

DOPPELGÄNGERS & DARK DOUBLES: RACE & GENDER IN THE 19TH-CENTURY ATLANTIC

GNDR_ST 382

SPRING
2023



Today, eviltwins, alteregos and doppelgängers are fodder for soap operas and sci-fi dramas. In this course, we'll trace the trope of the double back to the nineteenth-century, when doubles proliferated in popular culture. (Think Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.) We'll use the trope of the double to question the hardening of gender roles and racial categories in the nineteenth-century Atlantic world. Together, we'll identify the distinct modes of masculinity, femininity and domesticity presented by the twinned characters in novels like Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Mark Twain's *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, and Mary Seacole's *Wonderful Adventures* and ask how they uphold or destabilize ideas about "traditional" masculinity and femininity. Pairing novels from England, the U.S. and the Caribbean with readings by essential feminist critics and historians like Saidiya Hartman, Gayatri Spivak, and Anne McClintock, we'll contemplate how gender and racial categories emerge in ways that are entangled and intertwined. We'll consider what these texts can tell us about the relations between the English metropole, its colonies, and the distant- or deeply intimate and interdependent- bonds between them. Throughout the course, we'll also reflect on what contemporary representations of this world, like *Bridgerton*, have to say about our current understandings of these categories and how they continue to shape our world today.

Elizabeth Winter

TTh 11am-12:20pm
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