

Fall/Winter 2018-2019

AP/EN 4000 3.0A (F)

Studies in Literary Theory: Cultural Studies

Course Director:

Dan Dufournaud
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Weekly Office Hour: R 15:00 – 16:00, 312 BC

Delivery Format:

Seminar

Time:

Thursday 11:30 am – 2:30 pm, MC 215

Description:

The title of this course, “Post-Structuralist Approaches in/to Neoliberal Times,” suggests a kind of failure, one’s failure to put any distance between themselves and the object of their analysis. It seems obvious, of course, that any critical approach to the contemporary structures of the world unavoidably happens within those very structures—and perhaps, we might add facetiously, such an approach moves the critic in too deep or into a greater mess than before. The unsubtle play on words here is meant to draw attention to some of the fundamental tenets of post-structuralist theory: that context matters; that subjects are shaped by the linguistic, political, and cultural norms of which they are critical; that subjects are relationally inscribed and co-implicated with others; that newness, as opposed to essentialized traditions or origins, cannot be avoided and issues from confrontation with the various forces that determine our subject positions.

In this course, we will investigate a number of post-structuralist modes of analysis, from Lacanian psychoanalysis to Derridean deconstruction, as well as attend to how the structural and discursive operations of power affect distinct cultural constituencies. Ultimately, this course is about method and theory, and in it, students will learn how to better articulate the identification of a problem—be it in the world at large or in a creative text—to a methodological framework that brings their theses into sharpest relief.

Category:

A

Historical Requirement:

N/A

Requirements:

- 1) Three 500-word response papers, each worth 10%: 30%
- 2) Group presentation and write up: 10% + 5% = 15%
- 3) Annotated bibliography: 10%
- 4) 10-page research essay: 30%
- 5) Weekly participation: 15%

Reading List:

Hudes, Quiara Alegría. *Water by the Spoonful* . Dramatists Play Services, 2013.
Leitch, Vincent B., et al, editors. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*.
2nd ed ., Norton, 2010.

Nguyen, Viet Thanh. *The Sympathizer* . Grove Press, 2015.

Rankine, Claudia. *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*. Graywolf Press, 2004.

Additional secondary material will be available, free of charge, through the library and online.

An asterisk (*) next to a reading denotes that it is available as an e-book through the York University Library. Some aggregators/e-libraries allow you to download specific chapters as PDFs, a feature that will prove helpful if you like printing out hardcopies.

Open To:

Year 3 & 4