ENGLISH 330 B

Instructor: Brenda Cantar

Office: Hagey Hall 267
Office Hours: 11:30--1 pm. Tues/Thurs. or by appointment

Phone: ext. 3361

Required Texts:

Please read and thoroughly absorb the handout on plagiarism. If you have any questions, ask me for clarification before you begin your essay.

Course outline and objectives:

In this section of Elizabethan literature, we will concentrate on Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, and Philip Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, considered the period's greatest achievements in the genre of epic-romance. Since their first appearance on the literary scene in the 1590s, these texts and their authors have exerted considerable influence on later British writers and poets--from Milton to Keats. Indeed, Charles I is said to have gone to his execution with Pamela's prayer from Sidney's *Arcadia* on his lips, and Spenser has been called the poet's poet.

Lectures, followed by class discussion, will take several directions: the history and theory of epic and romance; the nature of language and representation in the shaping of the hero/heroine; Sidney's and Spenser's innovative fusing of epic and romance; imagery, metaphors, and the use of allegory. Our inquiries will be framed by the question of the Elizabethan use of art and literature in the shaping of a national consciousness--strategies that constitute what have been called the period's poetics and politics of culture.

Students who do not have the prerequisite (English 330 A) are required to read Castiglione, *The Courtier*, Book IV, transl. Hoby, and Sidney's *The Defence of Poetry*. The Castiglione (just a short selection from *The Courtier*) can be found in the *Norton Anthology of English Literature, Vol. I. There should be copies of Sidney's Defence in the bookstore; it is also reprinted in the Norton; and, of course, there are several copies in the Arts library.*

Grading and assignments

Two essays, 1500-2000 wds. (approx. 6-8 pgs. d.s.), and a final examination. Essays significantly shorter than the required length are not acceptable, but should not exceed the required length by more than a page. One essay must be on the *Arcadia* and one on *The Faerie Queene*, topics to be handed out shortly.

Essay one: due June 10 .............................. 25%
Essay two: due July 22 .............................. 25%
Final exam ............................................. 40%
Class participation .................................. 10%

A Note on the participation mark: Active class participation is essential for an interchange of ideas about the material, as well as for helping all of us work through an understanding of the texts. It goes without saying that attendance is imperative, and that the course material is read in advance of the lectures.

Late penalty policy: essays must be submitted on time. If you are unable to meet the due date, you must be granted an extension by me, or provide a medical certificate to avoid penalty. Otherwise an automatic 5% will be deducted for late submissions, and a further 1% for each weekday they are late.

No essays will be accepted more than two weeks after the due date.
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

English 330 B

Spring, 1993.

The first six weeks are devoted to the *Arcadia*. Since it is long and in Sidney’s dense and inimitable style, students are advised to read ahead as much as they can absorb to be prepared for class discussion. But it’s a terrific story, so forge ahead. In the second half of the course, we will read the six books of *The Faerie Queene*, I and III are complete, II, IV, V, & VI are selected excerpts. Except for the introductory lecture, the weekly topics will frame the lectures, and should help to guide your reading, and enable you to formulate questions. The attached, highly selective, bibliography is by no means prescribed, and meant only as a guide to available material that might help you draft your own questions and arguments for your essays.

Week 1)  Introductory remarks; course organization; Elizabethan romance within the genre of romance from Heliodorus to Barbara Cartland.

Week 2)  The plot of romance illustrated in Sidney’s *Arcadia*.

Week 3)  The characters of romance illustrated in Sidney’s *Arcadia*.

Week 4)  From romance distractions to epic quest: Sidney’s revisions.

Week 5)  The gender of the reader: what evidence is there that Sidney inscribes a gendered readership in the *Arcadia*?

Week 6)  Domination and Defiance: Parents and children in the *Arcadia*.

Week 7)  "A Letter of the Authors," *The Faerie Queene*, Book I, "a continued Allegory, or a darke conceit."

Week 8)  *FQ*, Book II, the Knight, the Lady, and the Bower of Bliss.

Week 9)  Book III, Britomart, Gloriana and Queen Elizabeth. Images of the feminine: images of the ruler.

Week 10)  From Books IV and V: love, friendship & The Temple of Venus. Justice & the vision of Britomart.

Week 11)  From Book VI, the blatant beast, the courtier and the poet.

Week 12)  The endless work of romance, epic closure, and the Mutabilitie Cantos.

Week 13)  Revision and open discussion.
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Christopher Martin, "Mis doubting His Estate: Dynastic Anxiety in Sidney's *Arcadia*" in *ELR* 18, 3 Autumn (1988): 369-388.


James Nohrnberg, *The Analogy of "The Faerie Queene."* 

Parker, Patricia. *Inescapable Romance*.


Gordon Teskey, "Allegory" in *The Spenser Encyclopaedia*.

Kenneth Thorpe, *Romantic Love and Parental Authority in Sidney's "Arcadia*"

There are many other books on both Spenser and Sidney, to say nothing of recent journal articles in *English Literary Renaissance, The Sixteenth-Century Journal, The Renaissance Quarterly*, to name just a few.