LITERARY LONDON: SUMMER 2015

Fredonia’s Literary London Program offers two three-credit courses during a 16-day stay in central London. Students live in the City and explore the very locations and scenes of the literature they read for their courses. Most evenings and a couple of days are open for students to plan entertainment and excursions of their own, too. Dates and program fees are still being worked out, but we hope to travel in mid-to-late June or the early part of July. The courses count as upper-level electives, for a total of six credit hours.

ENGL 404.01/512.01: DECADENTS, DEGENERATES, AND PAGANS: THE SECRET SIDE OF LONDON
DR. SHANNON MCRAE

This course delves into the fertile underground of mystical beliefs, occult practices, and Dionysian experiment that fed the stately traditions of Literary London—particularly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Reading the works of such authors as Oscar Wilde, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Christina Rossetti, William Butler Yeats, T.S. Eliot, Aleister Crowley, Alan Moore, and Neil Giaman, we will discuss their shared notions of England in general and London in particular as a place that existed on two different planes: one real and present, the other mythic, powerful, dangerous—just out of reach but deeply influential. Besides reading the literature, we will explore some of these places, in excursions to places such as Stonehenge, Highgate Cemetery, walking tours of Whitechapel and Occult London.

ENGL 404.02/520.01: LIQUID HISTORY: THE RIVER THAMES IN BRITISH LITERATURE
DR. DAVID KAPLIN

More than 90,000 objects recovered from the Thames and its foreshore currently reside in the collection of the Museum of London. For centuries, the river has offered up many of London’s secrets, and it has also offered unique inspiration to writers of fiction and poetry. In this course, we will explore depictions of the River Thames in the works of Daniel Defoe, Matthew Arnold, Charles Dickens, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Joseph Conrad, Jerome K. Jerome, and T.S. Eliot. How does each writer envision the geophysical and metaphorical significance of this venerable waterway, and how does its function vary from author to author? In addition, we will study historical and contemporary documents recounting the development of the river and its importance to the city’s economy, from the age of Londinium to today. Excursions include the Museum of London, the Museum of the Docklands, the Port and Naval Academy in Greenwich, and, of course, the Thames itself, both by walking along its banks and by taking a boat-ride up to Oxford (with an overnight stay).

Stay tuned for more details, including accommodations, meal arrangements, and estimated course fee. Questions? E-mail mcrae@fredonia.edu or kaplin@fredonia.edu, or contact Katrina Hamilton-Kraft in the Study Abroad Office in LoGrasso Hall (hamiltok@fredonia.edu).