

Cultural Studies Program **Fall 2025**

Category A: Text and Theory

ENG 2263 - Sylvia Wynter's Concept of Homo Narrans: Storytelling as Speciation

Dr. R.A. Judy | In this seminar, we will read widely across Sylvia Wynter's writings from early works such as "Beyond Miranda's Meanings: Un/silencing the 'Demoniac Ground' of Caliban's 'Woman,'" "The Pope Must Have Been Drunk, the King Of Castile a Madman: Culture as Actuality, and the Caribbean Rethinking Modernity," and "On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory, and Re-Imprisoned Ourselves in Our Unbearable Wrongness of Being, of Désêtre: Black Studies Toward the Human Project" through to Black Metamorphosis. Our focus will be on her concept of homo sapiens as a hybrid storytelling species, which she designates interchangeably as bios / mythoi and homo narrans. In the course of carefully analyzing the centrality of that concept to her theory of indigenization, we will study it comparatively in relation to other accounts of the black radical tradition, such as Frantz Fanon's poetic invention, C.L.R. James's concept of the artist as revolutionary, Édouard Glissant's poetics of relation, and George Lamming's radical imagination.

FR 2715 - Animality, Sex, Gender

Dr. Kaliane Ung | In recent years, we have come to realize that our destiny as humans is closely linked with that of the bee, the earthworm, or other animals. How should we consider gender and sexuality in this new paradigm, when cloning appears as a possible option for the preservation of species? This graduate seminar focuses on recent theoretical, literary, and cinematic texts that put animality into relation with gender and sexuality. Queer studies, gender studies, feminist studies, and trans studies have been radically rethought through the category of animality. How, for instance, is the category of woman linked with animals as a tentative gesture to redefine the "female" seventy years after Simone de Beauvoir's seminal work *The Second Sex*? The critical apparatus will allow us to open the word "female" to a plurality of meanings, freeing it from the constraints of a female body often characterized by the violence it is subjected to (Catherine Malabou). Thinking of oneself as an animal also means changing one's perception of the world and finding new ways to care for it. Students will be introduced to foundational thought in ecocriticism (Rachel Carson, Stéphanie Posthumus), in which "ecology is composed through histories of interaction, relationality, interconnection, and materiality" (Eva Hayward). Starting with Deleuze's notion of "becoming-animal," we will study animals as beings of language, but also as ontological beings larger than the metaphors and allegories

with which they are associated, in order to approach animal studies and queer studies as drafting an “ethics of difference” (Donna Haraway) and redefining our idea of Nature (Bruno Latour). Primary materials might include French, German, Latin American, and American texts read in English, as well as films (Boon Joon-ho, Lucile Hadzihalilovic, Jean Cocteau, Wes Anderson).

GSWS 2252 – Theories of Gender and Sexuality

Dr. Shaun Myers | This course provides an overview of important topics and controversies in gender and sexuality studies, emphasizing emerging directions in scholarship and the foundational readings that have prepared the way for them. Gender and sexuality studies are interdisciplinary fields in conversation with feminist theory and queer theory as well as a host of academic disciplines. Drawing on readings from a variety of disciplines and sampling a range of methodologies, this course works through some of the key moments, movements and problems that shape contemporary thinking about gender and sexuality. The course invites students to think through materials and ideas in relation to their own research, interests and commitments.

Category B: Disciplines and Intellectual Movements

HIST 2400 — Critical Approaches to Asian History

Dr. Raja Adal | This course approaches Asia not as a geographic place but as a malleable object of study. It begins by contextualizing the meta-geographical concept of Asia within other spaces, from nations to continents, religious realms, oceans, and highlands. It then turns to approaches for understanding Asia, including sound studies, visual studies, and the computational humanities. How do each of these approaches help us understand this object that we call Asia, and how can they understand it differently? In this way, this course explores a multiplicity of Asias, each of which is created as much by how its space is being conceptualized as by the sources that are being used to conceptualize it. While the first hour of each class will discuss these multiple Asias through a critical reading of recent scholarship, the second hour will seek to use some of the material covered in the first half to advance each student’s own research project. They will begin by creating a proposal for revising a previously written paper, or a plan for writing a paper from scratch. They will implement this plan by, first, rethinking the primary and secondary sources used in writing the paper. They will then explore how one of the methods introduced in class can contribute to their paper. Throughout this process they will rethink the structure of their paper, on their own, in conversation with the instructor, and in conversation with their classmates during two presentations of their paper. At the end of the course, they will

present a paper about their own research that incorporates the approaches and methods learned in the course.

ENGLIT 2004 - Interdisciplinary Methods in Literary Studies

Dr. Tyler Bickford | A recent trend in literary studies is balancing our consideration of the textual and discursive elements of literature with attention to various aspects of its materiality, as well as its relationship to questions of ontology, embodiment, and lived experience. An exciting part of this development is increased integration of interdisciplinary methodologies, especially archival work and ethnography, into literary research. In this course, we'll learn about the scholarly movements and theoretical conversations shaping this turn, while learning practical ways to engage the material and embodied in our own scholarship. We will be inspired by work in various fields, including book history, childhood studies, Black studies, gender studies, global/postcolonial studies, and American studies.

ENGFLM 31369 - The (Re-)Animated Human

Dr. JS Wu | What is the human? What are the inclusions and exclusions of this category? How is it imagined with, through, and against mechanical technologies? This seminar considers these questions and more through a pairing of humanist and post-humanist theories alongside scholarship in new media studies with particular emphases on the broadly defined field of animation studies. We will look at how films and new media technologies animate and give body to changing understandings of the human and/as a cultural, biological, and mechanical entity. We will also look at how discourses of mechanical technologies inflect and draw from imaginings of non-Human and para-Human Others through theories of Blackness and Asianness. The course takes a transnational scope with key nodes in the U.S. and Japan. Lessons will span and juxtapose topics in cybernetics, artificial intelligence, speculative fiction, the gendering of machines, the history of race sciences, animation as medium and metaphor, and global media ecologies. The seminar will require works of scholarly writing as well as facilitate experimental and creative exercises to encourage students to think about the cross-section of theory and praxis in their approach to the critical project of the human.

HIST 2804 - Histories of Gender & Sexuality

Dr. Lara Putnam | This course introduces students to foundational and evolving theories of gender and sexuality, and then explores the varied array of approaches that historians have taken to writing histories of and with gender and sexuality, and the findings their research has uncovered. How have patterns of continuity and change with regard to gender and sexuality interacted with other critical dimension of social, political, economic, and cultural change? These are questions scholars have pursued at varied scales, and readings

allow students to explore microhistorical, national, regional, transnational, and global approaches to histories of gender and sexuality.

Category C: Cultural Antagonisms and Cultural Crises

SOC 2311 - Politics and Culture

Dr. Mark Paterson| How are ideologies and systems of power represented, analyzed, or contended through culture and media? Who gets to decide what social and cultural identities are, who gets to speak? What metaphors are at work in understanding how societies grow or develop? Kropotkin built on his observations about cooperation rather than Darwinian competition between animals as the basis of his classical anarchist position in *Mutual Aid* (1902). Karl Marx had considered the real base of society in terms of political economy, and that culture was a 'superstructure' on top of this, in his *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859). Yet Marx and others recognized that the power of ideology to either maintain or disrupt the economic status quo comes from culture. The story of culture and power is at the heart of notions of social change and therefore of social justice movements. This course encourages close readings of classic and recent texts which explore these and other issues, and the application of concepts and frameworks to recent case studies of social movements and social issues. Readings will be by figures such as Marx, Kropotkin, George Herbert Mead, Herbert Spencer, Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault, bell hooks, Giorgio Agamben, Wendy Brown, Sara Ahmed, and Linda Alcoff.

GSWS 2240 – Knowledge and Society: Sex, Gender, Sexuality and Brain Sciences

Dr. Lisa Brush| This course will survey scientific theories of sex, gender and sexual difference and diversity, and their intersections with feminist and queer approaches to gender and sexual diversity, with specific application to the biomedical and behavioral brain sciences. We will attend closely to the interplay of diverse bodies, scientific approaches, and social institutions with regards to concepts, methods, theories, and empirical findings. We will explore debates over sex/gender and sexual differences and diversity as conceived, discovered, imaged, explained, and treated in late-20th and early-21st century neurosciences and their discontents (mostly but not exclusively Anglo-American). Through readings and discussions, including engagements with case materials from published debates, students will hone their proficiencies in critical reading, evaluation of natural and social scientific arguments and evidence, and oral and written communication about scientific and social controversies about sex/gender and sexual diversity that may feature considerable uncertainty.

Category D: Designated Courses

DSAM 3000 - Digital Studies and Methods: Seminar

Dr. Benjamin Miller | This seminar addresses the relationships between digital computing and the humanities, as a subject of both historical interest and contemporary practical concern. We will delve into what it means, if anything, to be a “digital humanist” by engaging in the ongoing theoretical discussions about the digital humanities (allied social sciences, liberal arts, etc...), but also by sitting down and finding out what it takes to implement interpretive research in the digital environment. We will practice together the study of the humans and their material, social and intellectual environments, and we will use digital computing mindfully and tactically in the service of learning more about the human condition. Students will leave this class having gained a personally significant understanding of current debates in the field of digitally-oriented humanities research as well as having built a digital project of their own.

THEA 2216: Advanced Theory and Methodology: Global Perspectives on Theatre and Performance Studies

Dr. Michelle Granshaw | This seminar will explore global approaches to theatre and performance studies. Drawing on theatre and performance studies, critical race theory, and gender and sexuality studies, we will examine the ways performance analyzed through global methodologies reconfigures our ideas of historiography, nation, race, gender, sexuality, and disability. In what ways does the global undermine the centrality of the nation-state and suggest new methodologies for researching and writing theatre and performance scholarship? How do globalization, imperialism, and colonialization operate transnationally to influence the production, reception, and circulation of theatre and performance culture? How do global contexts influence the construction, representation, and performance of race, gender, sexuality, class, and disability? How is performance constructed, appropriated, and adapted across geographies and how do the performances’ circulation establish international connections among communities as well as artists? We will analyze a range of approaches, including the global, transnational, glocal, and Atlantic among others.

PIA 2448: Political Economy of Development

Dr. Shanti Gamper-Rabindran | This course begins by discussing Amartya Sen's concept of "development as freedom" and reviewing the trends in poverty, inequality and human development indices in both developed and less developed countries. We examine how various development strategies - investments in human capital, public goods, and

responsive governance; corrections to market failures (e.g., externalities, monopolies); and efforts to address structural discrimination (e.g., against Indigenous peoples) - can improve socioeconomic outcomes for individuals and communities. We also examine efforts to reform the international system, including food production, the international trade regime, the international patent regime, which influences innovation and access to medicines; and international Loss and Damage funds to support climate mitigation and adaptation.

PIA 2502: Climate Policy Local and Global

Dr. Shanti Gamper-Rabindran | The Sustainable Development Goals prioritize investments in human health. We study policy instruments to support the innovation, access, and affordability of medicines and vaccines in developed and developing countries. These include pull mechanisms (e.g., advanced purchase commitments), push mechanisms (government funding for R&D), and public-private partnerships. We explore the national and international responses to COVID-19 to understand the need for and barriers to global pandemic preparedness. We explore how World Trade Organization provisions and bilateral agreements between US/EU and developing countries balance (or fail to) medical innovation with access and affordability to these innovations. We delve into policies to address the public health impacts of industrial agriculture that accelerates antibiotic resistance. We examine how international cooperation has assisted or hindered responses to existing challenges (e.g., addressing maternal/child mortality, AIDs, malaria, neglected tropical diseases, diarrheal diseases). Finally, we consider the global health challenges resulting from the climate emergency.