Fall 2020 Course Description

Instructor: Mikko Tuhkanen
Course: ENGL 393
Title: James Baldwin and Others (Studies in Africana Literature and Culture)

Description: This course looks at the work of James Baldwin (1924-1987), an African American, gay writer and a keen observer of American and European life in the context of postcolonial modernity. Throughout his work from the late 1940s to the late 1980s, Baldwin developed his own form of ethics—of moving in a world while mindful of, and sensitive to, its perhaps irreconcilable differences. In this class, we will explore what such "Baldwinian ethics" consists of and how it may be relevant to our lives in the twenty-first century by situating his work in various contexts. Apart from Baldwin’s work, the reading list also includes novels by Henry James, Richard Wright, and Harriet Beecher Stowe, as well as scholarly texts.

Proposed Readings: