



BROWN

DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH STUDIES

GRADUATE STUDIES COURSES

2014-2015

Fall 2014

FREN 2150D *Qu'est-ce que les Lumières ?/Pierre Saint-Amand*

A critical examination of the authors of the French Enlightenment from the point of view of the capital ideas that will forge the century: notions of universalism and otherness, notions of politics (such as reason and violence), notions of gender and race. Examines the critical reception of the Enlightenment by contemporary theorists and historians, principally Foucault, Hunt and Darnton. Readings in Graffigny, Boyer d'Argens, Diderot, Rousseau, and Sade. Taught in French.

FREN 2190A *Animal and I/Thangam Ravindranathan*

A certain French body of thought – whose two structuring coordinates are no doubt Deleuze and Guattari's *Mille plateaux* and Derrida's *L'animal que donc je suis* – has framed contemporary discussions of the animal and animality in literature and critical theory. In this course we will read what constitutes the French “canon” of this still emerging field of study, examining its lines of argument and tension and its most productive sites of reading. Authors include Merleau-Ponty, Deleuze and Guattari, Derrida, Kofman, Lestel, Baratay, Bellour, Despret, Novarina, and Bailly – from whose latest title (via Ponge) this course borrows its own. Taught in English.

Spring 2015

FREN 2130G Queering the Grand Siècle/*Lewis Seifert*

This seminar will approach canonical and non-canonical 17th-century literature through the lens of queer theory. Using strategies of queer critique while being attentive to literary/historical context, we will explore a selection of poetic, prose, and theatrical texts from perspectives that trouble the heteronormative and patriarchal norms of knowledge and power. Particular focus will be given to the reception of the “Grand Siècle” in contemporary French cultural identity and poststructuralist thought. Theoretical readings by Butler, Edelman, Freccero, Foucault, Halberstam, Sedgwick; literary texts by François de Sales, Théophile de Viau, Benserade, Cyrano de Bergerac, Madeleine de Scudéry, Corneille, Molière, Racine, Bussy-Rabutin, Lafayette, d’Aulnoy, Choisy, among others.

FREN 2630A Theories of Decolonization/*Justin Izzo*

This seminar studies theories of postcolonial politics as these emerged from philosophies and experiences of decolonization. We will consider how contemporary thinking about politics, democracy, and modernity in Africa and the Caribbean maintains a critical dialogue with foundational theoretical work on decolonization. Our approach will be interdisciplinary, and will include major works of philosophy, anthropology, literary theory, and fiction, from both the Francophone and Anglophone traditions. Our seminar will also make a claim on history: we will examine how major early theorists of decolonization and postcolonialism enjoy provocative purchase on postmillennial critical thought within and about the Global South.

FREN 2600Z Cinema and Deconstruction/*Laura Odello*

Though there are only a few texts by Jacques Derrida on cinema, his thought allows us to grasp the contemporary regime of cinematic images. Reading Derrida and other authors with whom he has been in dialogue, we will use such philosophical concepts as auto-immunity or spectrality in order to analyze various filmic texts and contexts. How do images circulate, how do they contaminate each other? How can we understand the dissemination and connectedness of screens? Is it possible for a film to testify or be a witness? These are some of the questions we will approach from a deconstructive perspective. Taught in French.