

## Summer 2017

### AP/EN 4080 3.0A (S1)

### Concept of Play

**Course Director:**

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**Delivery Format:**

Seminar

**Time:**

Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30-5:30pm

**Description:**

In his *Critique of Judgment*, Kant asserts that "play" is "purposiveness without purpose." In this course we consider this and other apparent paradoxes of "play" as we examine the concept in modern and contemporary performance. Our central preoccupations will be these: What is play and what is its ontology? How does play relate to performance—both theatrical performance and the performance of self in everyday life? What role does language play in these questions? In the course we play two sets of texts off one another: one set is drawn from critical theory; the other includes films, performance art, and (of course) plays.

**Category:**

A

**Area:**

6 or 7

**Period:**

N/A

**Historical Requirement:**

N/A

**Requirements:**

Three short writing assignments (48%); quizzes and grammar exercises (17%); final test (35%)

**Reading List:**

**Theoretical readings:**

Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" (Moodle); Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" (Moodle); Erving Goffman, selection from *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Moodle); bell hooks, "Is Paris Burning?" (Moodle); Peggy Phelan, "The Golden Apple" and "The Ontology of Performance" (Moodle); Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory* (Routledge); Gertrude Stein, "Plays" (Moodle)

**Dramatic texts:**

Edward Albee, *The Play About the Baby* (DPS); Samuel Beckett, *Play* (Moodle); selected performances of Sophie Calle; Euripides, *The Bacchae* (Moodle); Maria Irene Fornes, *Fefu and Her Friends* (Hushion House); David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*; The Performance Group, *Dionysus in 69* (course reserves); Gertrude Stein, *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights* (Moodle)

**Screenings:**

Buster Keaton, *Sherlock Jr.*; Jennie Livingston, *Paris is Burning*; Joseph Mawra, *Olga's House of Shame*; Anthony Minghella, *Play*; The Wooster Group, *House/Lights*.

**Open To:**

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