Course Description

The French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) has had a profound influence on today's cultural and visual studies. Often (incorrectly) labeled a poststructuralist, Deleuze is notable in that he technically remains outside the core canon of critical theory--loosely defined as the Marxian and Freudian tradition of socio-cultural critique beginning with the Frankfurt School--while nevertheless remaining one of the most influential writers in that same theoretical legacy. Charting his own course through the disorientation and schizophrenia of modern life, Deleuze rehabilitated a special sub-category of philosophy populated by "radically materialist" thinkers hand-selected from throughout history (Heraclitus, Spinoza, Hume, Bergson, Whitehead, and others).

Deleuze is perhaps best known for one of his collaborative books with Félix Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus (1980), or his signal work of ontology, Difference and Repetition (1968). Yet in this seminar, we bypass much of the more well-known Deleuze, skipping over the philosophical monographs of the 1960s and the two large collaborations with Guattari during the 1970s, in order to focus on Deleuze's aesthetics during the 1980s. References to art, literature, and aesthetics permeate nearly all of his writings. Yet first with his important 1975 collaboration with Guattari on the literature of Franz Kafka and then later with subsequent books published in the 1980s, Deleuze deals with aesthetic themes in a more systematic way, first with painting, then with cinema and the Baroque.

In this doctoral seminar we will perform a close reading of Deleuze's late work on aesthetics, focusing on his relevance to cultural and visual studies by way of painting, cinema, photography, the diagram, and the Baroque. Additional themes will include minor literature, machines, and the distinction between the digital and the analogue. Supplemental readings will be drawn from Elizabeth Grosz, as well as from three of Deleuze's peers and interlocutors (and, at times, fierce critics) in France, Michel Henry, Alain Badiou, and François Laruelle.
Required Books


Schedule

**Week 1**
Course Introduction.

**Week 2**
Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art*.

**Week 3**
Badiou, *Deleuze*.

**Week 4**
Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*.

**Week 5**
Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, Chapters 1-4.

Watch as many as you can of the following:

- *Broken Blossoms* (d. Griffith, 1919); also relevant are Griffith's films *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), and *Intolerance* (1916).
- *October: Ten Days That Shook the World* (d. Eisenstein, 1927); also relevant are Eisenstein's films *The Battleship Potemkin* (1925) and *The General Line* (1929).
- *La roue* (d. Gance, 1923); also relevant is Gance's film *Napoleon* (1927).
•  *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans* (d. Murnau, 1927); also relevant are Murnau's films *Nosferatu* (1922) and *Faust* (1926).
•  *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (d. Dreyer, 1928).
•  *Metropolis* (d. Lang, 1927); also relevant is Lang's film *The Nibelungen* (1924).

**Week 6**
Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, Chapters 5-8.

Watch as many as you can of the following:
•  *Man with a Movie Camera* (d. Vertov, 1929).
•  *Pickpocket* (d. Bresson, 1959).
•  *The Scarlet Empress* (d. Sternberg, 1934).

**Week 7**
Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, Chapters 9-12.

Watch as many as you can of the following:
•  *The Great Dictator* (d. Chaplin, 1940).

**Week 8**
Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, Chapters 1-4.

Watch as many as you can of the following:
•  *Rome, Open City* (d. Rossellini, 1945).
•  *Late Spring* (d. Ozu, 1949).
•  *The Rules of the Game* (d. Renoir, 1939); also relevant is Renoir's film *Grand Illusion* (1937).

**Week 9**
Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, Chapters 5-7.

Watch as many as you can of the following:
•  *Last Year at Marienbad* (d. Resnais, 1961).
•  *Citizen Kane* (d. Welles, 1941); also relevant are Welles's films *Lady from Shanghai* (1947) and *Mr. Arkadin* (1955).

**Week 10**
Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, Chapters 8-10.

**Week 11**
Henry, *Seeing the Invisible.*
Additional suggested reading:
- François Laruelle, “Réflexions philosophiques sur l'oeuvre d'August von Briesen.”

**Week 12**
Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*.

**Week 13**
Franz Kafka, “In the Penal Colony” (PDF).
Deleuze & Guattari, *Kafka*.

Additional suggested reading:
- Franz Kafka's novels *The Trial* and *The Castle*.

**Week 14**
Deleuze, *The Fold*.

**Week 15**
Selections from Deleuze, *Negotiations* and other late writings (PDF).

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**Suggested Further Reading on Deleuze**

- http://www.warwick.ac.uk/philosophy/pli_journal/?p=vol16
Course Assignments

Reading
All students are expected to read the assigned texts in advance of class.

Writing
Each student should write a total of 20 pages for the semester, preferably split into two shorter papers of 10 pages each, but other combinations are also possible. Suggested paper topics will be provided, but students are also encouraged to create their own topics. All papers should be on par with doctoral level work and should demonstrate a close reading of the required materials and exhibit a methodology of critical analysis.

Grading Requirements

Each student will be evaluated based on the course assignments. All students will be expected to do the course reading, and to write papers of approximately 20 pages total. Grades will be determined according to the following formula:

80% paper(s)
20% in-class discussion

Laptop Policy

I discourage the use of electronic devices in class. This includes all laptops, iPads, PDAs, phones, and other devices. There is mounting evidence that such devices impede learning and place an undo strain on the pedagogical experience of both students and teachers. While an outright ban poses its own difficulties, please note that I discourage the use of such devices and consider them to be detrimental to the social and pedagogical climate of the classroom. (Exceptions can be made for readings that have been distributed in electronic form, and for students with special learning needs.)