

CMST GRADUATE BULLETIN

Department of Communication Studies

Spring 2019

CMST 4169 Visual Rhetoric

Stephanie Houston Grey, Online

Throughout the history of western society vision has played a key role in the evolution of human thought from Plato's cave to the transparent observer that is the foundation of Enlightenment philosophy. Visuality is key to understanding how we come to know the world. Bear in mind that we are not talking about the physical act of seeing, but the socially constructed process through which we are taught to see. Visuality is a product that emerges from political practice, cultural narratives and everyday performances. From the time we are children we are trained to focus and place visuality in a primary role in how lives. It can be a practice steeped in both subversion and control. We also come to know ourselves as objects of display as we swim in a sea of symbols in which human bodies are presented for mass-consumption. Most recent syllabus: <https://bit.ly/2yVkyRV>

CMST 7914 Communication in Health Care Contexts

Loretta Pecchioni, M 3:30-6:20pm 0153 COATES

Topics such as interpersonal communication in health care contexts, intersections of family and health communication, and social support and health communication. My intention for spring is to do something similar to what I've done this fall: each student will decide on their own learning contract which must include either a research project, a pedagogy project, or an applied project. The content will be negotiated with each student. I will share a number of student projects that arose out of this course previously that reflect that communication in health care is a broad topic that might be approached from many different theoretical stances. For example, a student might be interested in caregiving. That student could conduct a research project in which they interviewed family caregivers and assessed the sources of their burden/stress, they could examine how family caregiving is

portrayed in the media, they could develop a class exercise in which students examine how their family enacts caregiving and unpack the family's value system as a result; they could review leave policies and how they are applied and circumvented in the workplace, etc.

CMST 4162 Crime, Communication, and Culture

Bryan McCann, TTH 10:30-11:50am 0202 COATES

Explores rhetorical dimensions of crime and incarceration in the United States; special attention to historical and contemporary expressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, national identity, etc. in and around criminal justice system. Our goal in this course is to better grasp how crime, including our socially constructed definitions thereof, allows us to make sense of the world around us. In other words, we will engage the ways public discourses of crime and criminality function as sites of cultural production. Throughout the semester, we will engage a wide range of texts, including rhetorical, historical, philosophical, and sociological research on the criminal justice system and its role in public culture. We will also study primary sources from a variety of perspectives that highlight how crime and criminality impact different communities, and how members of such communities have used communication to reckon with this salient dimension of American culture. Most recent syllabus: <https://bit.ly/2D0JGLm>

CMST 7943 Performance and Culture (Horror Film/Fiction)

Tracy Shaffer, TTH 12-1:20pm in the HBB

Content: This seminar focuses on careful and critical engagement with texts using horror films and horror fiction as the object of study.

Assignments: Students will create three performances: (1) a 3-5 minute performance of horror fiction (anything from Stoker's *Dracula* to contemporary young adult horror) using methods from oral interpretation [texts are MEMORIZED]; (2) a critical performance of a horror film drawing from one of Caillois' four types of games: *agôn* (competition on an artificially leveled playing field), *alea* (games of chance), *mimicry* (role-playing, or make pretend), and *ilinx* (disorientating oneself, thrill-seeking and risk taking); (3) a conceptual performance of horror. Students will also do presentations and write two short papers.

Texts: The reading in the course will draw from foundational horror scholarship like Carol Clover's *Men, Women, and Chainsaws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film* and

contemporary work from communication scholars such as Kendall Phillips and Bernadette Calafell.

SCRN 4001 Film Style: Films of Agnes Varda

Trish Suchy, TTH 3-4:20pm

Agnés Varda’s filmmaking career spans six decades, from her innovations as the “mother” of the French New Wave in films like *Cleo from 5 to 7*, through her experimental blending of fiction and documentary amid youth culture in 60-70s California, to her award-winning fiction films and essay films like *Vagabond* (1984) and *The Gleaners and I* (2000), and her recent collaborative road movie with the artist JR, *Faces Places* (2017). In this course we will screen and study this versatile and inventive filmmaker’s perspectives on culture and women’s experiences as we also derive filmmaking modes and forms to use in short video projects. No filmmaking experience is necessary.

CMST 4107 Communication as Culture (Communication, Culture, and the Economy)

William Saas, TTH 3-4:20pm 0055 ALLEN

In this course, we will explore how communication and culture constitute the modern economy. Our exploration will entail: (1) critical engagement with research from experts across the humanities and social sciences; (2) use of rhetorical methods to analyze contemporary economic discourses and controversies; and (3) translation of our individual and collective research experiences into a comprehensive “argumentative dictionary.” Most recent syllabus:

<https://bit.ly/2Jc1Daa>

CMST 7971 Feminist Critique

Ashley Mack, T 3-5:50pm 0153 COATES

In this course, we will critically interrogate the commitments of various feminisms and examine the critiques of White Western feminisms made by Black, trans, Chicana, postcolonial, decolonial, transnational, and queer feminist scholars. We undertake the task of the theoretical survey of feminist political theories for the purpose of learning how to read rhetorical and cultural texts from feminist orientations. We will emphasize how one might use feminist political theories as the

basis for productive and rigorous rhetorical or cultural criticism, discuss how to recognize implicit rhetorical theories in feminist discourses, and finally to determine which feminist approaches are appropriate to various kinds of texts. The course assumes a basic sympathy but welcomes critical engagement with the feminist goals of gender equity, self-determination, and sex/gender freedom. We will also critically engage how these aims are complicated and challenged in the contexts of racism, nationalism, and class-based exploitation. Tentative syllabus available at <https://bit.ly/2RhNcW>

CMST 7966 Problems in Rhetorical Theory, Criticism and History (Trauma Studies)

Stephanie Houston Grey, W 3:30-6:20pm 0153 COATES

When we consider trauma, many of us think first of personal or individual traumas that occur in a single life. However, societies, cultures, and social groups may also suffer from trauma that cuts to and may define a collective unconscious. The study of the shattering experience of social trauma opens some of the profound questions for the rhetorical imagination including the connections of past to future, the one to the many, and speech to silence. In this course, we will examine and theorize trauma as a social or cultural phenomena while reflecting on the discourses of trauma and how trauma is encoded in words, images or other forms. Through the portal of discourse, we will examine, for example, the relationships between trauma and history, memory and memorialization. While some groups recognize shared identity in part through a collective recounting, others precariously attempt to sustain patterns of denial, skirting a void that may open to reveal a hidden or repressed past. Our readings will include key theorists of social trauma: Freud, Alexander, Carruth, Phelan, Lindemann, Jovanovic and others. Participants in the course will produce a research paper on a topic related to social trauma. This initial work may potentially lead to further study or published work in this fertile area of communication studies.

CMST 4144 Performance Art (Performance and Technology)

Serap Erincin, W 3:30-6:20pm

In the 1960s, Marshal McLuhan declared technology to be the external organs of the body. If, as Maurice Merleau-Ponty proposed, our senses are not limited to the

boundaries of our skin, then our bodies are as big as we feel them. Our sensoriums can expand through tools such as cars, canes and prosthetics. What, then, does it mean to be human? In this course, through cultural theory, phenomenology, and neuroscience, we will consider questions surrounding technology, the body, and “super-powers” such as empathy through theory and practice – of other artists and our own. How do we differ from other organisms such as aliens, robots, androids, cyborgs, and automatons in humanoid forms? We will discuss phenomena such as mirror neurons and phantom limbs as described by V.S. Ramachandran from a humanities perspective. We will also discuss the technologies of becoming woman and becoming the other. We will examine post-apocalyptic, science fiction, or technologized works of art and popular culture such as the film *Blade Runner*, the novel *Alchemy of Stone*, and performances by artists such as Orlan, The Wooster Group, and Stelarc. Finally, participants will inquire into philosophical, political, or cultural issues of the self or society through either critical, analytical work that tackles these themes or a work of their choosing that involves the creation of “bodily extensions” via electronic or other additions to the human body. Alternatively, you may create performances or works of fiction featuring such concepts and write an artist’s statement.

CMST 7941 History of Performance

David Terry, TH 3-5:50pm 0153 COATES

How do we remember the past? How do our pasts re-member us? What are the political implications of privileging material artifacts of the archive over the embodied practices of the repertoire? Why do some stories carry weight in our collective memories while others fade away? How can interventions in practices of remembering change the future we are creating? This seminar will investigate histories of performance practices and performance as a historiographic method. Readings drawn from Michel Foucault, Della Pollock, Paige Dubois, Joseph Roach, Rebecca Schneider, Patrick Anderson, Tracy Davis, WG Sebald, Shannon Jackson, Saidiya Hartman, Diana Taylor.