



EMERSON COLLEGE, DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMING ARTS

TH514: PERFORMANCE STUDIES: ISSUES AND METHODS

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course introduces students to Performance Studies as an academic discipline from both academic and performance-based perspectives. It focuses on the fundamental issues of the discipline as well as various research and performance-based methodologies used by Performance Studies scholars. Students will investigate the relationships between Performance Studies and other disciplines (such as Anthropology, Religious Studies, Sociology, Psychology, Theatre History, Political Science, Gender Studies, Queer Studies, Cultural Studies, Race Studies, etc.). They will also be introduced to the concepts of performance, performativity, and performance studies, as informed by theory, research, and practice.



M: 6:00-9:45pm
Tuftes P914
FALL 2007

Magda Romanska
mmr24@cornell.edu
Office: Tuftes 501
Hours: M: 12:00-3:00

SYLLABUS:

WEEK 1 - Mon, Sept. 10

Introduction

WEEK 2 – Mon, Sept. 17

What is Performance?

- Schechner, Richard. "Drama, Script, Theatre and Performance." Performance Theory. (1994) 68-104.
- Williams, Raymond. "Introduction," "Culture." Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society (1976) 11-26, 87-93.
- Schechner, Richard. "Introduction." Performance Studies: An Introduction (2002).
- Schechner, Richard. "Points of Contact" and "Performers and Spectators, Transported and Transformed." Between Theater and Anthropology (1985).
- Denning, Greg. "Theatricality and the Paradoxes of Acting." Performances (1996).
- Hibbits, "Coming to Our Senses: Communication and Legal Expression in Performance Cultures." 41 Emory Law Journal 4 (1992).

What is Performance Studies?

- Schechner, Richard. "What is 'Performance Studies' Anyway?" Performance Studies: An Introduction (2002).
- Pelias and VanOosting. "A Paradigm for Performance Studies." Quarterly Journal of Speech 73,2 (1987): 219-231.
- Carlson, Marvin. "What is Performance?" Performance: A Critical Introduction (2003).
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. "Kodak Moments, Flashbulb Memories: Reflections on 9/11." TDR 47,1 (2003).

WEEK 3 – Mon, Sept. 24

Performance and Performativity

- Culler, Jonathan. "The Arbitrary Nature of the Linguistic Sign." Ferdinand de Saussure (1976) 28-33.
- Austin J.L. "Lecture I," How to Do Things With Words (1962) 1-11.
- Culler, Jonathan. "Performative Language." Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction, (1998) 110-124.
- Carlson, Marvin. "Performance of Language: Linguistic Approach." Performance: A Critical Introduction (2003) 56-76.

WEEK 4 – Mon, Oct. 1

Anthropology and Performance: Ritual Between the Sacred and the Profane

- Eibl-Eibesfeldt, Iraneus. "Ritual and ritualization from a biological perspective." Human Ethology (1979).
- Carlson, Marvin. "The Performance of Culture: Anthropological and Ethnographic Approaches." Performance Studies: A Critical Introduction (2003) 13-33.
- Schechner, Richard. "Ritual" in Performance Studies: An Introduction (2002).

- Turner, Victor. Dramas, Fields, Metaphors (1974) 23-59.
- Olorisa Omi Osun Olomo (Joni L. Jones), "Performance and Ethnography, Performing Ethnography, Performance Ethnography," SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies (2006) 339-45.

Video:

- Taboo: Rites of Passage, 2004.
- Taboo: Voodoo, 2004.

WEEK 5 - Tuesday, Oct. 9

RESEARCH METHOD: FIELDWORK

- Barz et al., Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology (1997)
- Kisliuk, "(Un)Doing Fieldwork." 23-44.
- Barz, "Confronting the Field(Note) In and Out of the Field." 45-62.
- Roach, Joseph. "History, Memory, and Performance," Cities of the Dead (1996) 2-31.
- Phelan, Peggy. "The Ontology of Performance," Unmarked (1993) 146-166.
- Phelan, Peggy. "This Book's Body," Mourning Sex (1997) 1-22.
- Geertz, Clifford. "Thick Description," The Interpretation of Cultures (1973).

WEEKS 6 – Mon, Oct. 15

Gender and Sexuality: What is the Difference?

- Wittig, Monique. "One is Not Born a Woman." The Straight Mind and Other Essays. Beacon Press: Boston (1992) 9-20.
- Butler, Judith. "Imitation and Gender Insubordination." Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories. ed. Diana Fuss. Routledge: New York (1991) 13-31.
- Culler, Jonathan. "Identity, Identification and the Subject." Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction (1998).
- Bell, Elizabeth. "Weddings and Pornography: the Cultural Performance of Sex." Text & Performance Quarterly [TPQ] 19 (July 1999).
- Schechner, Richard. Chapter 5, "Performativity," 110-114; Chapter 6, "Performing" Performance Studies: An Introduction (2002) 143-54 & 171-87.
- Johnson, E. Patrick. "Strange Fruit: A Performance about Identity Politics." TDR 47, 2 (Summer 2003).

Video:

- Taboo: Gender Benders, 2004.

WEEKS 7 – Mon. Oct. 22.

Feminist Discourse and the Politics of Representation

- Schneider, Rebecca. "Binary Terror and the Body Made Explicit." Explicit Body in Performance (1997) 12-32.
- Fuchs, Elinor. "When Bad Girls Play Good Theaters." The Death of Character: Perspectives on Theater after Modernism. Bloomington: Indiana University Press (1996).
- O'Dell, Kathy. "The Performance Artist as Masochistic Woman." Arts Magazine. 62.10. (June 1988) 96-97.
- Dolan, Jill. "Desire Cloaked in a Trenchcoat." Acting Out: Feminist Performances. ed. Lynda Hart and Peggy Phelan. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press (1993) 105-118.
- Phelan, Peggy. "Reciting the Citation of Others; or, A Second Introduction." Acting Out: Feminist Performances. ed. Lynda Hart and Peggy Phelan. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press (1993) 13-34.
- Davis, Tracy. "Extremities and Masterpieces: A Feminist Paradigm of Art and Politics." Keyssar, Helene. ed. Feminist Theatre and Theory. New York: St. Martin's Press, (1996) 137-154.

Video:

- Female Misbehavior, 1992 # 5166.

WEEKS 8 – Mon. Oct. 29

'Playing the Race Card': Racial Identity and Politics of Performance

- Gilroy, "'Not a Story to Pass On': Living Memory and the Slave Sublime." The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness (1995) 187-223.
- John P. Bowles; Olu Oguibe; Karen Stevenson; Maurice Berger; Ellen Fernandez-Sacco; Adrian Piper, "Blinded by the White: Art and History at the Limits of Whiteness," Art Journal, Vol. 60, No. 4. (Winter, 2001), pp. 38-67.
- Gilroy, Paul. "...to be real: The Dissident Forms of Black Expressive Culture." In Catherine Ugwu, ed., Let's Get It On: The Politics of Black Performance. London: Institute of Contemporary Arts; Seattle: Bay Press (1995) 12-33.
- Taylor, Diana, "A Savage Performance: Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Coco Fusco's "Couple in the Cage" TDR, Vol. 42, No. 2 (Summer, 1998), pp. 160-175.
- Thomas Nakayama. "Dis/Orienting Identities: Asian Americans, History, & Intercultural Communication." Our Voices: Essays in Culture, Ethnicity, and Communication (1997) 14-20.

Videos:

- Cornered, Adrian Piper, 1995.
- Couple in the Cage, Coco Fusco, 1993 # 713950.
- Tongues Untied, 1989 # DZ6770.

WEEKS 9, 10 – Mon. Nov. 5 & Mon. Nov 12

The Society of the Spectacle: Politics and Counter-Performance

- Debord, Guy. "Commodity as Spectacle," and "Ideology Materialized." The Society of the Spectacle (1967).
- Vaneigeim, Raoul. "The Organization of Appearances" and "Roles." The Revolution of Everyday Life (1967).
- Chomsky, Noam. "Introduction." Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Society (1989).
- Anderson, Benedict. "Chapter one." Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism (1991).
- Cray, Jonathan. "Spectacle, Attention, Counter-Memory." October. Vol. 50. (Autumn, 1989) 96-107.
- Yourman, Julius. "Propaganda Techniques Within Nazi Germany." Journal of Educational Sociology. Vol. 13, No. 3, Education Under Nazism (Nov., 1939) 148-163.
- Critical Arts Ensemble. "The Electronic Disturbanc", "Flesh Machine, Society for Reproductive Anachronism, The Cult of New Eve.
- Boal, August, Epstein Susana. "Invisible Theatre: Liege, Belgium, 1978." TDR, Vol. 34, No. 3 (Autumn, 1990) 24-34.

Videos:

- Triumph of the Will, 1933 # BL9088.
- Society of the Spectacle, 1973 # EI4333.
- Manufacturing Consent, 1992 # CT6505.
- Corporation, 2003 # 768334.
- Augusto Boal and the Theatre of the Oppressed, 1994 # 798540.

WEEK 11 – Mon. Nov. 19

Discourses of the Body

- Salecl, Renata. "Cut in the Body: From Clitoridectomy to Body Art." Thinking Through the Skin. edited by Sara Ahmed and Jackie Stacey. London: Routledge (2001).
- Jones, Amelia. Body Art/Performing the Subject. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota press (1998).
- O'Dell, Kathy. Contract with the Skin: Masochism, Performance Art, and the 1970's. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press (1998).
- Burghart, Catherine. "Sex Theatre." The Drama Review: TDR, Vol. 25, No. 1, Sex and Performance Issue. (Mar., 1981), pp. 69-78.

Videos:

- Sick: The Life and Death of Bob Flanagan, Supermasochist, 1998 # 100195.
- Taboo: Scarification: Ancient Body Art Leaving New Marks, 2004.
- Taboo: Tatoo, 2004.

WEEK 12 - Mon. Nov. 26

PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 13 - Mon. Dec. 3

PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 14 – Mon. Dec. 10

PRESENTATIONS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 17:

FINAL PAPER DUE
FINAL EXAM

BOOKS:

Available at Emerson Bookstore or Amazon.com

Schechner, Performance Studies: An Introduction. 2002.
Carlson, Marvin, Performance: A Critical Introduction. 2003.

Other readings will be available on WebCT E-reserve.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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- Students will be able to understand Performance Studies as a discipline, its issues, methodologies, and practices.
- Students will learn to navigate related vocabulary in their critical and creative endeavors.
- Students will read theory and explore methods for documenting, analyzing, interpreting, and writing about performance.
- Students will have an opportunity to explore research, fieldwork, and performance aspects of the discipline.

LEARNING PROCEDURES

- Lecture/demonstration of various schools of thought and dramatic traditions.
- Reading and discussion.
- Viewing and analysis of various performances.
- Research, fieldwork.
- Final analytical research paper summarizing the research, fieldwork, and performance experience.

NOTE:

The syllabus is available on WebCT. To access it: 1). Go to <http://webcms.emerson.edu>. 2). Enter your Emerson email address and password. 3). Click on TH 514.

Your grades, assignments, handouts, and articles on E-reserve will also be available at WebCT. Please make sure to access it as soon as possible to familiarize yourself with the system. I will communicate with you via email. Therefore, you must have and check regularly your Emerson email account.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Come to class on time.
- Read all assigned texts and come to class prepared to discuss them. It is expected that you devote between 3 to 4 hours per week to readings. You are expected to participate in classroom discussion, and I will call on you to answer questions pertaining to the readings.
- Fully participate in classroom discussions, contributing your own ideas. You are being trained to read the material as artists and/or scholars, not as a general reader, and that means that you should always know the materials of the day thoroughly and be prepared to have specific, concrete things to add to our discussions. The success of the class depends on you sharing your ideas and taking an active role in discussion.
- Prepare annotated bibliography.
- Prepare Power Point presentation.
- Write a Final Research Paper.
- Each student is encouraged to make at least two individual appointments with the instructor throughout the semester.

NOTE: According to department policy, we do not administer early or late exams (unless you're sick). Therefore, please, plan your holiday vacations and family gatherings with the final exam date in mind. Please do not purchase your plane tickets or make other plans for this date (unless you do not plan to take the exam). No exceptions.

PAPERS:

Assigned papers must be typed and turned in on the due date, at the start of class. Use one-inch margins and a 12-point font.

While citing your sources, be consistent, and always follow MLA format. For detailed guidelines, you can either refer to the MLA handbook or you can use this Web site: Citing Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism:
http://www.lib.duke.edu/libguide/cite/works_cited.htm . Cite ALL your sources, and include a bibliography.

LATE PAPERS:

- One day - ten points of the grade deducted
- Two days - twenty points of the grade deducted

Assignments received 3 days late will not be accepted.

NOTE: Final papers received late will not be accepted. No exceptions.

NOTE: No electronic submissions. Hard copies only. No exceptions.

HELP:

To get help with their papers (proofreading, organizing your ideas, etc), students can make appointments at the Writing Center in person at 216 Tremont Street or by calling 617-824-7874 . Because the Center can get busy, students should make appointments in advance. This is not a drop-in Center. For more information, see website:

http://www.emerson.edu/learning_assistance/writing_center/index.cfm

ASSIGNMENTS:

Detailed guidelines will be posted on WebCT.

LIBRARY REPORT: The report has the form of an extended bibliography. The purpose of the assignment is to research a particular performance practice as socio-political issue (race, gender, class, sexuality, social status, etc). You need to know what was done before, how, why, and for what purpose (aesthetic, political, social, etc.). 5 books (2-3 pages) for undergraduates. 10 books (5 pages) for graduate students.

POWER POINT PRESENTATION: Your presentation can include interviews, observations, images, videos, summary of your research, etc. You should explore a particular environment, its inner dynamic, and its socio-political conditions. Your Power Point presentation needs to be between 10 and 15 minutes long (20 slides for undergraduates, 40 slides for graduates).

FINAL PAPER: DUE MONDAY, DECEMBER 17

Min. 8 pages for undergraduates. Min. 15 pages for graduates. . Your paper should include 1) your main thesis framing the problem you explored, 2) the description of research findings (observations, data, description of performances, including, but not limited to, the audience/performer relationship, the social, political, cultural goals of the performance practice you researched, etc.) 3) the conclusions drawn from your research.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

- One day - ten points of the grade deducted
- Two days - twenty points of the grade deducted

Assignments received 3 days late will not be accepted.

Final papers received late will not be accepted.

NOTE: No electronic submissions. Hard copies only. No exceptions.

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http://www.emerson.edu/learning_assistance/writing_center/index.cfm

GRADING:

The College uses a system of letter grades and quality points to evaluate student performance. Grade-point averages are computed on a scale where A = 4.0 (93-100),
A - = 3.7 (90-92), B+ = 3.3 (87-89), B = 3.0 (83-86), B - = 2.7 (80-82), C+ = 2.3 (77-79), C = 2.0 (73-76), C - = 1.7 (70-72),

D = 1.0 (60-69), and F = 0 (failing). Based on this scale, the following class grading policy will be observed:

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION	- 200 points
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY	- 200 points
POWER POINT PRESENTATION	- 200 points
FINAL PAPER	- 400 points

TOTAL 1000 points

FINAL GRADES:

A	= 1000 - 930 points
A -	= 900 - 929 points
B +	= 870 - 899 points
B	= 830 - 869 points
B -	= 800 - 829 points
C +	= 770 - 799 points
C	= 730 - 769 points
C -	= 700 - 729 points
D	= 600 - 699 points
F	= 698 or less

An I (Incomplete) is assigned when students engaged in passing work are unable to complete class assignments for medical reasons or other extenuating circumstances.

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is essential to learning. If you must miss class, you are responsible for all work due and assigned on that day. Please try to let me know about absences ahead of time, and contact me afterwards so that you can be filled in on missed work. Assignments not turned in due to an absence are still considered late work.

According to Emerson Handbook: "Students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly and are responsible for all work done in their classes while they are absent. Attending an out-of-class activity or event for another course may not be used as an excuse to disregard a given class's attendance policy. In addition, Massachusetts state law requires that any student who is unable, because of religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such requirement. The student will receive an opportunity to make up the examination, study or work requirement which may have been missed because of such absence on any particular day provided, however, that such make-up examination or work does not create an unreasonable burden upon the College."

CLASS POLICY: You will be allowed 1 (one) unexcused absence without penalty. For each absence in excess of 1, you will need to bring a doctor's note. If you are caught signing attendance sheets for another student or being signed in, you will fail the course. No exceptions.

PUNCTUALITY:

Tardiness will result in a lowered participation grade. Three tardies equals one absence. If you are more than a half-hour late, you will be marked absent automatically.

DISABILITIES:

If you believe you have a disability that may require accommodations in this class, please register with the Disability Services Coordinator, Dr. Anthony Bashir, at 216 Tremont Street, 5th Floor (617-824-7415) so that together you can work to develop methods to address needed accommodations in this class.

PLAGIARISM:

"Plagiarism is the use of words and ideas of another as if they were one's own and without acknowledgement of their source. Plagiarism is stealing, and constitutes a serious offense against any ethical code, be it scholastic, artistic, or professional. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work, the work of another, or any work which he or she has not honestly performed, or to pass an examination by improper means, renders the offender liable to immediate suspension/dismissal. The aiding and abetting of a student in any dishonesty is likewise held to be a grave breach of discipline." (Emerson College Policy on Plagiarism).

Standing Invitation: Please feel free to come to my office hours or to make an appointment.