

## Winter 2019 English Graduate Seminar Descriptions



CRN	Course	Faculty	Location	Times	Day
43017	250 001	Minch, Mark	HMNSS 2212	02:10 PM 05:00 PM	Wednesday
45631	251 001	Doyle, Jennifer B.	HMNSS 2212	11:10 AM 02:00 PM	Thursday
43015	253 001	Sohn, Stephen	OLMH 1126	03:10 PM 06:00 PM	Wednesday
46693	260 001	Ganim, John			
45632	273 001	Hernandez, Robert Lyle	HMNSS 1407	<b>03:10 PM 06:00 PM</b>	Monday
45633	273 002	Wang, Fuson	HMNSS 2212	12:10 PM 03:00 PM	Friday
45634	276 001	Rangarajan, Padma	HMNSS 2212	10:10 AM 01:00 PM	Wednesday

ENGL 250 – Seminar in Native American Literature & Cultural Studies  
Wednesdays, 1:10-4:00PM  
HMNSS 2212  
Professor Mark Minch

### Indigenous Inhumanities

Jodi Byrd, in *The Transit of Empire*, links the recovery of Indigenous intellectual traditions to the act of mourning. Arguing for an Indigenous Critical Theory in which, “Indigenous scholars...draw from the intellectual traditions of their own histories and communities to contravene in, respond to, and redirect European philosophies [offering] crucial new ways of conceptualizing an after to empire...,” she locates this possibility in a mode of indigenous decolonization which is a “process that restores life and allows settler, arrivant, and native to apprehend and grieve together the violences of U.S. empire.” This apprehension through grief of a decolonized future raises the question of the significance of the human in such a project and centralizes indigenous thought, while situating both in the context of ongoing colonial violence. In this seminar, we will explore the relations between indigeneity, (post)humanism, and healing, especially as related to the recovery of indigenous modes of thinking. Attending to Byrd’s call for settler, arrivant, and native to grieve together, we will trace a number of connections between indigeneity and other (dis)figurations of the human. We will also touch upon trauma theory, human rights discourses, theories of the archive, posthumanism, and rhetorical theory.

Taking as a case study the recovery of Indigenous intellectual traditions in California, our theoretical itinerary will be put to work by negotiating genocidal violence and California Indian figurations of *inhumanity*. The ambiguous term “inhuman,” in “Western” theory, relates to both ethical discussions of cruelty and violence imposed upon (external) others and philosophical discussions of the conditioning of human subjects by an (internal) impersonal otherness. We will ask what the relation is between these two senses of the term and how it has informed colonizer/settler, arrivant, and native relations.

English 251: Seminar in Black Literary & Cultural Studies  
Black. Brown. Feminist. Queer. Performance.  
Thursdays, 11:10AM-02:00PM  
HMNSS 2212  
Professor Jennifer Doyle

A seminar considering the subjects, aims and effects of mostly but not only recent work by artists whose work might be understood as defining, shaping and pushing the boundaries of black performance. Emphasis on feminist, reparative, queer work. Attention to the relational dynamics of performance, to the body and to terms/qualities like virtuosity, voice, endurance, amalgamation and assemblage. Seminar meetings should center on the project of thinking with and through art practice – on the project of articulating the philosophical, literary critical dimensions of art/performance. We will explore what it means to write out *what happened*.

Artists will include E.J. Hill, Autumn Knight, Keijuan Thomas, Kenyatta Hinkle, M Lamar, Ligia Lewis and more. We will reflect on the intersections and spaces between black, brown, and indigenous performance (via, for example, Rafa Esparza, Dorian Wood, Tanya Tagaq). We will call upon Nina Simone, Vaginal Davis and Adrian Piper. Scholarship will be drawn from black feminist studies, queer performance studies, as well as literature oriented towards practices of care and social ecology. We will take a dynamic approach to performance; we will consider the social space of performance, performance as a practice of care, performance as intervention, performance as encounter.

Readings will include angel Kyodo Williams and Jasmine Syedullah's *Radical Dharma*, and selections from the following texts: bell hooks's *Teaching to Transgress*, Tavia Nyong'o's *The Amalgamation Waltz*, Uri McMillan's *Embodied Avatars*, Malik Gaines's *Black Performance at the Outskirts of the Left*, Amber Muller's *Sensual Excess: Queer Femininity and Brown Jouissance*, Saidiya Hartman's (forthcoming) *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments*, and Joshua Chambers Letson's *After the Party: A Manifesto for Queer of Color Life*.

Students will be expected to make every effort to attend performance-centered events in advance of the seminar and during the term. I will share a schedule of performance-based events in Riverside and in the Los Angeles region — students will be encouraged to write about work they have seen. The aim of our seminar meetings will be to foster conversation between us, and to center that conversation on the project of writing about performance.

Seminar participants will produce a portfolio of writing. That portfolio will include at least the following: a group of short, descriptive essays about performance-based work, a co-authored annotated bibliography on an assigned topic, a conference-length paper to be presented at a symposium we organize and then revised for final submission.

ENGL253: Seminar in Asian American Literature and Cultural Studies  
Wednesdays, 03:10-06:00PM  
OLMH 1126  
Professor Stephen Sohn

This course will engage in the study of Asian American/ Asian Anglophone speculative fictions. We will be considering the rise of this subarea, with a special attention to the ways in which race and social difference become deployed in representational terrains, which violate “realist” principles. Some possible primary texts of study include: Indra Das’s *Devourers*, Zen Cho’s *Sorcerer to the Crown*, Ling Ma’s *Severance*, and Nick Joaquin’s *The Woman who Had Two Navels and Tales of the Tropical Gothic*. Secondary scholarly and critical sources may focus on posthumanist theories (e.g. the work of Rosi Braidotti, N. Kate Hayles), genre theory (e.g. R.B. Gill), and studies of race and ethnicity.

ENGL 273-001: Seminar in Cultural Studies: Archiving the Queer/Queering the Archive  
Mondays, 02:10-05:00PM  
HMNSS 2212  
Professor Robb Hernández

Over the last two decades, the field of queer studies has been experiencing an “archival turn” with the recent publication of anthologies, journal special issues, and monographs announcing the “archivally queer.” However, as José Muñoz argues in *Cruising Utopia*, queers have maintained a “vexed relationship to evidence,” and thus traditional historiographic prescriptions demand “get[ting] lost . . . from the evidentiary logic of heterosexuality.” Just how do we “get lost”? How do we practice queer archival methodologies? What evidentiary turns occur when we examine other material states of documentation and non-institutional forms of record keeping? Just how do we read queer lives through the wreckage left in the wake of disappearance, violence, secrecy, self-censorship, confiscation, erasures, and plagues? Following Muñoz’s charge, we will not only interrogate queer temporalities and affect but also, queerness’ other materialities in civic arts, public history, and memorialization. This seminar will bring together an interdisciplinary collection of scholarship, artworks, literature, and performance practices expanding the conjunctions of queerness and archivality beyond the duality of ephemerality and tangibility. In addition to reading theoretical, literary and visual texts, students will be introduced to the foundations of archive studies as a field and profession. They will practice “archivally queer” readings of original records in skill-based group activities and fieldwork excursions outside of class time. Course materials may include works by Julio Capó, Christopher Castiglia and Christopher Reed, Ann Cvetkovich, Maryanne Dever, Kate Eichhorn, J. Jack Halberstam, Lucas Hilderbrand, Richard Meyer, Charles Morris, José Esteban Muñoz, K.J. Rawson, Justin Spring, Susan Stryker, and Jennifer Tyburczy (among others). This course supports requirements for the Book, Archive, and Manuscript Studies Designated Emphasis Program.

ENGL 273-002: Seminar in Cultural Studies: "A Literary History of Disability"  
Fridays, 12:10-03:00PM  
HMNSS 2212  
Professor Fuson Wang

The field of literary disability studies has been playing catchup ever since the scholarship issued its daunting challenge: the wide-ranging hypothesis that various forms of impairment have informed nearly all human cultural production. Literary critics have recently taken up the challenge to historicize this decidedly ahistorical claim. Lennard Davis, in his seminal *Enforcing Normalcy* (Verso, 1995), helped inaugurate this important push to historicize beyond abstract and presentist theorizations of disability. In his book, Davis engineers an ominous historical trajectory of decline from an amorphous, pre-1840 period to the post-1840 enforcements of proper embodiment. In his *Aesthetic Nervousness* (Columbia UP, 2007), Ato Quayson similarly offers a historical shift from medieval conceptions of disability as divine displeasure to modern science's eugenic impulse to mark disability as an objective symptom of moral deficiency. Far from straightforward histories of social progress, these accounts expose the increasingly clever, efficient, and ruthless methods of policing normalcy. This history runs right into the contemporary moment in which an elected leader thinks nothing of mocking a disabled reporter just to score some Twitter followers. This brand of cruelty must not be naturalized as straight-talking, from-the-hip honesty, and the historicist turn of disability studies is a welcome reminder to interrogate the social and historical contingencies that foster such astonishing ableism. This seminar introduces disability studies by historicizing the "disability narrative," a genre that we will continuously theorize and critique. Critical provocations from the *Disability Studies Reader* will guide our primary readings. Possible texts include selections from John Milton, Mary Wortley Montagu, Alexander Pope, Mary Shelley, John Keats, William Wordsworth, Charles Dickens, Arthur Conan Doyle, Herman Melville, Jorge Luis Borges, Terry Galloway, and David Auburn.

ENGL 276: Seminar Colonialism & Post Coloniality  
Reading the Colony: State, Emergency, Sovereignty  
Wednesdays, 10:10AM-1:00PM  
HMNSS 2212  
Professor Padma Rangarajan

In this class we will consider the colony as a dialectical space where the idea of civil society and its counter, the emergency state, were crucial to both imperial governance and colonial literature. The colonial state, which used the concept of civil society as a justification for conquest, also identified civil society as the enemy to imperial rule. The natural condition of the colony was, instead, emergency: the suspension of the rule of law and, very often, the legitimization of state terror.

Our reading for this class consists of literature across the nineteenth century that engages with questions of political violence, sovereignty and civil society in colonized spaces. Topics of discussion might include an aesthetics of terror; the work of allegory; the role of the novel in the imperial imaginary; the politics of fictionality; theorizations of fanaticism and religious enthusiasm; and the function of form. Primary texts (Conrad, Hogg, Prince, Scott, Stevenson, Moore) will be accompanied by readings in postcolonial and political theory (Agamben, Fanon, Gilroy, Mbembe, Bhabha, Spivak, Schmitt).

Assignments will include short presentations on the reading at the beginning of class, and a writing assignment that will vary based on what is most useful to each student. (Options may include a conference abstract and paper, a 20-page research paper, or an annotated bibliography.)