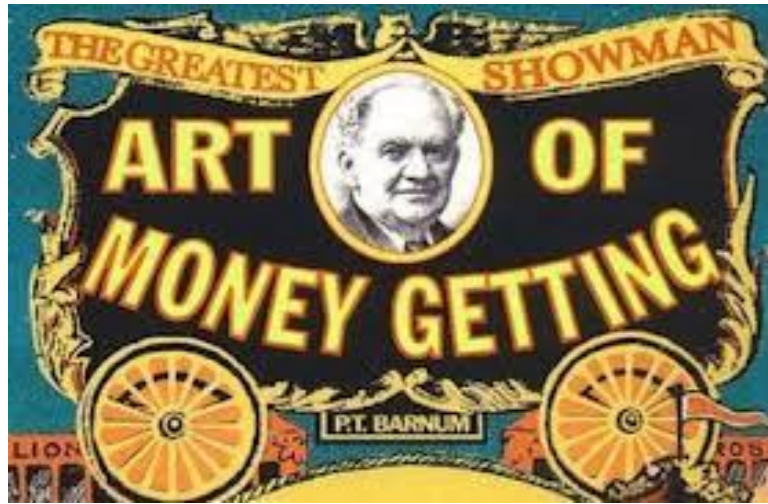


English 630  
Dr. Tom Fick  
Monday, 5:00-7:30

## **Promise(d) Land: The Confidence Game in American Literature and Culture**



In 1857 Herman Melville published *The Confidence-Man: His Masquerade*, and the con man in his various guises has continued to inspire some of our best writers, among them William Dean Howells, Mark Twain, Charles Chesnutt, Ralph Ellison, Flannery O'Connor, Ken Kesey, Jerzy Kosinski, Patricia Highsmith, David Samuels, and Walter Kirn. We'll delve into these authors, watch some of the best con-man films (David Mamet's "House of Games," for example), and explore related subjects and issues: slight-of-hand, influential public figures like P. T. Barnum, and contemporary strategies of political deception and slight-of-mind.

