

Spring 2025

Category A: Text and Theory

ENGFLM 2662 - Gender & Sexuality Arab Film

Dr. Raed El Rafei | This seminar pries open a window into the ways that gender and sexuality are understood, imagined, embodied, and practiced in the Arab-majority region. Rather than arriving at totalizing definitions, the seminar explores, through a transnational approach, how filmmakers from Arab-majority countries and their diasporas have adopted, throughout different periods, a multitude of approaches and strategies in tackling questions of gender and sexuality in realist, allegorical and experimental ways. We will unpack diverse film and video works to see how these filmmakers have responded to major political, social, and religious events and contexts, such as the Arab Spring and the Arab Israeli conflict.

HIST 2736 - World History Methods Seminar: Digital Methods for the Spatial Analysis of the Past

Dr. Ruth Mostern | Over the past two to three decades, scholars in the humanities and social sciences have increasingly referred to a "spatial turn" of increasing attention to the place of geography and landscape in understanding society and culture. At the same time, historians have taken up the term spatial history to describe the ways in which they articulate geographical perspectives from their particular disciplinary approach. The reach of approachable desktop GIS and database design platforms, accessible satellite imagery, and online spatial visualization has amplified these trends. This seminar is an introduction to exemplary projects, applied methods, and techniques and tools for spatial analysis of the human past. At the same time, it is an effort to bring together several approaches that are not yet frequently joined. For instance, spatial history theory, method and exemplar are not well integrated, and we will approach the field from all three of these perspectives. Moreover, spatial history is seldom practiced at the global scale. World historians have not yet "put the world in world history." This class combines reading in theory and exemplars, interaction with online projects, and hands-on work with digital archives and tools. By the end of the class, students will understand the state of the art and possible future trajectories of spatial history as a field and its relationship with the field of world history. They will also be able to plan a spatial history project at the global scale, articulate its significance and scholarly contribution, and identify the sources, tools and expertise needed to complete it. Student work will include reading responses and archive and website assessments throughout the semester, and will culminate in a large-scale project prospectus.

Category B: Disciplines and Intellectual Movements

ENGFLM 2550 — Siegfried Kracauer and the Origins/Futures of Film and Media Studies

Dr. Adam Lowenstein | Siegfried Kracauer (1889-1966) is now widely regarded as one of the most important and innovative theorists of film and media studies. But this was not always the case, as he was overshadowed for decades by his more famous German Jewish contemporaries Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin. What Kracauer offers us now is a unique bridge between the classical origins of film and media theory in the 1920s-1960s and the possible futures for those theories today. Kracauer's remarkable career included fleeing Hitler's Europe and eventually arriving in New York to establish himself as a fellow traveler with major intellectual figures such as

the film critic Robert Warshaw, the art historian Meyer Schapiro, and the political theorist Hannah Arendt. In this milieu, Kracauer's work blazed trails across topics as varied as spectatorship, experience, genre, aesthetics, history, and realism, as well as media forms as diverse as film noir, fascist propaganda, animation, documentary, and photography. In this seminar, we will explore Kracauer's texts and contexts in order to grapple with urgent questions in film and media studies now.

ENGLIST 2804 - City and the Young

Dr. Lidong Xiang | This course examines children's and adolescents' experiences within and navigation through both constructively organized and devastatingly deprived urban structures. It reveals that their perceptions of subjectivities and social justice are stratified by race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation, all of which are historically and systematically rooted in place. Spanning material and institutional spatial scales (e.g., the young body, city infrastructure, nation) and processes (e.g., representation, migration, globalization), we will explore theoretical and methodological approaches to unveiling young people's experiences and responses to injustices and violence across urban geographies. Particular attention will be paid to debates surrounding the competing roles of young people (e.g., neglected children, delinquent youth, youth activists, youth migration) in the city, as shaped by relations of power.

Course readings will span across disciplines, including literary and media studies on the contradictory fantasies of Russian adolescents and unaccompanied American children, historical studies on the lives of young Black women in segregated New Orleans and the traumatic experiences and behaviors of Tokyo's young people after the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, and ethnographic works investigating adolescents' experiences navigating urban schools and neighborhoods.

HIST 2409 - The Forgotten Asianist Metropolises: An Asian Intellectual Renaissance

Dr. Peng Hai | Asian metropolises today are ostensibly multicultural. But there was a time when they were more intensely multinational and inter-national, as Asian intellectuals found sanctuaries to invent lofty new concepts of their nationhood and nationalisms, even as they crossed boundaries, engaged in cultural translation, and sought political and ideological affinities among co-religionists, co-continentals, and co-miseraters of imperial domination. This course introduces the emergent field of inter-Asian studies, focusing on the critical moment of high imperialism when the idea of Asia had leapt off the pages of Marco Polo and Marx and began to find a vibrant new life among intellectuals of Asia's own. The course treats students to themes of inter-Asian mobility and connectivity during the late 19th century and early 20th century, enabled by the rivalry among high imperialism, coproduction of Eurasian Communism, Islamic modernism, as well as the political and intellectual energy of decolonization, Socialist revolutions, and Pan-Asianist solidarity. The course uncovers some of the untold aspects of colonial modernity in Asia, where the word "Asia" began to gain unprecedented intellectual currency. Concretely, course participants could expect to learn both the history of inter-Asian cultural exchanges and the methodology of conducting such studies. An examination of the immediate decades before the arrival of the post-colonial order in Asia, which ushered in an initial moment of jubilant triumph, invites the course participants to ponder Asia's march to the nation-state system mirroring Euramerica as formerly dominated peoples (re)gained their monoracial, and sometimes monocultural group sovereignty,

and erected tight territorial, political and cultural boundaries, has "Asia" regained itself or was it lost?

SOC 3191 - Social Stratification

Dr. Lisa Brush | This is a graduate-level survey of concepts, frameworks, and controversies in social science (mostly but not exclusively sociological) research on social stratification. The Big Idea of the course is to explore "stratification" as a(n) (inter)disciplinary idiom for addressing some key social, economic, and cultural phenomena: inequality, poverty, markets (especially labor markets), spatial/occupational/educational segregation, the "safety net" and intergenerational and individual mobility. We will survey the traditional ways mainstream scholars of social stratification have thought about these phenomena: mostly in terms of work, income, wealth, and their correlates, and in terms of gradational conceptualizations of class (and categorical conceptualizations of race and gender). We will also consider some of the scholars critical of stratification as an idiom, explore other conceptualizations of class, race, and gender as principles organizing social phenomena (including cultural capital), think through struggles over inequality and poverty and their causes, and grapple in a bit more depth with one significant critical concept that many people find orthogonal to stratification: intersectionality. Finally, we will devote time to your specific interests and cases that can form the core of a useful (to you) engagement with stratification and its critics.

THEA 2216 - Creative Scholarship: Ethics and Methods

Dr. Qianru Li | In this seminar, we explore the ethics and methodologies of conducting creative research. In doing so, we reconsider misleading divisions between scholarship and art, theory and narration, histories and memories, as well as research and teaching to disrupt the hierarchical structures of knowledge production. The course is two-fold. First, we engage in in-depth discussions with guest speakers from various disciplines. In doing so, we think with these scholar-artists in Theatre & Performance Studies, Ethnic Studies, Feminist Studies, Disability Studies, Decolonial Studies, and Critical University Studies to contemplate care- and community-centered ways to document, narrate, theorize, teach, as well as historicize. Additionally, as a collective, we develop and workshop the public-facing projects that each participant pursues. The methodologies that we work with include but are not limited to ethnography, autotheory, op-eds, oral history, visual art, digital humanities, installation, multimedia production, filmmaking, critical memoir, immersive performance, and interactive syllabus & course design. Our goal is to support your creative voices, and help you identify and formulate tools that are most respectful of and appropriate for the communities that you strive to serve.

Category C: Cultural Antagonisms and Cultural Crises

FR 2765 - Comparative Francophone Culture: Climate Fictions of the Global South

Dr. John Walsh | How do writers and filmmakers from the Caribbean, West Africa, Polynesia, the Indian Ocean, and the First Nations in northern Canada apprehend "climate," both in its meteorological sense and more generally as a confluence of natural, social, and political conditions for thought, creativity, and activity? In their works, how is "climate" related to conceptions of "environment" and "ecology," as well as "humanity" and "anthropos"? How do

these artists of the "Global South,"² imagine and critique changing climates and their impact on human and non-human environments? How do they treat colonial and imperial histories of environmental injustice, while also compelling a rethinking of normative assumptions of justice, equality, human rights, citizenship, sovereignty, mobility, and infrastructure? This seminar explores how climate fictions from the Global South differ from those in North America and Western Europe. By privileging a global approach and considering a range of genres related to climate fiction, we will study how climate is intertwined with questions of urbanization, development and trade, migration, racism, and inequality.

Category D: Designated Courses

COMMRC 2298 - Humanistic Research Methods: Research Labs

Dr. Caitlin Bruce | This course is an introduction to graduate level research design, and offers survey of humanistic research methods including archival investigation, oral history, close reading, ethnography and in situ field based methods, as well as awareness of university ethics boards like the IRB. Graffiti and street art will be the unifying case study for the course.

PHIL 2330 - Political Philosophy

Dr. Japa Pallikkathayil | This course examines new work in political philosophy (broadly construed) with an eye to comparing different methodologies and approaches. The course will be divided into four units. Each unit will be organized around a work-in-progress paper by a philosopher. The earlier sessions in the unit will focus on background literature to contextualize the work-in-progress paper. In the final session of each unit, we will discuss the work-in-progress paper with the author via zoom. One unit will be organized around a work-in-progress paper by Sally Haslanger about social ontology and oppression. Another unit will be organized around a work-in-progress paper by Anna Stilz on collective self-determination and the climate crisis. The subjects of the other two units of the course are TBD.