

GRADUATE COURSE OFFERINGS FALL 2021

ERIC DOWNING

CMPL 450: Major Works of Twentieth-Century Literary Theory – Walter Benjamin and Roland Barthes

This course is designed to explore some of the many tantalizing intersections between the work of two of the twentieth-century's most important critics. Among the topics that will concern us are theories of language, photography, mythology, autobiography, and fashion, and both Benjamin's and Barthes' writings on Proust. Works to be read include Benjamin's essays "On Language as Such," "Brief History of Photography" and "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility," "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," "The Image of Proust," his autobiographical *Berlin Childhood* and several sections of *The Arcades Project*. For Barthes, we will read *Writing Degree Zero*, *Camera Lucida* and "The Photographic Message," *Mythologies*, *The Fashion System*, *Roland Barthes and The Pleasure of the Text*. Readings and discussion will all be in English.

MARY FLOYD-WILSON

ENGL 825: Renaissance Literature in Context – Environment, Embodiment, Nature, and Habit in Early Modern English Literature

In the second quarto of *Hamlet*, Hamlet gives Gertrude advice:

That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,

Hamlet argues here that in most cases, "custom" produces devilish and ingrained habits, or sin. But it is possible that repeated fair and good actions (or, in this case, inaction) could "almost" reform nature. It is our aim in this course to investigate how Shakespeare and his contemporaries understood custom, habit, use, and nature. What aspects of a person were "stamped" and what could be changed or transformed through action or practice? Where does the Puritan notion of habitual sin fit into this discourse? What kinds of texts suggest a dynamic interplay between body and environment? How were somatic, moral, and spiritual practices thought to inform the construction not only of character, temperament, health but also class, gender, and race? Part of our focus will be on how the management of the six Galenic non-naturals (air; food and drink; rest and exercise; sleep and waking; excretion and retention; the passions) permeated daily life. How did "habit" work on the mind and the body? Where do we find clashes or conflicts in the discourses on habit, custom, and nature? We will bring these questions to bear in our reading of a range of early modern handbooks that advise on matters of regimen, education, courtesy, travel, and devotion, including texts by Roger Ascham, Aristotle, Sir Francis Bacon, Erasmus, Galen, George Herbert, Michel de Montaigne, Christopher Marlowe, Edmund Spenser, Shakespeare, and others.

RICK WARNER
ENGL 680: Film Theory

This course offers a rigorous survey of film theory from the 1920s to the present. We will begin by reconsidering classical debates about medium specificity, especially as they pertain to the close-up, montage, photogénie, and realism. Our conversations will then range across a number of approaches, including feminism, psychoanalysis, affect theory, critical race theory, queer theory, sound studies, postcolonial theory, phenomenology, and so-called “post-cinema” as it extends from contemporary media theory. Theorists we will likely read include Jean Epstein, Sergei Eisenstein, Andre Bazin, Laura Mulvey, Vivian Sobchack, James Baldwin, Frantz Fanon, Manthia Diawara, Walter Benjamin, Bertolt Brecht, Judith Halberstam, Gilles Deleuze, Nicole Brenez, Pascal Bonitzer, Michel Chion, and several others. We will often focus on theories that emphasize the role of the spectator. Questions of time, affect, atmosphere, and embodied engagement will loom large for us. The films we examine will not be regarded as subordinate to the theories we read. The films will have equal weight in our discussions as we acknowledge that films can perform theoretical and philosophical work in their own right. Some of our screenings will part of a film series co-organized with the Ackland Art Museum on the theme of music in cinema. Films we will likely watch include *Arrival* (Villeneuve), *Le Tempestaire* (Epstein), *Pariah* (Rees), *If Beale Street Could Talk* (Jenkins), *Dunkirk* (Nolan), *Point Break* (Bigelow), *Days of Heaven* (Malick), *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* (Akerman), *Two Days, One Night* (Dardenne brothers), *Parasite* (Bong), *Stalker* (Tarkovsky), *A Man Escaped* (Bresson), *My Life to Live* (Godard), *Caché* (Haneke), *Neighboring Sounds* (Mendonca Filho) *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* (Sciamma), *Transit* (Petzold), *You Were Never Really Here* (Ramsay), and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Kubrick). There are no pre-requisites. This course is open to both undergraduate and graduate students. It counts for the Film Studies Concentration, the Global Cinema Minor, and the VP requirement.

MARÍA DEGUZMÁN
English 666: Queer LatinX Literature & Photography
TW 11:00AM-12:15 PM

This course explores novels and short stories by LatinX writers that focus in one way or another on photographs & photography and, in doing so, that simultaneously question (or “queer”) certain cultural givens about gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, nationality, class, and other coordinates of identity, identification, and subjectivity. We will give careful consideration to each of the terms in the title of this course (Queer, LatinX, Photography, Literature) as we investigate the connections between this double focus on photography and literature. At the same time, we will examine actual photo-based visual work by a wide variety of LatinX artists. Visual and textual works considered include, but are not limited to, those by Alma López, Laura Aguilar, Félix Gonzalez-Torres, John Rechy, Achy Obejas, Helena María Viramontes, Emma Pérez, Elias Miguel Muñoz, Graciela Limón, and Carla Trujillo. [This course is open to both undergraduates and graduate students and can count as a graduate seminar when the graduate student completes a 20-25-page seminar paper as the final assignment (rather than an 8-10-page final project) in addition to the other course assignments (an 8-page essay #1 and the final exam.)]

DAN ANDERSON
ENGL 706: Rhetorical Theory and Practice

In this class, we will explore approaches to the teaching of contemporary writing in academic and professional contexts. We will also study rhetorical theories, reaching back to classical strategies like modes of persuasion, invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery and forward to concerns like genre and the materiality of words, images, and sounds. We will also engage with educational theories and practices, studying aspects of course/assignment design and approaches to teaching. Assignments will range from the creation of instructional materials to hands-on experiments in media composing to the development of teaching/professional portfolios.

JENNIFER LARSON
ENGL 690: Advanced Pedagogy

We will investigate topics such as resilient pedagogy, "small teaching," online learning (including Quality Matters training), accessibility, and inclusive teaching. Using these lenses, we will develop an online teaching portfolio. We will then craft and revise an article suitable for submission to publications focused on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).

KYM WEED
ENGL 763: Introduction to Health Humanities

This interdisciplinary graduate seminar will introduce students to topics and methods in health humanities. In recent years, scholars have sought to define the field of health humanities as a broader and more inclusive set of research practices and objects of study than related fields like medical humanities. Therefore, this course will sample critical and creative texts that represent this field-expanding trend. Students will read foundational critical texts in health humanities and related fields including medical humanities, narrative medicine, disability studies, medical anthropology, graphic medicine, and rhetoric of health and medicine along with a series of primary texts. Together, we will define the scope, methods, and values that constitute the field of health humanities.

Assignments will likely include weekly blog posts, 2 short papers, in-class presentation/discussion leading, and a course research project that employs one or more of the methods we discuss.

HELEN CUSHMAN
ENGL 734: Chaucer

How do you read Chaucer like a Marxist? What would Freud say about the little clergeon's love for the Virgin Mary in *The Prioress' Tale*? What would Sedgwick say about Pandarus' matchmaking in *Troilus and Criseyde*? Can Barthes' account of the author, sriptor, and reader help us to describe the relationship between Chaucer, the person, and the texts we attribute to him? Can we use Deleuze's theory of assemblage help us to understand the social dynamics at work in *The Canterbury Tales*? How would Said read the depiction of Ghengis Khan's court in *The Squire's Tale*? Is *The Wife of Bath's Tale* a feminist text? We will consider these and other questions as we

learn to read Chaucer using the key concepts and vocabulary of major theoretical approaches to literary study. Primary readings will include some of Chaucer's major works—The Canterbury Tales, Troilus and Criseyde, The Legend of Good Women, the dream visions and shorter poems. Secondary readings will include works by influential thinkers—such as Foucault, Derrida, Jameson, Said, Ngai, Berlant, Lacan, Barthes, Sedgwick, Felksi, Greenblatt, Butler, Benjamin, and others—as well as representative examples of Chaucer criticism that engages with one or more of the theoretical approaches we will consider—Patterson, Dinshaw, Ingham, Chaganti, Cooper, Justice, Burger, Prendergast, Crane, Orlemanski, and others.

GREGG FLAXMAN

ENG 881: Biopolitics and Control

W 5:00pm-8:00pm

In the spirit of Michel Foucault's "history of the present," this seminar will consider the transformation of biopolitics and the corresponding "society of control" that has emerged over the past several decades. Indeed, Gilles Deleuze introduced the concept of "control societies" precisely in order to extend Foucault's historical and genealogical project to the future. But whereas Deleuze located control in a post-disciplinary (and decidedly European) framework, we'll suggest that the designs of control society take shape in the uniquely rapacious circumstances of American liberalism. Specifically, the class will revolve around the techniques/technologies of the grid, which precipitated not only the conquest of indigenous peoples but also the "endocolonization" of its own (settler) population.

In the first part of the class, then, we'll consider the growing interest in gridding across a number of fields (e.g., computer engineering, geography, urban planning, infrastructure studies, architecture and art history, cartography, demography, surveillance and security studies, etc.). Readings will draw from Bernard Siegart's *Cultural Techniques: Grids, Filters, Doors, and Other Articulations of the Real*, Edwin Tufte's *Envisioning Information*, Jean-Pierre Vernant's *The Origins of Greek Thought*, Jill Desimini & Charles Waldheim's *Cartographic Grounds*, Rosalind Krauss' "Grids," and selections from Lewis Mumford's work.

In the second part of the seminar, we'll turn to the tradition of liberalism within which the United States developed the grid as an instrument of political economy and biopolitical technology. We'll look at a number of primary sources (including selections from Locke, Jefferson, and the Federalists) before turning to Foucault's account of American liberalism and neoliberalism in *The Birth of Biopolitics*. In this light, the seminar will consider how the U.S. federal survey, the most expansive land grid ever constructed, came to constitute a revolutionary instrument for managing of "life, labor, and language." Other readings will likely include essays by Sylvia Wynter, a selection from Matt Cohn's *The Networked Wilderness*, and James Beniger's *The Control Revolution*. The final portion of the class will trace the terrestrial and infrastructural iterations of gridding from property lines (plats), to roads (and later highways), to communication networks (telegraphs, then telephones), to electrical (power) grids, and finally to the specter of a global information grid. In this context, we'll seek to understand the emergence of control in relation to the urge to get off the grid. In what sense does the material and rhetorical proliferation of grids lend itself to conspiratorial narratives, and how is it possible to resist control without resorting to the "paranoid style of American politics." Readings may include work by Achille Mbembe, Wendy Brown's *In the ruins of*

Neoliberalism: The Rise of Antidemocratic Politics in the West), essays by Deleuze, and Simone Brown's Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness.

TODD TAYLOR

ENGL 805: Digital Storytelling across the Curriculum - Pedagogy, Publication, Agency, and Activism

This PhD seminar is designed for all graduate students in all disciplines who look to develop their students as powerful writers and are, simultaneously, cultivating their own professional, scholarly publications. We will examine how digital transformation continues to redefine most every economy and community by focusing on the rise of digital (multimodal) storytelling. This seminar will do so largely through a "pedagogy of making" in which each participant will draft an academic project aimed at a professional audience in five modalities:

- print as a magazine/journal article
- audio as a podcast
- video as a short film
- interactive as a website or mobile-app prototype
- graphic as a poster, infographic, or visual/photo narrative

The goal for the seminar is for the participants to better enable their students to find agency through digital, multimodal writing--to work to control their own narrative by telling their own stories in their own words--to move their students away from being passive consumers of other people's content to becoming active creators of their own ideas. This seminar will be equally accessible to novice and advanced digital storytellers alike, and it approaches "digital storytelling" broadly from digital scholarship to journalism to autobiography to literature and poetry, although we will focus mostly on non-fiction and academic writing.

META JONES

ENGL 872: Studies in African American and African Diasporan Literature

What is the relationship between African American and African Diaspora literature, theory, journalism, music and visual art? Do "Black" writers favor certain artistic and literary genres over others in order to delineate the dynamics of diaspora? Why have so many writers turned to memoir, travel narratives, photography, film and auto-ethnography to engage their diasporic experiences? This course aims to ground students in the diverse theoretical vocabulary, literary, artistic, and digital genres through which the concept of "Black," African-American and African Diaspora studies has emerged. While attention will be given to diaspora theory and its production within the Black Atlantic framework, this course is also equally concerned with considering literary production and geographic sites of memory by artists operating beyond that frame, including the Black Pacific. Disparate writers have evinced longing for, or belonging to, African-American and Anglophone African Diaspora communities. Why are some cities, sites, regions and countries within and beyond Africa often sourced as racially, culturally or politically "representative" regions for return in memoirs, art, poetry, biography and scholarship while others are less engaged by scholars and writers? Exploring these questions will serve to fulfill a course primary objective and learning

outcome goals: to read, review and write about poets, memoirist, novelists, fashionistas, journalists, visual artists and scholars whose intellectual and creative outpouring evokes the historical conditions and contemporary contradictions that co-produce “Black” diasporic subjects. Contact Professor Jones for a full bibliography of varied primary and secondary course readings.

Assignments Include:

Class Participation (15 %) Includes: Discussion Questions Due electronically 4pm the Tuesday before each Wed class Mandatory, Punctual Attendance, In Class Generative Keyword and Timed Writing Assignments (To Develop Reading Engagement in Final Written Projects); & Collaborative 2 Diasporic “Memory Dishes” and Foodways Potluck Seminar Critical Seminar Co-Leading Presentation & with Individual Reading Precip (15%) Critical and/or Creative Timed Reading Responses (15%) Book Review (1500 words) (15%) Final Project: Abstract, Annotated Bibliography; Keyword Index, Conference Length Paper, (40%) Includes: DRAFT; Peer Review (15% of 40%)

STEPHANIE DEGOOYER

ENGL 831: Theory and History of the Novel

In this class we will examine the rise and importance of a new (“novel”) type of fictional narrative in the eighteenth century. What to call this fictional narrative and how to evaluate its features have been the subject of intense scholarly debate, from Auerbach, Bakhtin, and Lukács to today's so-called “method wars.” The first half of the class will primarily focus on major theorists of the novel with attention to the novel’s global and historical trajectories. In the second half we will consider various topics and debates from contemporary scholarship: the development of fictionality, individualism, and character; the relationship of the novel to capitalism, class, and colonialism; and the novel’s marketplaces and reading publics.
