Fall 2020 Course Description

**Instructor:** Mikko Tuhkanen  
**Course:** ENGL 303  
**Title:** Approaches to English Studies (Ways of Reading James Baldwin)

**Description:** This class introduces students to the work that literary scholars do by focusing on the work of James Baldwin (1924-1987), an African American writer and a keen observer of American and European life in the context of postcolonial modernity. Scholars have recently noted a “new wave” of interest in Baldwin’s oeuvre. We will consider possible reasons for such resurgence, in the process thinking about the ways in which literary canons and the reception of artworks change over time. To do this, we will also familiarize ourselves with various scholarly approaches to literature (historicism, psychoanalytic criticism, queer theory, critical race theory), using Baldwin as our test case.

**Proposed Readings:**