

## Fall 2012 English Department Seminar Course Descriptions

**As of 4/27/2012**

Tues:	ENGL 200 (J. Tobias)	10:10am- 1:00pm	TBA
	ENGL 246 (S. Vint)	2:10pm- 5:00pm	HMNSS 1407
	ENGL 270 (S. Axelrod)	5:10pm- 8:00pm	HMNSS 1407
Wed:	ENGL 278 (T. Yamamoto)	2:10pm- 5:00pm	HMNSS 1407
	ENGL 279 (V. Nunley)	5:10pm- 8:00pm	TBA
Thurs:	ENGL 275 (J. Doyle)	10:10am- 1:00pm	HMNSS 2212
	ENGL 267 (S. Zieger)	2:10pm- 5:00pm	HMNSS 1407
Fri:	ENGL 276 (W. Gui)	2:10pm- 5:00pm	HMNSS 1407

### **ENGLISH 200 (Intro to Graduate Studies)- J. Tobias**

This seminar provides an introduction to literary, cultural, and media studies methods currently in use or relevant to many of the fields represented in the English Department graduate program. The seminar places an emphasis on the nuts and bolts of writing critical essays in an inter- and transdisciplinary scholarly context. Participants will produce seminar presentations as well as research essays on course themes and materials. Seminar meetings will focus on readings relevant to scholarly professionalization, major critical paradigms, and research writing. English Department faculty will visit seminars to present their views on the states of their fields and their engagements with those fields.

### **ENGLISH 246 (Seminar in Technoculture)- S. Vint Biopolitics and Science Fiction**

Biopolitics involves a new power over life, and a new relationship between sovereignty and life. As Foucault theorizes biopower, it had two interrelated objects of governance: the disciplined body of the individual subject and the management of the citizenry conceived on the aggregate level of the population. In twenty-first century technoculture, both of these aspects of the biopolitical are thoroughly colonized by subjects once segregated to the fictional realm: bioethical debates over the status of emergent subjects such as embryonic stem cells or “brain dead” patients challenge the boundaries of what counts as life or death; at the same time, epidemics and their attendant panics conflate the management of borders, disease vectors and agriculture trade with speculative fantasies about invader species and zombie plagues. Giorgio Agamben sees the concentration camp as the paradigmatic site/method of power in liberal democracies, marking as it does the distinction between bios (political life of the subject/citizen) and zōe (bare biological life of mere existence). Under biopolitics, life itself becomes the

object of political governance, and political governance becomes the practice of steering the biological life of individuals and species. Technoscience, sf speculation and biopolitical practice converge in this context. This course will explore both expressions of biopolitical anxieties and challenges to this regime of biopolitical governance in science fiction film and television. We will consider topics ranging from the biopolitics of viral epidemics, which often conflate national security and health crises, through the necropolitics of neoliberal governance, to the bioeconomics of genomic and transplant medicine. Our reading will include work from Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, Wendy Brown and Achille Mbembe, and screenings will include *Punishment Park* (Watkins 1971), *Monsters* (Edwards 2010), and *Eden Log* (Vestial 2007).

**ENGLISH 270 (Seminar in American Literature Since 1900)- S. Axelrod  
Modernism, Postmodernism, Transnationality.**

This seminar will focus on the vexed relations between modernism and postmodernism, as we keep re-envisioning those projects, and on the way emergent conceptions of transnationality intersect with both projects. Just as our notions of modernism and postmodernism have become ever more plural, so our notions of real and imagined national borders, and the spaces between them, have become fluid. We will put all three of these living concepts into a single arena and see what happens. Focusing on poetry, fiction, and theory, we will look in new ways at some enduring questions about location, period, culture, and form.

Our texts will be:

- S. G. Axelrod, C. Roman, and T. Travisano, *The New Anthology of American Poetry, Vol. 2: Modernisms* (2005)
- S. G. Axelrod, C. Roman, and T. Travisano, *The New Anthology of American Poetry, Vol. 3: Postmodernisms* (2012)
- Rudolph Fisher, *The Conjure-Man Dies* (1932)
- Gertrude Stein, *Blood on the Dining Room Floor* (1933)
- Nathaniel Mackey, *Bass Cathedral* (2008)
- Marjorie Perloff, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Modernism* (2002)
- Judith Butler and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Who Sings the Nation-State?* (2010)

Class responsibilities will include engaged participation, two oral reports, and a term paper. Welcome.

### **ENGLISH 278 (Seminar in Discourse)- T. Yamamoto**

#### **Resisting Trauma: Place, Archive, Agency & the Racialized Subject in Asian American Literature**

Over the past 15 years, trauma has come to occupy a central place in much of the thinking about so-called minority discourses. While trauma and its attendant vocabularies have made visible the coercion and containment of racially marked bodies, they have also largely rendered invisible the tactics and strategies of what Anishinaabe theorist Gerald Vizenor has called "survivance." As this reference suggests, we will be pulling from Native, African American, Chicano/a, Queer and Feminist discourses, as well as from Asian American theory, to push against analytic models that assume the traumatic as the ground for understanding racialized subjectivities, a framework in which presence is synonymous with vulnerability. Additionally, we will concentrate on the construction of place as archive, using critical geography and spatial theory to think about the relationship between the body and the various locales through which it becomes visible. The primary texts will concentrate on Asian American writers; however, seminar members are encouraged and invited to bring their own fields of interest to bear on the issues of the course so that it is enriched by comparative analysis.

### **ENGLISH 279 (Seminar in Rhetorical Studies)- V. Nunley**

#### **In Praise of the Heretical: Rhetoric, Anti-philosophy, and Re-thinking Reality and Human Legibility**

An administration official in the second Bush administration scoffed at reporters, academics, and others in the "reality based community" who judiciously study truth and lies. Instead, the official linked the administration to "reality creating" discourse. Rhetoric and discourse grounded in history's actors producing affective and material effects in the world.

Seminar is based on the following simple claim: if one does not understand *rhetoric* and its importance to *human meaning*, one does not understand the nature of ontology, of reality, truth, or human legibility. In short, the Tea Party and the Occupy Movement, neoliberalism and capitalism, and the Trayvon Martin/George Zimmerman case are more than disagreements of economic and social policy; they are fundamentally different understandings of the *nature of reality*.

Seminar is heretical because through the utilization of scholars and rhetors such as Cicero, Aristotle, Susan Jarrett, Kenneth Burke, Ida. B. Wells, Junichiro Tanizaki, Nietzsche, Boris Groys, Nathaniel Mackey, Chela Sandoval, Judith Halberstam and others, we will attempt to engage in theoretical and methodology blasphemy. We will attempt to do so around the following issues or concerns: philosophy, metaphysics, space and resistance, reality, ethnicity/sexuality/gender, critical theory, spatiality, episteme, and most importantly, *neoliberalism*.

Finally, in keeping with an emerging critical trajectory, seminar will move beyond critic to effective, productive rhetorical and spatial intervention into world.

## **ENGLISH 275 (Seminar in Film and Visual)- J. Doyle** **Warhol's Legacies**

This seminar will introduce students to the impact of Andy Warhol's work on art history, visual and cultural studies. We will consider, for example, the place of *Diamond Dust Shoes* to Fredric Jameson's theory of postmodern aesthetics (and the different ways in which scholars have contested his reading), the centrality of the Factory films to queer theory and performance studies, and role of Warhol's work in showdown between "cultural studies" and "art history." This seminar will consider early reception history, the "de-gayng" of Andy Warhol's work in its initial entry into the art historical canon and ask if we aren't seeing another version of that critical formation as his work becomes more and more embedded in critical wrangling over discourse on aesthetics and value.

In addition, we will spend time looking at the messy contexts for Warhol's work: New York underground scenes of the late 1950s and 1960s, gay urban culture of the 1970s, experimental feminist and gay pornography, the Los Angeles-New York exchange around pop art and counter culture, and the trajectories of diverse collaborators, which include: Jack Smith, Mario Montez, Viva, Nico, Valerie Solanas, Paul Morrissey, Ronald Tavel, Jean Michel Basquiat and more.

Students who enroll in this seminar must be available for a viewing material in UCLA's film and television archive. Screenings for the class will be arranged once enrollment for the class is established, although students have the ability to make trips to this library independently as well.

## **ENGLISH 267 (Seminar in Victorian Lit)- S. Zieger** **Fictions of Nineteenth-Century Sexuality**

This course introduces students to major theories of sexuality that are currently considered crucial to understanding nineteenth-century fiction, particularly the novel. We will read theory by Freud, Foucault, Butler, Sedgwick, and Edelman; fiction by Emily Brontë, Charles Dickens, Eliza Lynn Linton, Oscar Wilde, and Henry James; and literary criticism that mediates between them. Topics will include Foucault's revision of Freud's repression hypothesis; Butler's critique of Foucault's construction of the body; Sedgwick's model of homoerotic rivalry; Marcus' theory of lesbian desire; and Edelman's "negativity thesis." **Course requirements include** one facilitation of class discussion, one annotated bibliography, and one 15-page research paper. *Students are expected to write their papers on texts or theoretical questions that we encounter together.* **Required course texts include:** Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction*; Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*; Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality vol. 1*; Sigmund Freud, *Dora: An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*; Herculine Barbin, *Being the Recently Discovered Memoirs of a*

*Nineteenth-Century French Hermaphrodite*; Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*; Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol* and *Great Expectations*; Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*; Eliza Lynn Linton, *The Rebel of the Family*; and Eve Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*. Additional materials will be posted on the course website. **Recommended texts include:** Butler, *Bodies That Matter*; Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*; Eve Sedgwick, *Between Men*; and Sharon Marcus, *Between Women*. **For our first class meeting**, students are asked to read *Wuthering Heights* and Armstrong's *Desire and Domestic Fiction* (introduction and chapter 4).

### **ENGLISH 276 (Seminar in Colonialism and Postcoloniality)- W. Gui** **Introduction to Postcolonial Discourse**

This seminar is a broad introduction to postcolonial literature and the intellectual field of study known as postcolonialism. We will read a variety of literary texts by authors from Africa, South Asia, and the Caribbean, as well as key works of colonial discourse and postcolonial theory by Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and Elleke Boehmer among others. No prior knowledge of postcolonial literature or theory required. Assignments: seminar presentation, annotated bibliography, conference presentation, final research paper.