COGR 275
Performance Theory

Spring 2007

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Course Description: In the past several decades, Performance Studies has coalesced into a far-reaching
discipline--or, in the words of some, an "anti-discipline"--that brings together critical work from the fields of
anthropology, art history, communication, critical gender studies, ethnic studies, film studies, literature, and
theater studies. This course is designed to introduce graduate students to the foundations of Performance
Studies not by tracing any given genealogy, but rather by exploring many of the themes central to the discipline.
We will read the writing of a broad range of scholars, concurrently reviewing the performance, film, and
photography of a number of contemporary artists. Students in the course will be required to participate actively
in course discussions; compose short presentations framing central questions to several of the weeks' readings; and write a final term paper which may or may not be part of a larger project (for example, a thesis,
dissertation, or ongoing art project).

Assignments:
Discussion/Participation (25%)
Framing the Questions Presentations (25%)
Final Term Paper (50%)

Required Texts:
Cathy Caruth, Unclaimed Experience
Robert Mapplethorpe, Black Book
Kaja Silverman, World Spectators
PDFs of all other assigned essays and chapters will be made available online.

Week One: Introduction
Rebecca Schneider, "Intermediality, Infelicity, and Scholarship on the Slip" (from Theatre Survey 47:2
(November 2006) p. 253-260)
Richard Schechner, "What is Performance Studies Anyway?" (from The Ends of Performance)
Dwight Conquergood, "Performance Studies" (from The Drama Review 46:2 (Summer 2002) p. 145-156)
Memorial Talks on Dwight Conquergood, Performance Studies International (available online at: <http://psi-
web.org/texts/dwight%20text.htm>)

Week Two: The Symptom/Embodiment
Josef Breuer and Sigmund Freud, Selections from Studies on Hysteria
Roland Barthes, "The Grain of the Voice" (from Image Music Text)
Cathy Caruth, Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2 (from Unclaimed Experience)
Jean Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Symptom-Formation" and "Repression" (from The Language of Psycho-
Analysis)
View: Ulay/Abramovic, "Relation in Time" (available online at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mUz5mXQmfl>)
View: Ulay/Abramovic, "Expanding in Space" (available online at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PD41Rukna8>)
View: Jane Wagner and Tom DiMaria, "Tom's Flesh"

Week Three: Affect/Empathy
Raymond Williams, "Structures of Feeling" (from Marxism and Literature)
Wendy Brown, "Wounded Attachments" (from States of Injury)
Cathy Caruth, Chapters 3-5 (from Unclaimed Experience)
Kaja Silverman, "All Things Shining" (from Loss)
Jean Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Affect," "Pleasure," and "Unconscious" (from The Language of Psycho-
Analysis
View: Terrance Malick, "The Thin Red Line"
View: Yoko Ono, "Cut Piece" (available online at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqXSjFB08C8>)

Week Four: Specularity/Visibility I
Peggy Phelan, "Broken Symmetries" (from Unmarked)
Kaja Silverman, World Spectators
Jacques Lacan, "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis" and "The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious, or Reason Since Freud" (from Écrits)
Jean Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Phantasy (or Fantasy)" (from The Language of Psycho-Analysis)
View: Guillermo Gomez-Peña and Coco Fusco, "The Couple in the Cage"

Week Five: Specularity/Visibility II
Kobena Mercer, "Reading Racial Fetishism" (from Fetishism as Cultural Discourse)
bell hooks, "Seductive Sexualities"
Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (from Illuminations)
Jean Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Identification" (from The Language of Psycho-Analysis)
Case Study: Robert Mapplethorpe, Black Book
Case Study: Isaac Julien, "Looking for Langston"

Week Six: Performativity
J.L. Austin, Selections from How to Do Things with Words
Judith Butler, "Bodily Inscriptions, Performatve Subversions" and "From Parody to Politics" (from Gender Trouble)
Eve Sedgwick and Andrew Parker, "Introduction" (from Performance and Performativity)
Elspeth Probyn, "The Taste of Power" (unpublished)
Diana Taylor, "Bush's Happy Performative" (from The Drama Review 47:3 (Fall 2003) p. 5-8)
Case Study: Adrian Piper
Case Study: Orlan

Week Seven: Liveness/Disappearance I
Peggy Phelan, "The Ontology of Performance" (from Unmarked)
Peggy Phelan, "Whole Wounds" (from Mourning Sex)
Philip Auslander, "Live Performance in a Mediatized Culture" (from Liveness)
Patrick Anderson, "To Lie Down to Death for Days" (from Cultural Studies 18:6 (November 2004) p. 814-836)
Rebecca Schneider, "Performing Remains" (unpublished)
Case Study: William Pope.L
Case Study: Eva Hesse

Week Eight: Liveness/Disappearance II
Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics" (from Public Culture 15:1 (2003) p. 11-40)
Martin Heidegger, "Being-Towards-Death" (from Being and Time)
Giorgio Agamben, Part 3 (from Homo Sacer)
Case Study: Ana Mendieta
Case Study: Christian Boltanski

Week Nine: Utopia/Belonging
Jill Dolan, "Feeling the Potential of Elsewhere" and "Finding Hope at the Theater" (from Utopia in Performance)
Gloria Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" (from Borderlands/La Frontera)
Frantz Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness" and "The Negro and Recognition" (from Black Skin, White Masks)
Fred Moten, "Visible Music" (from In the Break)
Case Study: Anna Deavere Smith
Case Study: Photographs from Abu Ghraib

Week Ten: Ends
Dwight Conquergood, "Performance as a Moral Act"
Peggy Phelan, "Afterword: Notes on hope--for my students" (from Unmarked)
Shannon Jackson, "Discipline and Performance" (from Professing Performance)