

France/Germany, 1946-1975
W, 7-9:30 / ML 314

Professors Charlie Bertsch and Eric Hayot
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 Office hours: Bertsch: to be announced. Hayot: T/Th 9:30-11 and by appointment

Texts:

Boell, Heinrich. *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*
 Camus, Albert, *The Stranger*
 Duras, Marguerite. *Hiroshima My Love*
 Grass, Gunter. *The Tin Drum*
 Hollier and Mehlman, editors. *Literary Debate: Postwar French Thought Vol. 2*
 Robbe-Grillet, Alain. *Jealousy*
 Schmidt, Arno. *Nobodaddy's Children*
 Wittig, Monique. *Les guerilleres*

In addition to these books, we will have two coursepacks, and be asking you to photocopy other material over the semester. The first coursepack will be available by Friday at Arizona Print/Copy, (1033 N. Park Avenue; 882-3995). Details forthcoming for other stuff.

We will be screening several films outside of class. Though we will try and accommodate everyone's schedule, if you can't make it when most other people can, you will need to make arrangements to see the films before class.

Course description:

Looking at a Europe physically ravaged by the deaths and destruction of the Second World War, morally ravaged by the fact of the war's Holocaust, Theodor Adorno famously declared that "After Auschwitz [...]to write a poem is barbaric."

And yet, despite Adorno's warning, the post-war period in Europe produced not only great literature (even about the Holocaust), but a host of texts that redefined (and continue to redefine) Western conceptions of the aesthetic, of history, of the self and its relation to the social, of the structure of the fabric of reality, among other things (a canon otherwise known as "theory"). This course aims, through a historical reading of post-war developments in literature, philosophy, and film, to provide students with an extensive and culturally specific understanding of the major aesthetic and theoretical developments of the 20th century.

We intend for this historical and cultural reading to provide a general background in aesthetics and theory for all students of literature, but also to suggest, more methodologically, that an attention to the cultural and historical specificity of ideas can produce not simply theories about this or that defined "era" (e.g., 1946-1975), but also a more general appreciation of the movement of ideas in and out of local and global contexts.

This approach should prove particularly useful for students who have struggled with the difficulty of applying French and German theory to literature in English or, conversely, reconciling French and German literature and film with moments in American history (the Cold War, the Kennedy Era, Vietnam, the crisis of 1973).

Assignments and grading

You should come to every class with *two copies* of a response to that week's reading of *at least 250 words*. We won't be grading these response papers, but will be discussing them with each other. Ideally, one or more of your response papers will provide a foundation for your longer assignments. Bear in mind, also, that we expect a *cumulative* level of performance on response papers. They don't have to be of uniform quality or length, provided that we can see that your work on them as a whole reflects sustained engagement with the reading assignments. Twice during the semester, we will ask you to forward your week's response to the class's listserv, as a guide (or prod) to group discussion, online and off.

During the week of April 14, our class will hold a conference, "Works in Progress 2," concurrently with at least one other graduate class and the graduate student conference, "Theory Matters." Each one of you will be required to present a paper at either "WiP2" or "Theory Matters" as part of your participation in the course. Ideally, the paper you present (8-10 pages in length) will be an early version of your final essay.

Your final essay (10-15 pages for undergraduates, 20-25 for graduates) will be due during exam week. It ought to engage substantively ideas central to the course, though it does not necessarily have to focus on texts that we have read in class. We expect graduate student essays to demonstrate familiarity with scholarship on their objects of study.

Though both of us will look at work by every student, each of you will be randomly assigned a primary grader after the first few weeks of the course. The grading system for undergraduates and graduates will be slightly different. Details forthcoming.

In exceptional circumstances we will consider the granting of a grade of incomplete, but only when all but a minor portion of the course work has been successfully completed.

Lateness and absences:

Don't miss class. Don't hand things in late unless you've discussed it with one of us first.

Plagiarism and academic honesty:

If you use someone else's ideas, whether through direct quotation or paraphrase, you need to say so. Use parenthetical references and a works cited list (as explained in the *MLA Style Guide*, available in the library or at the bookstore) to credit your sources. We expect you to abide by the university's code of academic integrity.

Daily syllabus. Have everything read *before* coming to class.

In general, brief background essays on most of the theorists (but not novelists) we read can be found online at http://www.press.jhu.edu/books/hopkins_guide_to_literary_theory/g-contents.html.

Starred texts are in the coursepacks.

Engagement / Anti-Engagement

Jan 15 *LD 29-55 (LD is *Literary Debate*, eds. Hollier and Mehlman)*

Jan 22 Brecht, "A Short Organum for the Theater"*

Beckett, "Texts for Nothing"*

- Jan 29 Adorno, "Commitment"*
 Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism"*
 Sartre, *What is Literature* excerpts, "Forgers and Myths," *The Victors**
 Sartre, "Existentialism and Humanism" (email Eric Hayot and ask for a copy).

Years Zero

- Feb 5 Schmidt, *Brand's Heath* (in *Nobodaddy's Children*)
Germany Year 0 (in class)
 Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, excerpts*
 Adorno, "What Is Coming To Terms With the Past?"*
- Feb 12 Grass, *Tin Drum*
- Feb 19 Duras, *Hiroshima My Love*
 Genet, *Funeral Rites* excerpts*
 Laura Frost on Genet*

The New Novel

- Feb 26 Robbe-Grillet, *Jealousy*
 Barthes preface in *Jealousy*
 LD 259-282
 Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero* excerpts*

Decolonization

- Mar 5 Camus, *The Stranger*
 Djébar, *Women of Algiers in Their Apartment**
 Djébar, "The White of Algeria" in LD 450-460
 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* excerpts*
 Sartre, preface to *The Wretched of the Earth**
Battle of Algiers (in class)
 LD 431-460

Society of the Spectacle and the Specter of '68

- Mar 12 Perec, *Things* (photocopy)
 Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, excerpts*
 OuLiPo, selections*
 Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, excerpts*
- Mar 26 Godard, *Contempt* (screening)
 Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, excerpts*
 History of May 68 (tba)*
 LD 373-403

New Subjectivities

- Apr 2 Wittig, *Les guerrilleres*
LD 350-354, 410-430
- Apr 9 Handke, "The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick"*
Wenders, *Alice in the Cities* (screening)
- Apr 16 No class: Works in Progress 2
- Apr 17 Mary Ann Doane speaks on campus
- April 18-19 "Theory Matters" graduate student conference

Return of the Repressed

- Apr 23 *Germany in Autumn* (screening)
Boell, *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*
- Apr 30 The Heidegger Controversy (Habermas, Derrida, Bourdieu etc.)*
- May 7 Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*, excerpts*
Foucault, interviews*
LD 487-499