

TMC 20 Seminar Topics by year

2012-2013

SPRING 2013

Susanne Hillman

Tuesday, 10:00a - 10:50a in TMCA 127.

The Holocaust Living History Study at UCSD: Giving a Face to Catastrophe

The Holocaust Living History Study aims to preserve the memory of the victims and survivors of the Holocaust. Working towards this goal, the Workshop connects local students, teachers, interested community members, as well as local Holocaust survivors and their families through use of the Visual History Archive.

FALL 2012

Allan Havis-TMC Provost

ASSIGNED READING: American Political Plays. (Introduction plus assigned six plays). COURSE

SYNOPSIS: cursory look at range of political theatre in new writing for the American stage.

Definitions of political drama will be employed and there will also be a timeline view of Marshall College's 40 year campus history as a metaphor of dramatic struggle. The class will also watch online Marshall College's commissioned play, *The Haunting of Jim Crow* and see online or live the Thurgood Marshall solo show this quarter (Nov. 8th evening on campus).

WINTER 2013

Meditating on Race

Simrita Dhir, P.h.D

Toni Morrison is a novelist of eminence. She has been Distinguished Professor of Humanities at Princeton University. In 1993, she became the first African-American to win the Nobel Prize for literature. She is a luminary who draws her emotional and intellectual sustenance from a collective history of discrimination. Her work explores issues of race and identity in the United States. In her fictional world, the themes of diversity, justice and imagination find a creative and fervent expression. This seminar seeks to uncover the African-American experience in the larger American society. It will encourage an understanding of a community and in turn enable an appreciation of the greater context of community in the United States. The students will be required to do a reading of *The Bluest Eye* and identify the themes of beauty and race that the novel sets out to explore.

SPRING 2013

History, Memory, Trauma: Holocaust Video Testimony

Instructor: Susanne Hillman

Participants of this seminar learn to evaluate Holocaust video testimony as a type of text. Topics include affective involvement with primary sources, the ethics of listening, layers and types of memory, the performative function of witnessing, etc. Selected clips from the Visual History Archive will supplement discussions of the assigned texts. As a term project, students will analyze one entire interview and give a brief presentation of their findings. The course is taught by Susanne Hillman, a specialist in Jewish-German history and a lecturer in modern European history. For the last three years, she has managed the Holocaust Living History Workshop, an outreach and education program at UCSD that trains individuals in the use of the Visual History Archive and connects local Holocaust survivors with the campus and broader San Diego community.

2011-2012 [\[Top of Page\]](#)

FALL 2011

Monique Gaffney

Guest Lecturer (TMC Artist in Residence)

SPRING 2012

From Thermopylae to 300

Anthony Edwards, Literature

Professor

When the Greek historian Herodotus began his research into the wars between the Greeks and the Persians, his central concern was to explain how the Greeks managed twice to fight the Persian empire to a standstill. He calculated the differences between Greek and Persian culture through a series of contrasts, including: freedom and slavery, poverty and luxury, citizen and state, risk and security, Athens and Sparta, and discipline, free will, and compulsion. Herodotus concentrates many of these concerns in his account of the Spartan defense of the strategic pass at Thermopylae. Frank Miller must have seen exciting possibilities in this nexus of themes, not to mention the moving story itself of the Spartans' forlorn struggle, since he incorporated many of them into his retelling of the battle in his graphic novel 300. To these he adds a few issues of his own, such as loyalty, masculinity, the nature of warfare, and the value of a life. Miller's sometimes troubling idealization of the Spartan king Leonidas and his 300 followers embodies the problematic legacy of Sparta for our own civilization. Zack Snyder only complicates relations further by introducing political references, along with the armored rhinos, into his film adaptation of Miller's novel.

We won't spend much time on the problem of historical accuracy--trust me, Herodotus took his liberties too--as we work through these different versions of what happened at Thermopylae so much as on what each has to say, by itself and through its commentary on the others, about cultural identity, political authority, and virtue.

2010-2011 [\[Top of Page\]](#)

SPRING 2011

Liszt in the World

Cecil Lytle, Music

Professor-Emeritus

Born in Hungary in 1811, Franz Liszt (died 1886) was thought to have been the greatest musical prodigy and “phenom” since Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Today, he is viewed as the archetypical Byronic hero, an anthropomorphic actor in the romantic gothic image. Known as the greatest living pianist of his time throughout all of Europe and Asia Minor, he was: idolized, but flawed; highly gifted and intelligent, but nomadic; cunning and adept, but self-critical to extreme; charismatic and sexually attractive, but deeply religious and pious.

Although he composed well over 1,000 compositions, the general public knows, perhaps, portions of only two of his more enduring works (Liebestraume #3, and the legendary 2nd Hungarian Rhapsody (made famous by Bugs Bunny and Tom & Jerry cartoons). From 1823-his death in 1886, Liszt was the most famous musicians in Europe and beyond and toured more widely than any other artist. He dined with kings, queens, popes, dukes, and duchesses---and danced with the Gypsies (the Roma) that were the largest minority group in Central and Eastern Europe. Liszt’s iconographic status in Europe during his long lifetime may be why P.T. Barnum offered him a contract to tour the United States with Buffalo Bill Cody!

This seminar is offered in honor of Liszt’s bicentenary and will attempt to introduce two sides of this Hungarian composer: Franz Liszt, the composer/pianist; and, Franz Liszt the iconic public figure that influenced both the 19th and 20th centuries. The life and works of Franz Liszt is typically divided into three important periods: 1) from birth through the early Paris years (1811-1848); 2) the Weimar period (1848-61); and 3) the final years including Rome.

WINTER 2011

Global Adaptation: Coping with Climate Change in the 21st Century

Arnold Rheingold, Chemistry

Once it is accepted that global climate is rapidly changing, it is less important to worry about why it is happening or even if we can modify its advance, and much more important to consider how we will adapt to the change. By all reliable estimates, we have waited too long to consider only abatement. Our planet, in the words of Bill McKibben, is melting, drying, acidifying, flooding and burning in ways that no human has ever seen. We’ve created a new planet for which we have no plan for its operation. Carbon dioxide levels exceed 390 ppm and are growing; only levels of 350 ppm or less are sustainable.

Denialism abounds; some argue that climate change is a hoax and that scientists disagree on fundamental issues. The origins and manifestations of denial are most prevalent among those least able to discuss scientific issues cogently. The sole objective of this seminar course will be make

plans for a fundamentally different life. Without them, productive life in the 21st century will be impossible. There is no more imperative need in early 2011 than to seek far reaching modes of adaptation.

FALL 2010

American Political Plays after 9/11

[Allan Havis](#), Theatre

(Provost, Thurgood Marshall College)

American Political Plays after 9/11 is a diverse collection of bold, urgent, and provocative plays that respond to the highly charged, post 9/11 political landscape. [More ...](#)

This seminar will explore provocative dramas that respond to the highly charged, post 9/11 political landscape. Texts will include "The Guys" by Anne Nelson, "At the Vanishing Point" by Naomi Iizuka, "The Venus de Milo is Armed" by Kia Corthron, "Back of the Throat" by Youssef El Guindi, "Three Nights in Prague" by Allan Havis, and "Question 27, Question 28" by Chay Yew. A brief history of political theater in the U.S. and a discussion about how theater communities responded to 9/11 will be addressed in seminar.

2009-2010 [\[Top of Page\]](#)

FALL 2009

Methods and Practices in Oral History: Talking Vietnam War

Abraham Shragge, Dimensions of Culture (DOC)

This eight-hour (total) seminar will present interested students with the opportunity to conduct, compile and interpret an oral-history project based on live interviews with two Vietnam War veterans. Students will explore several examples of contemporary oral history publications, learn fundamental interviewing and recording techniques, develop an oral-history protocol, and create final presentations based on their work.

WINTER 2010

For All We Know ~ And Don't !: A Look Back at the first year of President Barack Obama

M'Lafi Thompson, Guest Lecturer (TMC Artist-in-Residence)

This seminar will explore prevailing opinions on the first year of the Barack Obama presidency, top stories of the decade, and the importance of the arts as a life tool. The purpose of this seminar is to PROVOKE and INSPIRE students' ownership of their learning experience through the examination of current events, historical personalities, and exposure to "the arts" as a necessary life experience. Through a series of questionnaires, articles and artistic offerings, students will develop a journal of entries identifying what provoked or inspired self-motivated research, discussion and participation over the next five week period. The goal is to create an appetite for advocacy, cultural empathy, and artistic expression.

SPRING 2010

The Issue of "Race" in Contemporary Higher Education
Jorge Mariscal, Literature

This seminar will explore the development of the modern public university in the United States in relation to the issues of "race" and race relations. A segment of the class will be devoted to the UC system and UC San Diego in particular. Students will identify a particular problem they want to address, write a research statement, produce a short bibliography on the subject, and develop a blueprint for future investigations that could lead to scholarly work or more practical community engagement. The goal of the course is for students to learn how to initiate a research project and sustain it over time.

2008-2009 [\[Top of Page\]](#)

FALL 2008

Dynamics of power acquisition and tyranny
Jacques Verstraete, Mathematics

The twentieth century is described by some as the "bloodiest century of all time," in large part due to the ascendance of individuals who styled themselves as leaders with absolute power. While these individuals sometimes descend into madness, it is however often true that without support of the people or political parties, their acquisition of power and ensuing tyranny would not have been possible. Will the twenty-first century be any different? In this course we look at this question, and how such individuals manage to obtain power and remain in power, the responsibility of the people for giving it to them, and the consequences that such events entail. This will be done primarily through case studies of African dictatorships, through the eyes of the media and through film.

WINTER 2009

Social Justice & Spirituality
Rabbi Lisa Goldstein, Guest Lecturer

This seminar will explore the synergies and pitfalls of entwining a spiritual awareness with social justice work in the world. The methodology will include both theory and case studies and will involve lectures, discussions, film and reading. While there is no assumption about a personal commitment to either a spiritual tradition or to justice work, students will be encouraged to consider the application of the topics discussed to their own lives.

SPRING 2009

Social Change & Theater
Seema Sueko, Guest Lecturer (TMC Artist-in-Residence)

This seminar will explore how to use theater to affect social change. Students will identify a community need they want to address, create a mission statement, select a script that can help advance that mission, and develop hypothetical community partnerships and outreach activities to address their identified community need. In addition, students will be exposed to the practical side of

theater production, including developing a budget, marketing, raising funds, building an audience, and auditioning and hiring. The goal is for students to learn how to take a project from beginning to end and how to write and present project proposals.

2007-2008 [\[Top of Page\]](#)

FALL 2007

Methods and Practices in Oral History
Abraham Shragge, Dimensions of Culture (DOC)

WINTER 2008

Race, Art and the Creative Process
Karole Forman, Guest Lecturer

SPRING 2008

Religion and Politics
Robert Horwitz, Communication

2006-2007 [\[Top of Page\]](#)

FALL 2006

Cultural Topics in Africa and Its Diaspora
Robert Cancel, Literature

This is an eight-week survey of various dimensions of humanities and social concerns in Africa and its wider diaspora. We will be reading some short texts and view several video/cinema representations to back up in-class discussions. Though, of necessity, there will be a bit of lecturing to convey key ideas and information, the nature of a seminar is participatory. Members of the seminar will be required to do the readings and/or watch the video material before class and participate in discussions. Readings will be supplied by the TMC staff and video material will have a scheduled group showing at the Geisel Library as well as be available for personal viewing at the Video and Film Reserve room.

SPRING 2007

Son Jarocho: Building Community through Music
Eduardo Garcia, Guest Lecturer

Son Jarocho is a regional music of Southeastern Mexico that incorporates Spanish, African, Arab and Amerindian elements. It is a music that as it is practice in the rural areas serves as a way to generate community. We will engage in the actual practice, learning and execution of this music. Everybody will play an instrument, dance or sing. We will also attend the performative event called Fandango.

2005-2006 [\[Top of Page\]](#)

FALL 2005

Life after Graduation: Work-Life Balance in Demanding Professions

Mary Blair-Loy, Sociology

Educated young people expect a lot out of life, including rewarding careers, good incomes, and rich personal lives. How is it possible to "have it all" in today's competitive economy? Work hours and stress have increased for managers and professionals in the past 20 years, and the U.S. labor force now puts in longer hours than the labor force of any other nation. This course will look at the data on work dedication, family commitment, gender, and work-life conflict. We will also hear from impressive professionals trying to negotiate their own balance between work and family responsibilities in their own lives.

WINTER 2006

ELEMENTS OF SPIRITUALITY

Rabbi Lisa Goldstein, Guest Lecturer

This course will open discussion of spirituality, what it means to an individual and a society; how it may fit into ones everyday life.