

LITERATURE AND OTHERNESS: COMPLEMENTARY APPROACHES FROM GENDER AND POSTHUMANIST STUDIES – 5 Creds.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course addresses the study of the concepts of alterity and subalternity, as theoretically developed by Levinas and Gramsci. Our goal is to study the different forms of expression that the silenced subaltern finds in literature due to gender, sexual orientation, or species.

Dr. Rodríguez Salas's sessions will be divided into two main thematic blocks: Studies of Masculinities and Trans Theory. Until recently, the official approach in Gender Studies has been feminism. The present course aims to visibilize the increasing attention paid to alternative fields within Gender Studies, such as the Studies of Masculinities or Trans identities. The Studies of Masculinities will be studied in their three waves, outlining some of the central issues: hegemonic masculinity (Connell), homosociality and homosexual panic (Lipman-Blumen, Sedgwick, Segal), gender box (Katz), etc. Further attention will be given to the concept of 'Female Masculinity', as a way to show the fluidity of gender and its separation from biological determinism. Here the studies by Stoller, Butler and particularly Halberstam will be central. Trans Studies will lead to the ultimate problematization of the dyad sex/gender. After offering a clarifying terminological distinction and discussing the growing range of non-normative identities subsumed within the label 'trans' (Pratt), the course will provide a historical revision of Trans Studies, paying special attention to detractors (Daly, Raymond, Hausman) and supporters (Stone, Butler, Stryker, Halberstam, Meyerowitz) within feminist studies. Central concerns such as embodiment, biomedical discourse, and the (de/re)construction of the notion of 'woman' will be addressed.

Dr. Carretero González's sessions will look at the most relevant theories on posthumanism (Wolfe, Haraway, Hayles and Braidotti), broadly understood as a reconceptualization of reality which rejects the essentialist separation between human and other-than-human nature, looking at nature and culture as part of a mutually defining continuum. Possibly the most popular version of posthumanism is that which looks into the possibilities offered by technology for human enhancement, yet this course will show that focusing exclusively on this aspect (the transhuman, in fact) runs the risk of perpetuating the centrality of the human, rather than inserting it in the wider ontological, cultural and ecological contexts in which humans actually belong (Deleuze and Guattari). The first session will be devoted to presenting the theoretical framework to students, who will then have to use the posthuman lens to analyse the literary corpus. The chosen texts prove particularly useful to illustrate the theoretical nuances expressed by Braidotti's Post-Humanism – understood as "Life beyond the self" – and Post-Anthropocentrism, or "Life beyond the species".

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary sources

- Isherwood, Christopher. *A Single Man* (1964) and Tom Ford's film adaptation (2009).
Ebershoff, David. *The Danish Girl* (2000) and Tom Hooper's film adaptation (2015).
Auster, Paul. *Timbuktu* (1999)
Coetzee, John M. *The Lives of Animals* (1997)
Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968)

Part I: Masculinities

- Bird, Sharon R. "Welcome to the Men's Club: Homosociality and the Maintenance of Hegemonic Masculinity". *Gender and Society* 10.2 (1996): 120-32.
Gardiner, Judith Kegan. "Female Masculinity and Phallic Women – Unruly Concepts". *Feminist Studies* 38.3 (2012): 597-624.
Kimmel, Michael. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." *Gender and Society* 19.6 (2005): 829–59.
Seagal, Lynne. "Men: Masculinities in Context". *Theory and Society* 22.5 (1993): 625-41.

Part II: Transgender and Transsexuality

- Connell, Raewyn. "Accountable Conduct: Doing Gender in Transsexual and Political Retrospect". *Gender and Society* 23.1 (2009): 104-111.
---. "Transsexual Women and Feminist Thought: Toward New Understanding and New Politics." *Signs* 37.4 (2012): 857-881.
Elliot, Patricia. "Who Gets to Be a Woman?: Feminist Politics and the Question of Trans-inclusion." *Atlantis* 29.1 (2004): 13-20.
---. "Introduction: Exploring Rifts in Transgender, Queer, and Feminist Theories." *Debates in Transgender, Queer, and Feminist Theory: Contested Sites*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2012. 1-15.
Heyes, Cressida J. "Feminist Solidarity after Queer Theory: The Case of Transgender." *Signs* 28.4 (2003): 1093-1120.
Stone, Sandy. "The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto." (1987): <<http://sandystone.com/empire-strikes-back.pdf>>

Part III: Posthumanism

- Braidotti, Rosi. 2013. *The Posthuman*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
Haraway, Donna. 2003. *The Companion Species Manifesto. Dogs, People and Significant Otherness*. Chicago, IL.: Prickly Paradigm Press.
Hayles, Katherine. 1999. *How We Became Posthuman. Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature and Informatics*. Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press.
Wolfe, Cary. 2010. *What is Posthumanism?* Minneapolis, MN.: University of Minnesota Press.

EVALUATION

Attendance and class participation (including oral presentations): 30%

Final examination: 70%

