

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
GRADUATE COURSE
DESCRIPTIONS
SPRING 2018**

For more information about our Department of English
visit our Website at
<http://english.buffalo.edu>

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ENG 517 – ELIZABETH-JACOBEOAN DRAMA

PROF. BARBARA BONO

Mondays 12:30-3:10

Registration Numbers: (A) 23285 (B) 23286

Shakespeare's plays were written in an age of theater that also produced a host of other major playwrights—Marlowe, Dekker, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster, etc.—and literally dozens of masterful plays. Theater under Elizabeth I and James I was both elite and popular. It was orthodox, confirming religious and political pieties, exorcising social discontent, and it was subversive, threatening traditional boundaries and articulating hitherto unspoken fears. It was performed in the centers of power—the courts, great houses, and banqueting halls of the mighty—and it was marginalized, censored, played out in the suburbs, amid the stews and the bear-baiting. In 1642 the public theater was suppressed, but in 1649 it arguably performed its "last act" in a process Franco Moretti has famously described as the "deconsecration of sovereignty," the literal execution of the King: "That thence the royal actor borne,/ The tragic scaffold might adorn;/ While round the armed bands/ Did clap their bloody hands" (Andrew Marvell, "An Horatian Ode Upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland").

In this course we will study these distinctions among and contradictions within Elizabethan and Jacobean drama through an historical survey reaching back to the native origins of English drama and looking ahead to Charles's deposition. We will use paperback editions of Andrew Gurr's *The Shakespearean Stage, 1574-1642* and *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. John Cox and David Scott Kastan as background resources; to them we will add a paperback edition of critical essays, *Staging the Renaissance: Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama*, ed. David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass. I will also make available additional critical work on the drama of this period—coordinated with our weekly readings—by new historicist, sex and gender system, and cultural materialist critics such as Catherine Belsey, Michael Bristol, Karen Coddin, Walter Cohen, Frances Dolan, Jonathan Dollimore, Margaret W. Ferguson, Susan Frye, Marjorie Garber, Jonathan Goldberg, Stephen Greenblatt, Richard Helgerson, Jean Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus, Louis Adrian Montrose, Stephen Mullaney, Gail Kern Paster, Phyllis Rackin, Valerie Traub, Frank Whigham, and others. Our primary texts will be the works of Shakespeare and *The Norton Anthology of English Renaissance Drama* (2002).

Our focus will be on certain specific historical and symbolic moments in the history of the early modern English theater as a way of establishing the central cultural importance of the drama, frequently with an implied or explicit Shakespearean comparison. Thus we will begin by discussing the "place" of the early modern English drama through studying how it negotiates its limits, "beating the bounds" of the regional city or town in the medieval cycle plays, renegotiating those limits in royal entry pageantry and a play such as Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* (1604), written shortly after James's entry into London as King. We will read John Lyly's court-centered *Endymion* (1588) as a heightened dramatic example of the "cult" of Elizabeth, erected against a background of royal

James's tragicomic accession at the end of 1603 (that "Wonderfull Yeare," as Dekker suggestively titles it in his pamphlet) will form the occasion for us to read Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist* (1610) as a self-conscious look backward at the dominating passions of the Elizabethan age, their dramatic expression, and their commercial renegotiation in the seven years "sin' the king came in" (1.2.165). It will also be the occasion for us to return strongly to the issues of gender and sexual politics in transvestite comedies such as Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (1599) and Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton's *The Roaring Girl* (1610) and domestic tragedies such as Thomas Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1603), Shakespeare's *Othello* (1603-1604), John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (c. 1613), and the first female-authored play in English, Lady Elizabeth Cary's closet drama, *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613). Finally, it will provide us with the occasion to speculate on the increasing difficulty of government and surveillance (John Marston's *The Malcontent* [1604] and Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* [1604]), of holding together a kingdom "unified" from two formerly independent states and committed to a policy of irenic marital diplomacy abroad (Shakespeare Scottish play, *Macbeth* [1605-1606] read against Ben Jonson's *Masque of Queens* [1609], or tragicomedies by Beaumont and Fletcher such as *Philaster* [1608-1610]), and of unifying an audience sensibility riven by distinctions of belief systems and class (Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* [1607-1610]).

Pace and format will be contractually determined between the instructor and the individual student, depending upon the student's background for the work, graduate program, and section choice (A or B). One likely "A" format is brief bi-weekly response papers, a critical review, and either an extended seminar paper or a briefer mock-conference presentation. If you have questions, contact me (bbono@buffalo.edu) and we'll talk about how this course fits into your plans.

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## ENG 548 – CREATIVE WRITING FICTION

**PROF. DIMITRI ANASTASOPOULOS**

Wednesdays 7:00-9:40

Registration Number: 19805

This course interweaves the practice of crafting fictional language with the study of contemporary novels, short stories and theories of fiction. As an integral part of this inquiry, students will be engaged in the English Department's writing communities, with a particular focus on a series of events (Exhibit X and Poetics Plus, mainly) at which students will have the opportunity to meet and engage practicing writers from outside our university.

A workshop is made of a community of writers willing to take time and care with each other's work-in-progress. This seems basic enough but it signals a level of commitment outside one's writing and into multiple and challenging conceptions of writing offered by others. Our goal therefore is to offer acute, critical insights about the manuscripts we examine—their structure, plot (if they have plots), conceptual conceits, language, voice, character development and so on—keeping in mind the evolution of individual technique.

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**ENG 550 – POETRY****PROF. MYUNG MI KIM**

Tuesdays 3:30-6:10

Registration Number: 2328

This course, conceived as a studio seminar, invites participants to consider the heterogeneous condition of poesis. There are a number of interrelated objectives and spheres of activity for this seminar, chief among them:

- reading widely and diversely in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> innovative Anglophone poetry. As part of this undertaking, each student will be asked to formulate a project they wish to pursue in relation to the holdings at the Poetry Collection.
- mobilizing creative practice, generating new work through transdisciplinary experiments, research/documentary poetics, collaborations, site-specific considerations, and so on. Students will share weekly critical/creative posts as well as individual projects in poetry writing with emphasis on dialogic and attentive exchange. By the close of the semester, participants will have a substantial body of writing (creative/critical) that may translate to a set of essays and/or a manuscript of poetry.

This seminar devotes itself to the process of making and in particular, to the radical potential for the transformative in the practice of poetry.

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## ENG 584 – THE POETICS OF ABSTRACTION: NECESSITY, VIOLENCE, PROMISE

**PROF. JUDITH GOLDMAN**

Mondays 3:30-6:10

Registration Numbers: (A) 19806 (B) 19807

There is nothing new about the thesis that the Absolute is identical to this world.

- Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*

This course will explore a constellation of genres and processes of abstraction, on the premise that while abstractions, their concretions, and their fallout have formed the matrix of our disastrous present, the abstract, abstracted, and abstractive may also allow us to comment on or live alongside it, and perhaps reach towards emancipation from it. If abstraction is an unconditional dimension of human thought, in what modes does it operate, and what might distinguish the noxious from the beneficial?

We will begin by considering a focused opposition between the abstractions of scientific instrumentality and the abstractions of abstract art – visual, musical, verbal (Adorno). We will then take up a series of basic, consequential abstractions: number and quantification (at the origin of writing), along with money and monetization, exchange and the market, and selected historical and contemporary financial instruments; language, with a focus on words, deixis, speech acts, the alphabet, poetic measure and patterning, translation and the phenomenon of English as global language. We will here also address the cultural violence of colonialism in terms of its self-abstraction and enforced reproduction through cultural displacement and mobility, taking the Native American context as our main exemplar. This topic forms a bridge to the study of spatial abstraction, both in terms of colonialist and capitalist “production of space” and a putatively external nature, as well as to the abstractions of nation and contemporaneity as generated by, for instance, consumption of mass media. We will then explore personhood as abstraction, particularly with regard to lyric apostrophe and to person as heterogeneous legal construction. We will end by examining the problematics (and failures) around the liberal abstractions of universality and equality, to think through and beyond paradigms of injured particularity and identity politics.

Throughout the course, with each topic, we will read poets past and present invested in desublimating abstraction – either unmasking its violences, producing work whose aesthetics defy abstraction, or both – doing so according to strategies that range from materialist poetics to postconfessional and postconceptual “formlessness.” But we will also be interested in poets’ fascination with abstraction: in probing its necessity and inevitability, its esemplastic power to contain contradiction. How might abstraction figure in poetic speculation on political possibility – and how do such visions and enactments relate to or account for the abstractive quality (however this has morphed in the contemporary new media ecology) of writing, reading, and text?

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## ENG 585 – PROFESSIONAL WRITING AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

**PROF. ALEX REID**

Tuesdays 12:30-3:10

Registration Numbers: (A) 20578 (B) 20579

This is a special topics version of the first course in our soon to be approved graduate certificate in Professional Writing and Digital Communication. The 4-course certificate is designed to be of interest to three groups of students: those interested in pursuing careers in professional or technical writing; those entering STEM professions who recognize the value of improving their communication skills; and those pursuing academic careers with a primary or secondary interest in the study and teaching of rhetoric. This class is a version of the one required course, with the other three selected from a menu of options (which allows the certificate to be of use of a wide range of students). Please see me for more information about the certificate.

This course provides a practical and scholarly introduction to the fields of professional, technical, and digital communication. We will discuss research in professional and technical communication, particularly as the scholarship might be implemented in the workplace. The course will also explore theories and practices related to the design and composition of professional-technical genres including concepts of visual communication and rhetoric, user experience design, and multimodal composing. Students will have the opportunity to experiment with a variety of tools, and students in the intensive section will select a particular tool to investigate in greater depth. A provisional syllabus for the course will be available at [alex-reid.net/teaching](http://alex-reid.net/teaching).

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## ENG 589 – DELEUZE, CINEMA, AND THEORIES OF REPRESENTATION

**PROF. TANYA SHILINA-CONTE**

Thursdays 4:00-6:40

Registration Number: 23412

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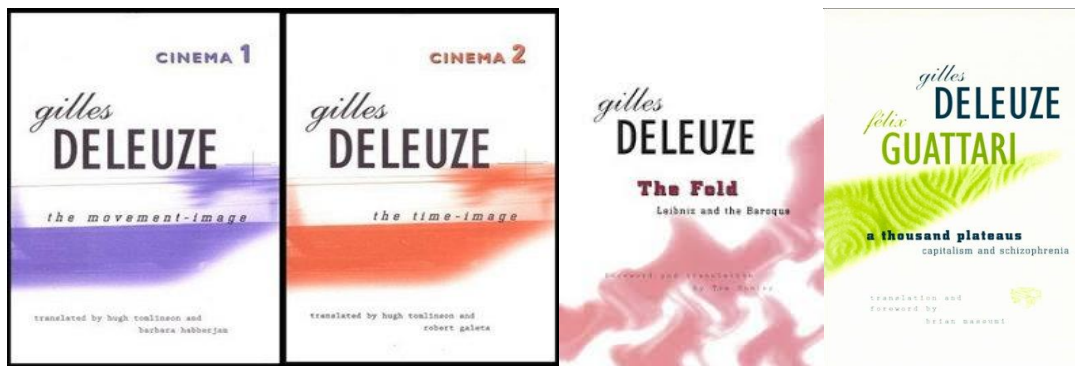
This class will be structured as an overview of the theory and practice of montage and representation in global film and media. For our purposes, we will rely on excerpts from Gilles Deleuze's diptych on cinema, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, and his other key writings, such as *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (co-written with Felix Guattari), *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (co-written with Guattari; discussed in the context of "minor cinema"), *Difference and Repetition*, and *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (discussed in the context of "baroque cinema"). We will also engage with key theoretical writings on post-Deleuzian thought in the digital age (so-called "Third Image" approaches) by a range of leading scholars such as Patricia Pisters, Felicity Colman, Steven Shaviro, David Martin-Jones, William Brown, Elena del Rio, and others.

Many films discussed in this class will explore alternative modes of representation such as fragmentation, coding, silence, and absence, both as a means of experimentation with the cinematic language and as a tool of political protest and resistance. From these reservoirs of invisible evidence in cinema emerge a host of critical issues such as ethnicity, race, sexuality, gender, ethics, trauma, and censorship. The topics covered in this class will help us to understand the connection between cinematic form and content and place mediated representations into social, cultural, and historical contexts. We will also focus on the recent turn to non-representation and the reframing of regimes of visibility in film-philosophy and media studies, especially in the context of affect theory.

Topics for discussion will include the Soviet montage school (Eisenstein, Kuleshov, Pudovkin, Vertov), American continuity style, rational and irrational / serial montage (Deleuze), analogue and digital montage. We will trace the

technological developments in film and digital media that permitted a shift from single frame shots (sequence) to multiple frames, windows, and screens (multiplicity). We will also discuss the contemporary remix era, the emerging genre of the cinematic remix, and the notions of copyright and fair use.

This class would be indispensable for students interested in learning how to interpret film and media critically as well as for students who wish to become better editors/makers of their own media.



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**ENG 613 – STUDIES IN 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY LITERATURE:**  
**Slavery and Enlightenment**

**PROF. RUTH MACK**

Wednesdays 3:30-6:10

Registration Numbers: (A) 23288 (B) 23289

This course focuses on the British Enlightenment's horrible paradox: in the age of "human understanding" and "human rights," millions of people were enslaved in New World colonies. Indeed, not until 1772 was it confirmed (in the Somersett Case) that slavery was illegal on English soil, and slavery was not abolished in most of Britain's Empire until 1833. In historical understandings of the period, "Enlightenment" and "slavery" are sometimes posed in a causal relation: the kinds of thinking associated with Enlightenment, or the economic conditions that it produced, made possible the thinking of persons as property. In part of the course, then, we will explore just this kind of link: examining, for instance, how capitalism and slavery work hand in hand, and how ideas of "progress" make their way from abstract theories of government into the texts of proslavery and antislavery writers alike. But we will look at other relations too, within an "Enlightenment" that was far from uniform or monolithic. We will be particularly concerned with how former slaves wrote within this context, and how writing usually called "slave narrative" both participates in and refutes the terms of prominent Enlightenment models of identity, of society, and even of temporality. Put in different terms, then, this course will consider the epistemology of slavery: both the kind of knowing that made its horrors bearable for some, and, contrastingly, the terms that its opponents generated in order to instruct readers and actors to think differently.

The course will be structured around three major British Enlightenment discourses that David Brion Davis has argued shaped the antislavery movement: theories of society (social philosophy), sentimentalism, and ideas of natural rights and revolution.

Primary authors will include:

Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Ottobah Cugoano, Olaudah Equiano, Thomas Clarkson, Adam Smith, William Cowper, Phillis Wheatley, William Earle, Leonora Sansay.

Secondary authors will include:

Hannah Arendt, Ian Baucom, Andrew S. Curran, Lynn Festa, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Saidiya V. Hartman, Marcus Rediker, Stephanie E. Smallwood, Roxann Wheeler, Stefan M. Wheelock, Michelle M. Wright.

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**ENG 628 – STUDIES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE:  
Liberalism’s Discontents**

**PROF. JEEHYUN LIM**

Mondays 12:30-3:10

Registration Numbers: (A) 23556 (B) 23557

This course examines how writers of color and literary/cultural critics have engaged with liberalism’s unfulfilled promises in the second half of the twentieth century. One of the most robust and productive strands of creative and critical production in this period has come from writers and critics who turned to the distance between the ideals of American democracy and the lived experiences of people of color. We will look at these creative and critical texts with an eye to how what the course will call “liberalism’s discontents” became the basis of minority creative imagination and how critical discourses and questions evolved around the effort to comprehend and critique the limits of U.S. liberalism. The course will be organized around critical rubrics such as injury and redress, cultures of United States imperialism, war and memory, multiculturalism, border studies, and transnationalism. Each rubric has spawned extensive criticism; the focus of the course will be on how select critical conversations from each rubric converge on a critique of liberalism. Writers we will read include Toni Morrison, Junot Díaz, Viet Thanh Nguyen, Karen Tei Yamashita, and Chang-rae Lee. For readings on theory and criticism, we will draw from a range of American Studies scholarship, critical race theory, ethnic studies scholarship, and political theories of liberalism.

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## ENG 645 – MULTIMODALITY IN THE NOVEL

**PROF. JOSEPH CONTE**

Wednesdays 12:30-3:10

Registration Numbers: (A) 23292 (B) 23293

In this seminar on innovative fiction, we will examine the contraindicated persistence of multimodality in print novels; or, books you *can't* read on a Kindle™. Alison Gibbons defines multimodality as “the coexistence of more than one semiotic mode within a given context.” We experience multimodality as the environment of our daily lives, in various platforms that include the urban streetscape, art galleries, digital “desktops” and other electronic media. Multimodality is as new as the iPhone X with its app icons and voice assistance, but as old as



the New England Primer’s abecedarium. Multimodal literature may be regarded as both the resistance to and the appropriation of digital technology in the print medium. Most literary works are monomodal and language-centered; they call on the reader’s store of linguistic competency and comprehension of the symbolic mode, but they subordinate or exclude the iconic and indexical modes. Multimodal literature, however, exhibits polysemiosis: the reader encounters two or more semiotic modes and *recognizes* that they are not autonomous meaning systems but semantically interrelated. The experience of reading a multimodal text requires that the reader—in the broadest sense of the word—negotiate between systems of meaning, not merely within the rule of one mode. The relation between

the verbal text, visual icon, and indexical design is one that is cognized rather than decoded. So the study and reception of multimodal literatures requires the development of a cognitive poetics.

Each of the multimodal books that we will peruse exhibits a “set” toward a dominant mode while retaining reference to all others: the book can trend toward a. transparency, or the set toward narrative, mimesis or character; b. opacity, or the set toward the form of the novel; c. code, or the set toward the visual appearance, the icon; or d. base, or the set toward the form of the book. We will want to examine the effects of multiple reading paths on narrative structure; the physical manipulation required to read one or more of these books; the relationship between the semiotic modes of the graphical and textual in all of these books; the “self-conscious”

reading that is required by works that call attention to themselves as books; or the metafictional reflexivity of these works as fictions; etc.

Works for extended discussion *may* include: Mark Z. Danielewski, *Only Revolutions* (2006); Umberto Eco, *The Mysterious Flame of Queen Loana: An Illustrated Novel* (2004); Jonathan Safran Foer, *Tree of Codes* (2010); Alison Gibbons, *Multimodality, Cognition, and Experimental Literature* (2011); B. S. Johnson, *The Unfortunates* (rev. ed. 2009); Vladimir Nabokov, *The Original of Laura (Dying is Fun)* (2008); Tom Phillips, *A Humument: A Treated Victorian Novel* (5<sup>th</sup> ed. 2012); W. G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (2001); Art Spiegelman, *MetaMaus: A Look Inside a Modern Classic* (2011); Steve Tomasula, *VAS: An Opera in Flatland* (2004); Chris Ware, *Building Stories* (2012); and Glyn White, *Reading the Graphic Surface: The Presence of the Book in Prose Fiction* (2005). Other literary and critical readings will be available through UB Learns or on graduate course reserve.

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**ENG 679 – 698 THEORIES OF AVANT-GARDE****PROF. MING QIAN MA**

Wednesdays 12:30-3:10

Registration Numbers: (A) 23294 (B) 232

In the entire repertoire of the literary-critical vocabulary, no word, perhaps, has been used, misused, and abused than “avant-garde.” Supported largely by generalized assumptions and approached as given, this term has, lately, not only taken on a rhetorical spin, whereby “avant-garde” finds in itself a dialectically inborn twin of “arrière-garde,” but also gained a transcend popularity and a universal applicability, whereby future practices have already been mapped out. Although much has been written on “avant-garde” as a historical and artistic phenomenon, the term itself, together with its constitutive aspects, deserves a careful rethinking, especially in the context of contemporary innovative writing. From this perspective, this seminar has a dual purpose: To read/reread the major theories of “avant-garde” so as to acquire a solid understanding of its nature, function, and working mechanisms on the one hand and, on the other hand, to examine the specific conditions, whatever the kinds, in which “avant-garde” is legitimized as such, so as to grasp, as fully as possible, its evolutionary cycles.

Tentatively, seminar reading list includes, but not limited to, the following books and book-excerpts:

Benjamin Buchloh, *Neo-avantgarde and Culture Industry: Essays on European and American Art from 1955 to 1975*

Peter Bürger. *Theory of the Avant-Garde*

Matei Calinescu. *The Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism*

James M. Harding: *Cutting Performances: Collage Events, Feminist Artists, and the American Avant-Garde*

Roberts, John. *Revolutionary Time and the Avant-Garde*

Maerhofer, John W. *Rethinking the Vanguard: Aesthetic and Political Positions in the Modernist Debate, 1917-1962*

Marc James Léger (ed.). *The Idea of the Avant Garde—And What It Means Today.*

William Marx. “The Twentieth Century: Century of the Arrière-Gardes”

Renato Poggioli. *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*

Schechner, Richard. “The Five Avant-Gardes or ... [and] ... or None?”

Richard Schechner, “The Conservative Avant-Garde.”

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Charles Bernstein. *My Way*

Lyn Hejinian. *The Language of Inquiry*

Marjorie Perloff. *Unoriginal Genius*

Jed Rasula. *Syncopations: The Stress of Innovation in Contemporary American Poetry*

Ron Silliman. *The New Sentence*

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Selected poets and their poetry works.

**Cross-listed Course  
Department of History**

**ENG 586 – READINGS IN THE CULTURAL HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND MEDICINE**

**PROF. JAMES BONO  
Mondays 4:00-6:40 pm, Park 532  
Registration No. 23786**

This seminar will provide an intensive introduction to major historiographical issues and approaches in scholarly work on the history of science and medicine, including recent attempts to write cultural histories of specific facets of science and medicine. The course is intended to serve the needs of a broad range of students from history and from disciplines such as anthropology and literature, who have an interest in science, medicine, technical knowledge and practices, the body, sexuality, disability studies, or related topics and their relationship to culture and society.

We shall focus chiefly upon the cultural history of medicine, with special attention given to the history of the body and sexuality from antiquity to postmodern cyberculture. We'll address such topics as the body in ancient Greek and Chinese medical traditions; medicine, natural philosophy, and notions of sexual difference in ancient, medieval, and Renaissance Europe; the female body, the saintly body, and the criminal body in late medieval, Renaissance, and early modern Europe; monsters, marvels, and monstrous bodies from the 13<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries; the new cultural history of Renaissance anatomy; women, gender, and the birth of modern political economy; race, gender, and "other" bodies in European and American scientific and medical discourses; hermaphrodites and the scientific study of sexuality from the late Renaissance to the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Europe and America; Foucault's *History of Sexuality*; and such issues as virtual surgery, technoscientifically altered human bodies and disability studies, informatics, and the "posthuman" body.

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