**COLT 1813: Making a List**

Tuesdays and Thursdays 6:30–7:50

101 Thayer Street (VGQ 1st fl) 116E

Haynes

Office: Marston Hall, Room 101

Office hours: Tuesday 12–1, Thursday 1–2

The list is one of the most ancient and enduring figures of rhetoric and one of the most versatile means of organizing literary works. From the catalogues of Homeric epic to the postmodern fables of Borges to new digital media, from biblical lists to Renaissance copia, from the descriptive realism of novels to modernist techniques of collage, the simple list has produced an astonishing variety of effects in a wide range of genres and authors. We will read widely in this course, from many periods, literatures, authors, and genres.

*Course requirements*

Two short papers (2000 words), one medium-length paper (4000 words), participation in class discussion

January 23 Introduction to the class and the topic

January 28 William H. Gass: ‘And’, ‘I’ve Got a Little List’

January 30 Epic catalogue: Homer, catalogue of ships; Milton, catalogue of demons

February 4 Epic ekphrasis: Virgil, shield of Aeneas; Catullus 64

February 6 Curses and insults: Semonides, Ovid

February 11 Theory 1: Durkheim and Mauss; Mary Douglas on Leviticus

February 13 Bible: prohibitions, commandments, beatitudes; Psalms and parallelism

February 20 Litany: Nashe, Smart, Blake, Baudelaire

*Paper 1 due*

February 25 Chaucer: General Prologue

February 27 Copia: Erasmus and Rabelais

March 4 The *essai*: Montaigne

March 6 The anatomy: Burton

March 11 Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*

March 13 Whitman and Hopkins

March 18 Flaubert

March 20 Joyce

*Paper 2 due*

April 1 Theory 2: Polythetic classification

April 3 Pound

April 8 Borges; Garcia Marquez

April 10 Perec

April 15 Calvino (begin)

April 17 Calvino (complete); Kis (begin)

April 22 Kis (complete)

April 24 Final discussion

April 30 Final paper due