vocabulary building. Prerequisite: ITAL 140 or equivalent. L5

* **ITAL 162a, Introduction to Italian Literature: From the Duecento to the Renaissance** Simona Lorenzini

This is the first course in a sequence studying Italian Literature. The course aims to provide an introduction and a broad overview of Italian literature and culture from the Duecento to the Renaissance, specifically focusing on authors such as Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Machiavelli, Ariosto, and literary and artistic movements such as Humanism and Renaissance. These authors and their masterpieces are introduced through readings, works of art, listening materials, videos, and films. Great space is left for in-class discussion and suggestions from students who may take an interest in specific authors or subjects. This course is interactive and open, and the authors mentioned here are only indicative of the path that we follow. At the end of the course, students are able to analyze and critique literary works of different genres and time periods. The course is conducted in Italian. Prerequisite: ITAL 140 or equivalent. L5, HU

* **ITAL 303b / FILM 457b / LITR 359b, Italian Film from Postwar to Postmodern** Millicent Marcus

A study of important Italian films from World War II to the present. Consideration of works that typify major directors and trends. Topics include neorealism, self-reflexivity and metacinema, fascism and war, and postmodernism. Films by Fellini, Antonioni, Rossellini, De Sica, Visconti, Pasolini, Bertolucci, Wertmuller, Tornatore, and Moretti. Films in Italian with English subtitles. WR, HU

ITAL 310a / HUMS 180a / LITR 183a, Dante in Translation Staff

A critical reading of Dante's *Divine Comedy* and selections from the minor works, with an attempt to place Dante's work in the intellectual and social context of the late Middle Ages by relating literature to philosophical, theological, and political concerns. No knowledge of Italian required. Course conducted in English. HU TR o Course cr

ITAL 315a / HIST 280a / RLST 160a, The Catholic Intellectual Tradition Staff

Introductory survey of the interaction between Catholicism and Western culture from the first century to the present, with a focus on pivotal moments and crucial developments that defined both traditions. Key beliefs, rites, and customs of the Roman Catholic Church, and the ways in which they have found expression; interaction between Catholics and the institution of the Church; Catholicism in its cultural and sociopolitical matrices. Close reading of primary sources. HU o Course cr

* **ITAL 340a / HUMS 191a / LITR 347a / WGSS 362a, Dangerous Women: Sirens, Singers, Poets and Singers from Sappho to Elena Ferrante** Jane Tylus

Was Sappho a feminist? This course tries to answer that question by analyzing how women's voices have been appropriated by the literary and cultural canon of the west—and how in turn women writers and readers have reappropriated those voices. Students read a generous amount of literary (and in some cases, musical) works, along with a

variety of contemporary theoretical approaches so as to engage in conversation about authorship, classical reception, and materiality. Following an introduction to Greek and Roman texts key for problematic female figures such as sirens and sibyls, we turn to two later historical moments to explore how women artists have both broken out of and used the western canon, redefining genre, content, and style in literary creation writ large. How did Renaissance women such as Laura Cereta, Gaspara Stampa, and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz fashion themselves as authors in light of the classical sources they had at hand? And once we arrive in the 20th and 21st centuries, how do Sibilla Aleramo, Elsa Morante, Anna Maria Ortese, and Elena Ferrante forge a new, feminist writing via classical, queer and/or animal viewpoints? HU TR

* **ITAL 470a and ITAL 471a, Special Studies in Italian Literature** Simona Lorenzini
A series of tutorials to direct students in special interests and requirements. Students meet regularly with a faculty member.

* **ITAL 491a, The Senior Essay** Simona Lorenzini
A research essay on a subject selected by the student in consultation with the faculty adviser.