

CLCS 6762: CONTEMPORARY LITERARY AND CRITICAL THEORY

Spring 2021
W 2:00-5:00pm

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This seminar offers an introduction to some of the major themes, issues, and problematics that have shaped contemporary critical and literary theory over the last forty years. The class will be organized around a number of thematic "clusters" that explore specific concepts or ideas from a variety of critical currents and perspectives (post-structuralism, new historicism, Marxism, postcolonial theory, gender studies, race and ethnicity, environmental studies, post-foundational thought, etc.) in order to trace their historic transformations and / or hermeneutic adaptations within different theoretical trends.

Some of the concepts and themes we will focus on may include: interpretation, authorship, and literary field; culture industry and media technology; hegemony and post-hegemony; recognition, coloniality, and the postcolonial condition; memory and trauma; ecology and materiality; primitive accumulation, biopolitics, and neoliberalism. Readings and discussions will be based on a combination of introductory, historically significant, and specialized theoretical contributions, as well as a selection of short literary pieces, films, and documentaries. This seminar is open to WLC graduate students and to all interested students from other departments.

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