Dr. Maggie Taft

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9-11am, Umrath 234

Dr. Matthew Fox-Amato

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 11:30-12:30; Wednesdays, 10-11am, Umrath 236

**Visual Problems:**

**L93 IPH 405: Theory and Methods in the Humanities**

**Spring 2015**

**Tues/Thurs, 10-11:30am**

**Cupples II/L007**

Since the Enlightenment, humanists have taken special pains to reflect on the theoretical underpinnings of their analytic practice, explicitly considering such concepts as language, narrative, psychology, ideology, group identity, race, class, and gender. In this course, students will read a number of key theorists (e.g. Marx, Freud, and Saussure) whose work continues to influence humanistic discourse. This spring's iteration of the course will give special emphasis to the various frameworks through which scholars, critics, and image-producers have understood the conception, fabrication, and circulation of images. Students should leave the course with a solid foundation in visual studies questions and theory and an expanded tool-kit for research.

**Course Readings**

You will be required to purchase just one book for this class:

Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003).

All others readings are available electronically on the course Blackboard site. You must bring printed or digital copies of the assigned readings with you to class.

**Course Requirements**

Undergraduate Students:

*Participation* (40%)

You are expected to participate actively in all classroom discussions. In fact, the success of the course depends upon your active participation. This requirement makes up the largest portion of your grade and includes:

* Close reading of assigned texts, readiness to answer and raise questions, comments that connect readings, comments that focus classroom discussion and move it forward.
* Punctuality, unbroken attendance, adherence to assignment deadlines.

*Short Essays* (20%)

A short essay (500-750 words) on five out of six units, due within one week of the end of that unit. These are “applied papers,” in which you are to reflect on the methodologies and theories articulated by course readings in relation to your own project. One way to approach the assignment might be to write a literature review, isolating important questions and problems identified by the authors in question, and then briefly considering the viability of these in relation to your own topic of study. Alternatively, you might foreground your own research and consider it in relation to just one especially compelling theory or approach from the unit in question. These papers are an opportunity to creatively reflect on course readings in relation to your own area of interest. They do not demand the argumentative rigor that is expected in the final paper but they must be lucid, presentable, and free of typos.

*Final Paper* (40%)

A final paper (8-10 pages) expanding one short essay into a research paper related to your own subject of study. You will also be expected to give a presentation on this paper at the end of the semester.

Graduate Students:

*Participation* (40%)

Including one session leading class discussion.

*Final Paper* (60%)

Assignment to be determined.

**Instructions for Written Assignments**

* Short papers are to be submitted in class in hard copy on the due date specified on the syllabus.
  + Work submitted after the specified due date will be marked down 1/3 of a grade for each 24-hour period after it is due. For instance, if an assignment is due in class on Tuesday, it will be marked down 1/3 of a grade if turned in before 10am on Wednesday, 2/3 of a grade if submitted in class on Thursday. Work more than four days late will not be accepted.
* Please use: 1-inch margins, Times New Roman, 12-pt font, double-spacing
* Papers must be stapled
* Give your paper a title and number your pages

**Grading**

Assignments will be evaluated according to the following rubric:

* Creativity: boldness of analysis, originality of claims, efforts to juxtapose and draw connections between unlikely ideas
* Clarity: lucidity of prose, quality of the writing. Do the paragraphs cohere as proper paragraphs? Is there a proper introduction and conclusion? Does the writing flow easily?
* Evidence: strength and robustness of the materials (visual analysis, research, etc.) used to produce an argument
* Argumentation: Structure of the text, is the argument coherent?
* Presentation: papers should be free of typos, careless grammatical errors, and general sloppiness

**Plagiarism**

Do not claim the ideas or words of someone else as your own. Do use the ideas and words of others to help develop your own work. Always give explicit credit when you use anyone’s thoughts or language, whether in paraphrasing or quoting them. Give an acknowledgment to someone who’s helped you overall. Intellectual work means developing and sharing your ideas, and it presumes taking note of people who have shared good ones with you. For more information about plagiarism and academic integrity, see: http://wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities are welcome in this class and will receive disability-related accommodations. If you need support for a disability, please contact Disability Resources (DRC) at 935-5970. DRC is located at Cornerstone in Gregg Hall on the South 40. DRC is responsible for approving and arranging all accommodations for students.

**Class Protocol**

* Cell phones are not permitted in the classroom and must be turned off. Texting during class will have a substantial negative effect on your participation grade.
* Laptops and tablets are permitted in the classroom to access assigned readings and to take notes. Turn off the Wi-Fi when you arrive in class. Research has shown that laptops are distracting not only to the user, but to other students as well, and that this distraction results in lower grades. Make sure that your laptop is a learning tool and not a distraction-machine.

**SCHEDULE**

**Tues., 1/13, Class 1: Introduction**

Syllabus Review

THINKING ABOUT LOOKING

**Thurs., 1/15, Class 2: Ways of Seeing; or, The Wide World of Image Study**

Reading: "Visual Culture Questionnaire," *October* 77 (Summer 1996): 25-70

**Tues., 1/20, Class 3: Problems of Seeing; or, How do we look when *we* don’t look like *they* looked?**

Reading: Jonathan Crary, “Modernity and the Problem of the Observer,” in

*Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992), 1-24.

Michael Baxendall, “Period Eye” in *Painting and Experience in*

*Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 29-56.

**Thurs., 1/22, Class 4: Transhistorical Seeing; or, But what if we all look in the same way?**

Reading: David Freedberg, Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 15, in *The Power of Images:*

*Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of

Chicago Press, 1991), xix-xxv, 1-26, 429-441.

CONTEXT

**Tues., 1/27, Class 5: The Social Contexts of Images**

Reading: Jennifer Roberts, “Introduction: Long-Distance Pictures,” “Audubon’s

Burden: Materiality and Transmission in The Birds of America,” in *Transporting Visions: The Movement of Images in Early America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 1-11, 69-115.

**Thurs., 1/29, Class 6: Images Shaping History**

**Due in class: “Thinking about Looking” short paper**

Reading: TJ Clark, “Introduction,” *The Painting of Modern Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 2-22.

Peter Burke, “Introduction,” *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as* *Historical Evidence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 9-19.

**\*\*\*Suggested talk: “Divine Concealment: Authorship, Ecology, and the Cult Image”**

Sara Ryu

Honorary Scholar, WUSTL

Fri., Jan. 30, 4:00-5:30pm, Kemper 103

PRODUCTION

**Tues., 2/3, Class 7: The Producers**

Reading: Walter Benjamin, “The Author as Producer,” in *Understanding Brecht*,

translated by Anna Bostock (London: Verso, 2003), 85-104.

Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” in *Image Music Text*, translated by

Stephen Heath (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1978), 142-148.

**\*\*\*Suggested talk: "In/Out the Box: Visuality, Print Culture and Indigenous Theatre in Nigeria"**

Prof. Olubukola Gbadegesin

Assistant Professor of African-American Studies and Art History at SLU

Wed, Feb. 4, at 5:30 p.m. Kemper 103

**Thurs., 2/5, Class 8: The Possibilities of Production**

**Due in class: “Context” short paper**

Reading: Linda Nochlin, “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists,” in *Women*

*Art, and Power and Other Essays* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), 145-178.

Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” *Screen* 16: 3 (1975): 6-18.

**Tues., 2/10, Class 9: The Labor of Production**

Reading: Karl Marx, “Wage Labor and Capital,” *The Marx-Engels Reader*, edited

by Robert C. Tucker (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989),203- 217.

William Morris, “The Revival of Handicraft,” and “The Arts and Crafts of To- day,” in *The Theory of Decorative Art: An Anthology of European & American Writings, 1750-1940*, edited by Isabelle Frank (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 169-176, 61-70.

**Thurs., 2/12, Class 10: NO CLASS**

**Tues., 2/17, Class 11: Modes of Production Part I: Mass Culture Production**

Reading: Joshua Brown, “Introduction,” “Pictorial Journalism in Antebellum America,” “Illustrating the News,” in *Beyond the Lines: Pictorial Reporting, Everyday Life, and the Crisis of Gilded Age America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 1-57.

**\*\*\*Suggested talk: “In A Communion of Shadows: Religion, Race, and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America Photography”**

Rachel McBride Lindsey

Associate Director, Danforth Center on Religion and Politics, WUSTL

Tues., Feb. 17, 4:30-6:00pm, Umrath Lounge

**Thurs., 2/19, Class 12: Modes of Production, Part II: Handcraft to Machine**

Reading: Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,”

*Illuminations*, translated by Harry Zohn (New York: Shocken Books, 1968), 217-252.

REPRESENTATION

**Tues., 2/24, Class 13: Grammars of Representation**

Reading: Ferdinand de Saussure, “The Nature of the Linguistic Sign,” in *Course in General Linguistics*, edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye (P. Owen 1961), 65-70.

W.J.T. Mitchell, “Word and Image,” in *Critical Terms for Art History*,edited by Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 47-57.

**Thurs., 2/26, Class 14: Representing Objectivity**

**Due in class: “Production” short paper**

Reading: Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, “Prologue,” “Epistemologies of the Eye,”

in *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007), 11-53.

**\*\*\*Suggested talk: “Material Culture and Its Narratives”**

Lynn Festa (Associate Prof. of English, Rutgers) and Michael Kwass (Associate

Prof. of History, Johns Hopkins)

Friday, Feb. 27, 4pm, location TBD

**Tues., 3/3, Class 15: Representing Truth**

Reading: Joel Snyder, “Res Ipsa Loquitur,” in *Things that Talk*, edited by Lorraine

Daston (New York: Zone Books, 2004), 195-221.

Christian Delage, “Film as Evidence: An American Jurisprudence,” in *Caught on Camera: Film in the Courtroom from the Nuremberg Trials to the Trails of the Khmer Rouge* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 9-44.

**Thurs., 3/5, Class 16: Representing the Invisible**

Reading: Georges Didi-Huberman, “Legends of Photography,” in *Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpêtrière*, translated by Alisa Hartz(Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003), 29-66.

Sigmund Freud, “On the Psychical Mechanism of Hysterical Phenomena (Preliminary Statement),” “Katharina,” in *Studies on Hysteria*, translated by Nicola Luckhurst (London; New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 5-21, 128-138.

**SPRING BREAK**

**Tues., 3/17, Class 17: Representing Identity**

Reading: Roland Barthes, “Myth Today,” *A Barthes Reader*, edited by Susan Sontag(New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 93-149.

**Thurs., 3/19, Class 18: TBD**

**Tues., 3/24, Class 19: Representing the Impossible**

Reading: Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003).

DISPLAY AND SPECTATORSHIP

**Thurs., 3/26, Class 20: Society of Surveillance**

Reading: Michel Foucault, “Panopticism,” *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), 195-228.

**Sunday, March 29, 2pm: Field Trip: The Godfather, STL Orchestra, Powell Hall**

**Tues., 3/31, Class 21: The Museum**

**Due in Class: “Representation” short paper**

Reading: Tony Bennett’s “The Exhibitionary Complex,” *New Formations* 4 (Spring 1988): 73-102.

**Thurs., 4/2, Class 22: The Cinema House**

Reading: Miriam Hansen, “Introduction,” “Early Audiences: Myths and Models,”

“Chameleon and Catalyst,” in *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 1-19, 60-125.

CIRCULATION

**Tues., 4/7, Class 23: Circulation and Commodification**

Reading: Roland Marchand, “The Great Parable,” in *Advertising the American Dream* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 206-224.

Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception,” in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (London: Verso, 1979), 120-167.

**Thurs., 4/9, Class 24: The Social Life of Things**

**Due in class: “Display and Spectatorship” short paper**

Reading: Arjun Appadurai, “Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value,” in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988 [1986]), 3-63.

**Tues., 4/14, Class 25: Society of the Spectacle**

Reading: Guy Debord, “Separation Perfected,” “The Commodity as Spectacle,” in *The Society of the Spectacle* (Detroit: Black and Red, 1983), n.p.

David Foster Wallace, “9/11: The View from the Midwest,” *Rolling Stone*,

25 October 2001.

**Thurs., 4/16, Class 26: Presentations**

**Tues., 4/21, Class 27: Presentations**

**Due in class: “Circulation” short paper**

**Thurs., 4/23, Class 28: Presentations**

**Thurs., 4/30: Papers Due by 5PM via e-mail (as a word document) to both Matt and Maggie**