Title of the Course: IKA 710 Cultural Theory
Instructor: Prof. Dr. SERPIL OPPERMANN
Year and Term: 2012 Fall
Classroom and Hours: Monday, 13:00-17:00 Seminar Room,
Office Hours:

Aim and Content:

This course presents an introduction to the major principles and key concepts of contemporary cultural theory with a focused study of Theory’s main objectives. The course aims at developing a critical awareness of major concepts of thought and their contribution to the interpretation of contemporary culture. The course will mainly focus on the new developments after poststructuralist and postmodern approaches to major cultural issues, concepts and themes. It aims to provide the students with a broad view of the contemporary debates on cultural theories.

Course Outline: (Subject to Revision)

Week I-II-III: Introduction to “Cultural Theory” (The beginnings: British Cultural Studies paradigms; European continental philosophical traditions)
Homi Bhabha, “The Commitment to Theory.” (Chpt. 1) in The Location of Culture. 28-56.
Stuart Hall, “Representation, meaning and language.” In Stuart Hall.Ed. Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices. 15-64

Week IV-VI: Post-Structuralist Approaches to Cultural Theory:
Michel Foucault, “Truth and Power.” “Panopticism.” In The Foucault Reader. 51-75. 206-213
Michel Foucault, “Discursive Formations.” In The Archeology of Knowledge. 31-39

Week VII-VIII: Globalism and Transnationalism

Joan Martinez-Alier, “Environmental Justice (Local and Global).” In In The Cultures of Globalization. 312-326.
Saskia Sassen. *A Sociology of Globalization*. (students will choose chapters)
Ursula Heise. “From the Blue Planet to Google Earth.” (chpt.1) In Heise. *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: Environmental Imagination of the Global*
Chapter 5 “Toxic Bodies, Corporate Poisons: Local Risks and Global Systems.”

**Week VIII-XI:** Posthumanism, Animal Studies, and Dark Ecologies

**Cary Wolfe.** “What is Posthumanism?” in *What is Posthumanism*. xi-xxxiv.
**Donna Haraway.** “Able Bodies and Companion Species” Chpt. 6 and “Crittercam: Compounding Eyes in Naturecultures.” Chpt. 9 in *When Species Meet*. 161-179. 249-264.
**Patricia Yaeger.** “Editor’s Column: Sea Trash, Dark Pools, and the Tragedy of the Commons.” *PMLA*. 125.3 (May 2010): 523-545.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4JvMwem7mc&list=UUBpIshXI_KHhwUdup_yHoVg&index=7&feature=plcp
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQdpccDNB_A&list=UUBpIshXI_KHhwUdup_yHoVg&index=5&feature=plcp. 2012.

**Week XII-XIII:** Queer Ecologies and Biosemiotics

**Andil Gosine.** “Non-white Reproduction and Same-Sex Eroticism: Queer Acts against Nature.” In Sandilands and Erickson. 149-172.


Week XIV: Exam

Method of Instruction: lectures and student presentations/discussions

Requirements: Attendance is compulsory. More than 12 hours of absence will result in F1. Class participation is extremely important as the whole course will proceed in the form of a series of workshops in which each student will be expected to know, analyze, discuss and make a critique of the assigned texts.

The students are expected to study the assigned texts and offer critical approaches informed by their ideas in their papers. Each student is obliged to read every text listed and is expected to come to class with questions and critical insights concerning the material to be covered. Participating in discussions is a MUST for at least 10 minutes of individual contributions. An intensive reading and thinking are required in this course. To help the students an introductory survey of theories will be gradually unfolded during my own lectures in the beginning. Additional introductory reading, however, might be necessary. There will be Two term papers prepared and delivered in class in addition to 10 minute presentations on the material each week. Each student will have to choose two texts from the theorists mentioned and prepare a critical reading of these texts.

Students should be able to:
1. read texts with a critical eye
2. compare and contrast ideas and schools of thought
3. identify major figures and developmental trends in CULTURAL Theory
4. write upper-level research papers

Method of Assessment: In grading oral and written work 20% will be cut for language mistakes. The aim here is to encourage the students to have close attention to their style.

The final assessment will be made on the following basis:

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<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Term Papers</td>
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<td>Class presentations on critical concepts and/or articles</td>
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Reading Material: