Course Description

This course will explore the centrality of secrets and secrecy to literature, and the centrality of literature to our understanding of secrets. We’ll begin the course by exploring the nature of the secret from a number of theoretical perspectives—sociological, philosophical, political, and narrative—and then work through four key versions of the relationship between concealment and disclosure, which we will explore with the help of texts by a range of nineteenth-century British and American writers: mystery and obscurity; transparency and confession; conspiracy; and the open secret.

Required Texts (Available at the Campus Store; please buy these editions)

Sophocles, Oedipus the King (Chicago)
Ann Radcliffe, A Sicilian Romance (Oxford)
Edgar Allan Poe, Selected Tales (Oxford)
Wilkie Collins, The Woman in White (Broadview)
James, The Beast in the Jungle and other Stories (Dover)
George Eliot, The Lifted Veil and Brother Jacob (Oxford)