

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
Graduate Program for Cultural Studies
SPRING 2019 OFFERINGS
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CLST 2050: CULTURAL STUDIES COMMON SEMINAR

A Sense of Place in and Epoch of Loss

Ruth Mostern

Wed. 6-8:30PM

402E-CL

This seminar explores the ethical, epistemological, and artistic challenges of doing theory and history in times of profound global loss. Through the activity of the seminar, we aim to develop languages and frameworks for communicating about the Anthropocene as an epoch of loss. At present, discussion about the catastrophic and rapid changes now underway in the earth system — transformations that include the mass extinction of species, the inundation of cities, and the collapse of entire ecosystems—focuses largely upon concepts like sustainability, mitigation, and resilience. However, irrevocable loss has already begun, and it will accelerate even under the most optimistic scenarios for human ingenuity and investment. We need new modalities of thinking about loss and commemoration. To an extent that is rare in academia, the issues are largely uncharted. The questions are existential and profound. They include: What are the limits of hopefulness? Is it morally appropriate to pause for elegy when there is so much to be done? Is it morally defensible not to do so? What can we learn from historical cases of civilizational collapse? Does speculative fiction help us envision what may be coming? How can we take stock of what exactly it is that we are losing?

This seminar will explore these questions in part by theorizing the concept of place, the lens through which humans name and make meaning about the world. People name the locations of homes, from which some of us may be displaced forever. Place is a key concept for non-human species as well. Fish return to ancestral spawning grounds, and when they are blocked by dams, entire populations are destroyed. We will contemplate how to use place as a way to understand the scope and impact of loss, and how to use place as a focus for remembrance.

The seminar should appeal to two overlapping groups of students. Some may wish to focus primarily on the conceptual tools that spatial theory can bring to bear on a wide range of research questions. Others may wish to read works that offer strategies for how to pause and contemplate the nature and degree of the upheaval that is now coming clearly into view. This seminar is intended to offer frameworks for both of those intertwined areas of inquiry. (*Certificate Students who have previously taken a CLST Common Seminar may take this as an out-of-department course in Category C.*)

A. Text & Theory	B. Disciplines & Intellectual Movements	C. Cultural Crises & Antagonisms	D. Designated Courses
ADMPS 2353 — <i>Applied Anthropology of Education</i> Maureen Porter	ADMPS 2305 <i>Sociology of Education</i> Sean Kelley	ADMPS 2359— <i>Gender in Education</i> Maureen Porter	ADMPS 3131 — <i>Student, Campus, and Society</i> Linda DeAngelo
ANTH 2490 — <i>Linguistic Anthropology Core Course</i> Laura Brown	ANTH 2720— <i>Poetics & Politics of Ethnography</i> Nicole Constable	COMMRC 3326 — <i>Seminar in Media Studies: #MeToo — Women, Media, and Voice</i> Ronald J. Zboray (with Mary Saracino Zboray)	CLASS 2390 — <i>Topics in Ancient Philosophy: Augustine & the Philosophers</i> Christina Hoenig
COMMRC 2212— <i>Visual Rhetoric</i> Lester Olson	ANTH 2731 — <i>Medical Anthropology 2</i> Emily Wanderer	HIST 2710 — <i>Global Capitalism</i> Niklas Frykman	ENGLIT 2244 — <i>Race and Transnational Performance</i> Imani Owens
ENGFLM 2425— <i>Black Time: Afrofuturism, Afro-pessimism, and Beyond</i> Elizabeth Reich	COMMRC 3306 — <i>Seminar in Rhetoric & Culture: Affect and Rhetoric</i> Caitlin Bruce	LAW 5339— <i>Law of Disability Discrimination</i> Joseph Hornack	FR 2102— <i>The Medieval Body</i> Renate Kosinski
ENGLIT 2861— <i>Intersectionality in the Archives</i> Courtney Weikle-Mills	ENGFLM 2660— <i>Sexual Representation and the Cinema: Sex and the Archive</i> Mark Lynn Anderson	LIS 2194 — <i>Information Ethics</i> James “Kip” Currier	HAA 2401 — <i>Cotemporalities in Artistic Practice & Exhibition Making</i> Terry Smith
FR 2505— <i>19th Century to-pics: Living Money 1791-1842</i> Giuseppina Mecchia	ENGLIT 2542— <i>Black Rhetorics: “Alls my life I has to fight”</i> : <i>Storying Black Resistance</i> Louis J. Maraj	PIA 2307 <i>Human Security</i> Lisa Alfredson	HAA 2451— <i>Art & Politics in the Weimar Republic</i> Barbara McCloskey

HAA 2300— <i>Image, Art, Thing in Early Modern Europe</i> Chris Nygren	GSWS 2240— <i>History of Feminist Theory</i> Laura Lovett	PIA 2520— <i>Food Security, Agriculture and Rural Development</i> Paul Nelson	HIST 2020— <i>Digital/Critical Interdisciplinary Methods</i> Annette Vee
MUSIC 2038— <i>Music, Culture & Technology: The Sounds of Romantic Comedy</i> Dan Wang	HIST 2724— <i>Rethinking the Black Atlantic: Circuits, Spheres, Social Movements</i> Lara Putnam	SOC 2311— <i>Politics & Culture: The Ethnography of the African-American Experience</i> Waverly Duck	HIST 2023— <i>Historical Methods & Approaches</i> Michel Gobat
MUSIC 2611 — <i>Musico-logy Seminar: The Sublime, the Grotesque, and the Exotic in Music</i> James Cassaro	RUSS 2425— <i>Philosophy & Literature</i> Victoria Juharyan	SPAN 2226— <i>Readings in Critical Theory: The Post-anthropocentric Turn— Debating the Crisis of Sovereignty that Intersects the Culture of the Anthropocene in Latin American Critical Thinking</i> Elizabeth Monasterios	LING 2267 — <i>Sociolinguistics</i> Scott Kiesling
SPAN 2585— <i>Beyond the Revolution: Art, Literature & Performance in Post-Revolutionary Cuba</i> David Tenorio	SOC/GSWS 2251/2252— <i>Theories of Gender and Sexuality</i> Lisa Brush	SPAN 2464 — <i>Biopolitics, Race/Sexuality and the Neoliberal State</i> Junyoung Verónica Kim	MUSIC 2396— <i>Music in Society: Visual Albums, Pink Floyd to Beyoncé</i> Dan Wang
THEA 2216 — <i>Advanced Theory & Methodology —How We Argue About Performance Now: Histories, Presents, & Futures of Performance Studies</i> Patrick McKelvey	SPAN 2695— <i>Race, Gender, Modernity in Brazil & Lusophone Africa</i> Serena Rivera	SWGEN 2005— <i>Poverty & Income Inequality: Social Responses</i> Helen E. Petracchi	PIA 2553 — <i>Political Economy of Global Health</i> Shanti Gamper-Rabindran
			SOC/GSWS 2303— <i>Political Sociology</i> John Markoff
			THEA 2202 — <i>Theatre, Counterculture, Avant-Garde</i> Jason Fitzgerald