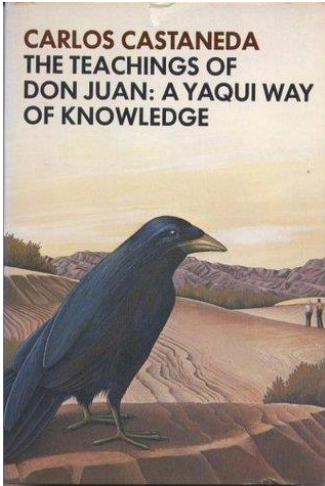


“Ethnographic Fiction and Faction”

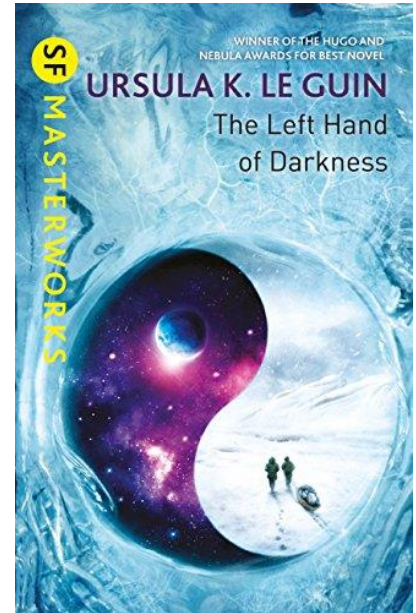
INGL 3300 (Fall 2018, T-Th 2-3:15 Chardón 222)

Dr. Gregory Stephens

“Faction” describes the mutual influence of fiction and non-fiction. This course looks at both sides of the border between literature and ethnography. We will read fiction that uses ethnographic framing, as with Ursula LeGuin’s *The Left Hand of Darkness*, a classic of science fiction about gender-bending and intercultural exploration.



We will also read anthropology that uses fictional story-telling devices, from Margaret Mead’s *Coming of Age in Samoa*, to Carlos Castaneda’s controversial *The Teachings of Don Juan*.



Ethnographically-informed writing provides a way of seeing things whole, and understanding other cultures from the perspective of participants. This genre is characterized by the “outside observer,” as in *Ecotopia* by Ernest Callenbach, in which a reporter from a United States much like “The Capitol” in *Hunger Games* visits the Pacific Northwest, which has declared independence, forming a society based on environmental principles. The YAL novel *The Telling* by LeGuin offers a model of how to see beyond the biases of our/the dominant culture, in order to gain a better understanding of “the other”—peoples who do things differently in ways that may challenge us, or even seem threatening, until we see the world through their eyes.

The area of interface between literature and ethnography offers several valuable skills: another approach to literary/cultural analysis; a wider palette of writing styles; and methods for intercultural understanding.