

Doctoral Core Seminar II (E57.3200), Tuesdays 2 - 4:10 pm, Spring 2010
Alexander R. Galloway

This is an advanced graduate seminar designed for first-semester PhD students in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication. The aim of the course is to provide students with a set of foundational readings in the areas of media studies, cultural theory, and communications, with a focus on contemporary authors and issues. Attention will be given to debates around political sovereignty, identity and subject formation, representation, meaning, and aesthetics. Together with the fall doctoral seminar, this course serves as the basis for the PhD candidacy exam in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication.

Books: Available at NYU Bookstore.

January 19--Course Introduction

January 26--Dialogue and Dissemination

Plato, *Phaedrus* (PDF).

John Durham Peters, "Dialogue and Eros in the Phaedrus" (PDF).

Jacques Derrida, "Signature, Event, Context" (PDF).

Additional Reading:

Jacques Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," *Dissemination*.

February 2--Enlightenment and Modernity

Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'" (PDF).

G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* (excerpt on the master-slave dialectic) (PDF).

Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History*.

February 9--Representing the Outside

Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization* (abridged version).

Rey Chow, "Where Have All the Natives Gone?" (PDF).

Additional Reading:

René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, meditations 1 and 2.

Jacques Derrida, "Cogito and the History of Madness" (PDF).

February 16--Modern Sovereignty and the Exception

Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology*.

Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*.

Judith Butler, "Indefinite Detention" (PDF).

Additional Reading:

Hobbes, *Leviathan, Parts 1-2*, (particularly chapters 13-19).

February 23--Critical Race Theory: Postcolonialism

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*.

Homi K. Bhabha, "Interrogating Identity: Frantz Fanon and the Postcolonial Prerogative" (PDF).

March 2--Life

Judith Butler, "Precarious Life" (PDF).

Catherine Malabou, *What Should We Do with Our Brain?*

Additional Reading:

Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (particularly Section III).

Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*.

Lily Kay, "Cynetetics, Information, Life: The Emergence of Scriptural Representations of Heredity."

March 4--Guest Lecture by Judith Butler & Catherine Malabou

March 9--Feminist Theory

Donna Haraway, "Gender For a Marxist Dictionary" (PDF).

Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, pp. 1-34, 79-149.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes" (PDF).

Additional Reading:

Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs" (PDF).

March 23--Poststructuralism: The Problem of Authorship

Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer" (PDF).

Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text" (PDF).

Roland Barthes, "Death of the Author" (PDF).

Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" (PDF).

Additional Reading:
Stuart Hall, "Encoding/Decoding."
Giorgio Agamben, "Author as Gesture."

March 30--Media and Technology

Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" (PDF).
Marshall McLuhan, "Understanding Media" (selections) (PDF).
Hans Magnus Enzensberger, "Constituents of a Theory of the Media" (PDF).
Jean Baudrillard, "Requiem for the Media" (PDF).

April 6--Aesthetics and Visual Culture

Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*.
Judith Butler, "Torture and the Ethics of Photography: Thinking with Sontag" (PDF).
Jacques Rancière, "Are Some Things Unrepresentable?" (PDF).

Additional Reading:
Aristotle, *Poetics*.
David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste" (excerpt) (PDF).
Edmund Burke, "...The Sublime and Beautiful" (excerpt) (PDF).
Susan Sontag, "Against Interpretation" (PDF).

April 13--Postmodernism

Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society" (PDF).
Fredric Jameson, "Marxism and Postmodernism" (PDF).
Perry Anderson, *The Origins of Postmodernity*.

Additional Reading:
Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, pp. xxiii-xxv, 3-17, 71-82.

April 20--Empire, Neoliberalism, Postfordism, Biopolitics

Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (selections).
Nancy Fraser, "Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History" (PDF).

Additional Reading:
Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*.
Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*.
Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on Control Societies."

April 27--New Media Theory

Mark Wigley, "Network Fever" (PDF).

Mary Ann Doane, "Information, Crisis, Catastrophe" (PDF).

Samuel Weber, "Target of Opportunity: Networks, Netwar, and Narratives" (PDF).

Additional Reading:

Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, "On Software, or the Persistence of Visual Knowledge."

Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media*.

Yochai Benkler, *The Wealth of Networks*.

Requirements & Grading

The course contains both midterm and final examinations (40% each). Each exam is take-home and has a period of 48 hours. Students are expected to write around 3,000 words total for each exam (i.e. 6,000 words total for the whole semester). Students are also required to participate in seminar (10%) and lead discussion in rotation (10%).

Required Books

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Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History*.

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*.

Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization* (abridged Vintage/Random House edition).

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