

LTEN 154 - AMERICAN GOTHIC LITERATURE

Summer Session 2 † T&TH 8:00am -10:50am

Instructor: Laurie Nies



This course explores the political and cultural anxieties that were haunting the nineteenth-century American imagination. We will focus on gothic tropes – monstrosity, darkness, the uncanny, etc. –and what their use reveals about national identity, slavery and female autonomy. A study of short stories, novels, and contemporary criticism, will allow us to question why a nation that values freedom, purity, and democracy, produces literature so often characterized by captivity, corruption and dominance. In addition to canonical authors, including Poe, Brown and Lippard (all white men), we will also read texts penned by the frequent specters of gothic fiction, women and African Americans.