

Humanities 195j
Spring 2003
Mon. 2:45-4:15 (sometimes longer)
and by Institute calendar
Humanities 120

Professor Liss
Humanities 214, x73541
Office Hrs: Mon. 11-12,
Th 2:30-3:30

Humanities Institute Junior Fellows Seminar

The theme for the Spring 2003 Scripps College Humanities Institute is Biopowers: Disease, Ethics, Activism. The program will consist of three symposia or panels and a series of luncheon talks.

Throughout the semester, we will address a number of issues involving the intersection of science, medicine and the humanities. The themes that we hope to explore include how social and cultural forces influence science and medicine, the “social” and “medical” constructions of disease and disability, the body as a site of representation, power and resistance, the relationship of global inequalities, international intervention, human rights and health, biotechnologies, the role of biomedical understandings of race and difference, and illness and identity.

Course requirements:

All Fellows will participate in a seminar that accompanies the lecture series. We will read texts recommended or written by the speakers in preparation for their visits. Fellows are expected to attend the weekly seminar and all other Institute events. Fellows will have opportunities to meet individually with the speakers.

Each student is expected to fulfill the following requirements throughout the semester:

- Read all of the assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss them
- Write weekly, two-page reading responses (due at the beginning of class)
- Make an oral presentation on one week's assignment to initiate and focus discussion. This presentation includes summarizing the argument, presenting what is at stake (why does this argument matter?), and posing questions for discussion. In order for these presentations to be productive and helpful, you should be as clear as possible about what you think the author's main concerns are and about your own analysis or reactions to them.
- Interview one speaker during the semester and present a 3-4 page summary of that interview (due within one week of the interview)
- Write a fifteen-page research paper on a topic of your choice related to the topics we discuss this semester. You must discuss your topic with me beforehand as noted in the schedule below. Students will present their work to the class at the end of the semester. Students may pursue a project in another format, equivalent in scope and rigor to a research paper, e.g. a video or an art project based on the readings for the semester. This alternative also needs to be discussed with me.

Schedule of meetings and readings:

We will meet regularly on Mondays to prepare for the Thursday Institute events. There are times during the term when we will need to meet on Thursday (at 4:15) as well (see January 23, February 27, March 28, April 10 and April 17 below).

Students are required to attend monthly Institute events. For the most part, they begin on Thursdays at 4:15 (and end by about 6 p.m.). The February symposium will include a follow-up discussion on Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The March and April programs will continue with a Friday morning program. On Thursday March 6 there will be an evening performance. Luncheon talks are scheduled for February 20 (Thursday), March 12 (Wednesday) and April 2 (Wednesday).

The readings are assigned based on what the speakers made available as of the first day of class. Changes or additions may be necessary. Readings will be distributed to you as soon as they are available. I have also ordered two books at Huntley bookstore: Alice Wexler, Mapping Fate and Robin Cook, Chromosome 6.

Introduction

January 23 (Thursday): What is biopower? Why disease?

Tobin Siebers, "Disability in Theory: From Social Constructionism to the New Realism of the Body" (2001)

I. Narratives of Illness and Disease

Jan. 27: Francis Bacon "Of Deformity" (1601)

William Hay, "Deformity: An Essay" (1794)

Randolph Bourne, "The Handicapped—By One of Them" (1911)

Helen Deutsch, "Exemplary Aberration: Samuel Johnson and the English Canon" (2002)

Feb. 3: David Mamet, "Capture-the-flag, Monotheism, and the Techniques of Arbitration" (1996)

Harvey Sacks, "On Doing: Being Ordinary" (1984)

Timothy Halkowski, "Realizing the Illness: Patients' Narratives of Symptom Discovery" (2001)

Feb. 10: Wexler, Mapping Fate: Memoir of Family, Risk, and Genetic Research, (1996) pp. xi-124

Feb. 17: Wexler, Mapping Fate, pp. 125-end

Feb. 20: Luncheon talk by Gayle Greene

(her book, The Woman Who Knew Too Much (1999), is in the Institute office)

Symposium: Feb. 20

II. HIV/AIDS Activism and the Global Pandemic

Feb. 24: David Román, ch. 1, 2, Acts of Intervention: Performance, Gay Culture, & AIDS (1998)

"Not-About-AIDS," (Spring 2000)

Longtime Companion (1990) [we will arrange to screen this beforehand]

Feb. 27 (Thurs.): Nancy Scheper-Hughes, "An Essay: 'AIDS and the Social Body,'" (1994)

Selected newspaper articles on HIV/AIDS

Sheila Tlou, "Women, the Girl Child, and HIV/AIDS," (2001)

Physicians for Human Rights, "About the Health Action AIDS Campaign"

Mar. 3: Cathy J. Cohen, "Invisible to the Centers for Disease Control" (1999)

Sheryl Gay Stolberg, "Racial Disparity ... in AIDS Clinical Studies" (2002)

"The Ethics of Clinical Research in the Third World" (1997) and related material

Marcia Angell, "Investigators' Responsibilities for Human Subjects in Developing Countries" (2000) and related material

D. Roberts, Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare (2001), selections

Symposium: March 6 and 7

III. Biopowers: Problems in Bioethics and the Politics of Science

Mar. 10: Review of symposium
Tobin Siebers, “Tender Organs, Narcissism, and Identity Politics” (2002) and
“My Withered Limb” (1998)

Project topic statements due in class

Mar. 12: Luncheon talk by Lee Klosinski

Mar. 17: Spring Break

Mar. 24: Max Weber, “Science as a Vocation” (1922)
Paul Rabinow, Intro. and ch. 1, French DNA: Trouble in Purgatory (1999)

Mar. 28 (Thursday): National Bioethics Advisory Commission reports: “Cloning Human Beings” (1997) and “Ethical Issues in Human Stem Cell Research” (1999)
National Academy of Sciences reports: “Stem Cells and the Future of Regenerative Medicine” (2002); “Scientific and Medical Aspects of Human Reproductive Cloning” (2002)
President’s Council on Bioethics Report: “Human Cloning and Human Dignity” (2002)

Mar. 31: Robin Cook, Chromosome 6 (1997)
Planet of the Apes (2001) [we will arrange to screen this beforehand]

April 2: Luncheon talk by Susan Rankaitis, Patrick Hebert, and Lisa Avery (Scripps ’02)
Lecture by Rosemarie Garland-Thomson (TBA)

Symposium: April 3 and 4

April 7: no class

April 10 (Thursday): Review of conference; questions on final projects
Project outlines due in class

April 14: no class

April 17 (Thursday): Project drafts due in my Humanities mailbox by 4 p.m.

April 21: Presentations

April 28: Presentations

May 5: Presentations

May 8 (Thursday): Presentations

May 9: Senior grades due

May 14: Final projects due by noon