

Comparative Literature R1B, section 14
Spring 2014

CCN: 17260
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machines and media: literature and/on technology

In this course, we will explore how technology is represented in literature and art, and how technology shapes—literally and metaphorically—literary conventions, genres, and ways of reading at the turn of the 20th and the 21st centuries. First, we will look at films and texts from the Machine Age that grapple with representing and keeping pace with new technologies such as the railroad, aircraft, automobiles, radio, and mechanized assembly lines. From there, we will move on to the impact, in more recent decades, of new media and digital technologies on *what* and *how* we read, from digital poems and hypertext novels to dystopian depictions of a world dominated by social media.

Both of these moments raise questions about how technology intersects with art and literature:

- How is technology related to the idea of cultural progress, utopia, civilization, and urban development, on the one hand, and a doomed dystopian future, on the other?
- In what ways are technology and media connected to social, cultural, and economic critique?
- How do new technologies alter the production and distribution of art, films, and literature; existing roles of author and reader; and the process of reading itself? How do they impact our conceptions of time, space, and order?
- How does society's relationship with technology change over time?

These questions will function as a framework for developing close reading, critical thinking, and analytical writing skills. In addition to weekly blog posts and workshops on specific reading and writing techniques, we will focus on drafting, composing, and revising, as well as incorporating research into an argumentative essay.

Reading and Composition Goals:

- Expanding on existing critical thinking, close reading, and basic writing skills acquired in R1A.
- Writing longer papers with independently formulated, complex arguments.
- Evaluating, critically engaging with, and incorporating theoretical and secondary texts into literary analysis.
- Learning how to incorporate and critically engage with scholarly research into paper writing.
- Formulating original and sophisticated arguments.

Required texts:

The following books are available for purchase at the Cal Student Store. You may also buy the books online; however, if you purchase books from amazon.com or a similar site, you MUST have the exact edition listed here (please check the ISBN numbers):

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (ISBN-13: 978-0486282114)

Gary Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story* (ISBN-10: 0812977866; ISBN-13: 978-0812977868)

Vicente Huidobro, *Altazor* (ISBN-10: 0819566780; ISBN-13: 978-0819566782)

Dave Eggers, *The Circle* (ISBN-10: 0385351399; ISBN-13: 978-0385351393)

All other readings for this class will be made available online through our course website on bCourses. It will be your choice whether you want to print out readings and annotate them by hand, or use software to do so (options for text editing: Skitch, Adobe Acrobat Pro, PDF Notes,...).

Films:

Fritz Lang, *Metropolis*

Charlie Chaplin, *Modern Times*

Stanley Kubrick, *2001: A Space Odyssey*

Highly Recommended:

Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference* (7th ed.) (ISBN-10: 0312601433; ISBN-13: 978-0312601430)

Strunk and White, *Elements of Style* (ISBN-10: 1492795356; ISBN-13: 978-1492795353)

Grade Breakdown:**Essays: 65%**

Essay 1 (3 pages): 5%

Essay 2 (6-8 pages): 25% (total)

outline: 10%

first version: 35%

final version: 55%

Essay 3 (10-12 pages): 35% (total)

annotated bibliography: 5%

outline: 5%

first version: 35%

final version: 55%

Preparation and Participation: 15%**Weekly Responses and Miscellaneous**

Assignments: 15%

Discussion Leading: 5%**Grade ranges:**

A+ 97-100

A 93-96

A- 90-92

B+ 87-89

B 83-86

B- 80-82

C+ 77-79

C 73-76

C- 70-73

D+ 67-69

D 63-66

D- 60-62

F <60

Course Requirements:

Prerequisites: Completion of R1A

Preparation and Participation: This course is based primarily on collaboration and an exchange of ideas. As such, coming to class prepared to participate is a key course requirement. Preparation entails, on a basic level, having read (and sometimes re-read), annotated, and thought about the assignment before class, as well as bringing your copy of the texts to every class.

During class, participating consists of commenting, asking questions, actively listening and responding to your classmates, and sharing your impressions and interpretations of the texts we read. Don't be afraid to ask questions or "try out" an interpretation: your thoughts and questions will be the starting point of our class discussions. Different interpretations are encouraged! Just be sure to always present your perspective in a respectful and productive way. If you're reluctant to speak up in class, please talk to me and we can find a way for you to participate.

Details on reading and writing assignments will be posted for each class through bCourses online.

Essays: You will write 3 essays over the course of the semester:

- Essay #1 is a 3-page diagnostic paper.
- Essay #2 is a 6-8 page paper and will consist of a written outline, a first version, and a final, revised version, written about a single text.
- Essay #3 is the final 10-12 page paper for the course, and will consist of an annotated bibliography, an outline, a first version, and a final, revised version; it is a research paper and should take a comparative approach to two or more texts.

The grading rubric used to evaluate your essays and a grading key are available on bCourses.

Weekly Blog Responses: You will be expected to post blog responses on the assigned readings once a week. Responses have three components: 1. posting your own response, 2. reading your classmates' responses, and 3. responding to other students' posted responses. You can find more details on the blog.

Leading Discussion: Once or twice over the course of the semester, you will be asked to lead the class discussion on the assigned reading. You will be responsible for formulating insightful and provocative discussion questions and addressing the key themes and concepts of the assigned texts.

Course Policies

Classroom Environment: As a discussion-based course, my priority is maintaining a non-critical classroom environment in which all students feel comfortable expressing ideas, doubts, impressions, and questions. Specifically, I ask that you actively listen to your classmates, and respond and comment attentively and respectfully.

Academic Honesty: You are responsible for knowing and abiding by the Cal Student Code of Conduct (<http://sa.berkeley.edu/conduct/students>). The University defines plagiarism as follows:

"Plagiarism is defined as use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source, for example:

- Wholesale copying of passages from works of others into your homework, essay, term paper, or dissertation without acknowledgment.
- Use of the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgment.
- Paraphrasing of another person's characteristic or original phraseology, metaphor, or other literary device without acknowledgment."

(Berkeley Campus Code of Student Conduct)

Using others' ideas as your own not only violates university policy, but also directly interferes with our course objectives. This means that whenever you use words or ideas from another source (websites, books, class lecture,...), that source and the extent to which you have used it must be identified.

If you are found to have used others' words or ideas without proper acknowledgment, you may be failed from the course and reported to Student Judicial Affairs. When in doubt, ask before turning in your work. I am happy to advise you on how to cite your sources.

Attendance: You can miss three (3) classes without penalty. After that, I will lower your final course grade by 2% per additional absence. After six (6) absences, you risk failing the course. Note that this policy does not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. In the case of a serious emergency (health or family related), please speak with me immediately. If you have any athletic or academic obligations that will require you to miss class, please provide a schedule and a letter at the beginning of the semester.

Arrive on time to start class at 11:10. Arriving late three (3) times equals one absence.

Finally, if you do not have a copy of the text we are reading, or you have not done the assigned reading, you cannot participate in class discussion and will be marked as absent.

Lateness: I expect you to be in your seat and ready to begin class discussion at 11:10; arriving late disrupts the entire class and will not be tolerated. Being late three (3) times is akin to one absence.

Submitting Assignments: Assignments are due at the beginning of class time. Turn in all assignments as hard copies unless instructed to do otherwise.

Format of papers: double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman with 1" margins; all pages must be stapled together; and your papers should be submitted in a folder that contains all previously graded papers, your outline, and previous versions of the paper, if applicable.

Late Work: Late essays will be penalized by 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late. You will receive only partial credit for any written work handed in past the due date. Extensions on papers will not be granted.

Classroom Guidelines:

Technology: You will not need your laptops or any other devices in class, as I find that they distract from class discussion. Please bring a notebook to take notes. Do not bring laptops or tablets to class unless specifically instructed to do so. Also, remember to silence and put away cell phones before class begins.

Food & drink: No food in class. Drinks are OK.

E-mail communication: You can expect me to respond to emails within 24 hours, possibly longer on weekends. Please check bCourses before emailing me with questions about assignments. I also expect you to check for emails sent from me or through bCourses at least once a day.

Accommodations: If you are registered with the DSP and require accommodations (work, deadlines, etc.), speak to the instructor immediately. If you think you may need accommodations but are not registered with DSP, contact DSP directly (642-0518, <http://dsp.berkeley.edu>, 260m Cesar Chavez Center).

Resources for you:

Office Hours – Please don't think of meeting with me as a last resort; I suggest you come early, and often. This is your time to get individual attention; take advantage of it!

Berkeley College Writing's Resource List – <http://writing.berkeley.edu/writing-resources>

Student Learning Center – <http://slc.berkeley.edu>

Student Code of Conduct: Academic Honesty – <http://writing.berkeley.edu/about-us/academic-honesty>

Research Advisory Service – <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/doemoff/ras.html>

Purdue Online Writing Lab – <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Counseling & Psychological Services – <http://uhs.berkeley.edu/students/counseling/cps.shtml>

Disabled Students' Program – <http://dsp.berkeley.edu/>

Course Schedule (subject to change)

week 1: technology and modernity

W	01/22	first day of class: syllabus and introductions
F	01/24	view/read: paintings, photos, poems & manifestos by Duchamp, Muybridge, Balla, Marinetti & Hausmann; intro to modernity & modernism
		technology, modernity & art: introduction workshop 1: annotating texts

week 2: technology and modernity

M	01/27	read: Apollinaire, selected poems from <i>Calligrams</i> ; de Torre, selected poems from <i>Helices</i> due: annotated poem; academic honesty quiz (bCourses) poetry discussion
W	01/29	read: Stephen Kern, <i>The Culture of Time and Space</i> (excerpts); "Beyond the 5-paragraph essay" (bCourses) poetry and theory workshop 2: close reading brainstorming for essay topics; beyond the 5-paragraph essay
F	01/31	due: blog posts (close readings of Gironde poems) read: Gironde, selected poems; <i>How to Write a Sentence</i> (excerpts) poetry discussion (close readings); building sentences

week 3: man vs. machine: industrial anxiety

M	02/03	due: essay #1 (diagnostic) watch: Charlie Chaplin, <i>Modern Times</i> film discussion
W	02/05	due: blog posts (<i>Modern Times</i> and Benjamin) read: Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art ..."; MLA citation guidelines discussion of film & Benjamin; overview of MLA citation
F	02/07	read: "Basic Writing Skills Revisited" (bCourses) workshop 3: review of basic writing skills (based on essay #1) essay #1 returned

week 4: man vs. machine: industrial anxiety

M	02/10	due: revision of part of essay #1 (based on workshop 3) watch: Fritz Lang, <i>Metropolis</i> film discussion
W	02/12	read: film theory (Eisenstein?); model outlines film discussion, film theory; writing outlines
F	02/14	due: blog posts (<i>Metropolis</i>) read: article on <i>Metropolis</i> workshop 4: reading literary criticism: theory and secondary sources

week 5: technology and the super-man

M	02/17	ACADEMIC & ADMINISTRATIVE HOLIDAY
W	02/19	due: outline for essay #2 read: Vicente Huidobro, <i>Altazor</i>
		peer review of outline discussion of <i>Altazor</i>
F	02/21	due: blog posts (<i>Altazor</i>) read: Freud, <i>Civilization and its Discontents</i> (excerpts)
		discussion of <i>Altazor</i> & Freud

week 6: technology and the super-man

M	02/24	watch: <i>2001, A Space Odyssey</i>
		discussion of Freud; discussion of film
W	02/26	read: Nietzsche, <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> (excerpts)
		Nietzsche & <i>2001</i>
F	02/28	due: essay #2, version 1 (2 copies for peer review) read: list of sources
		workshop 5: research: locating materials (online)

week 7: technology and the body

M	03/03	read: Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i> read: peer essays
		discussion of novel peer review
W	03/05	read: Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i> online research: finding and assessing sources on <i>Frankenstein</i>
		discussion of novel workshop 6: research: assessing sources
F	03/07	read: Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i> ; Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto" due: blog posts – monsters and technology
		discussion of <i>Frankenstein</i> and Haraway

week 8: technology and the body / writing as technology; written word, print, digital

M	03/10	read: Jackson, <i>My Body – A Wunderkammer</i> read: model essays
		discussion of the novel peer review of model essays
W	03/12	read: Hypertext theory due: blog posts (<i>Patchwork Girl</i> , Hypertext)
		discussion of the novel, hypertext, gender theory
F	03/14	read: Plato, <i>Phaedrus</i> (excerpt); Ong, "Writing Is a Technology That Restructures Thought" (John)
		discussion of writing as technology; Plato

week 9: writing as technology; written word, print, digital

M	03/17	due: essay #2, final version
		LIBRARY SESSION
W	03/19	read: Borges, "The Library of Babel" (Melody)
		discussion of Borges; peer editing of essay topics
F	03/21	read: Borges, "The Garden of Forking Paths" (Angela)
		due: collaboration 2 (library research)
		<u>workshop 7</u> : annotated bibliography discussion of Borges

week 10 (03/24-03/28): SPRING RECESS**week 11: media and the message**

M	03/31	due: preliminary list of sources for final paper (library & online)
		read: McLuhan, <i>Understanding Media</i> (excerpts); "A sampling of New Media Literature" (Morgan)
		discussion of media theory and texts
W	04/02	STRIKE
F	04/04	read: "Evaluating Sources" (bCourses)
		research: digital poems online
		<u>workshop 8</u> : evaluating sources for relevance; critical evaluation of sources discussion of poetry about media; poetry in the digital sphere

week 12: media and the message

M	04/07	read: poems on UbuWeb.com; digital poetry (Sam)
		in-class viewing/reading of interactive digital poems; discussion of ubu
W	04/09	due: annotated bibliography for final essay (preliminary)
		read: twitter poetry/twihaiku/micropoetry discussion of twitter poetry and haiku
F	04/11	read: blog posts; paper 2; assessment of methods of incorporating evidence update your list of personal writing issues
		<u>workshop 10</u> : incorporating evidence

week 13: digital dystopias

M	04/14	due: outline of essay #3
		peer review of essay #3 outline
W	04/16	watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xFAWR6hzZek https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhcPX1wVp38 read: Gary Shteyngart, <i>Super Sad True Love Story</i> (Samantha)

		discussion of <i>Super Sad True Love Story</i> and videos
F	04/18	due: blog posts (<i>Super Sad True Love Story</i>) read: Gary Shteyngart, <i>Super Sad True Love Story</i> (Patrick)
		discussion of <i>Super Sad True Love Story</i>

week 14: digital dystopias

M	04/21	read: Gary Shteyngart, <i>Super Sad True Love Story</i> (Nusrat)
W	04/23	read: Dave Eggers, <i>The Circle</i> due: blog posts (<i>The Circle</i>) (Chris)
		discussion of the novel
F	04/25	read: Dave Eggers, <i>The Circle</i> (Dan)
		discussion of the novel

week 15: digital dystopias

M	04/28	due: essay #3, version 1 read: Dave Eggers, <i>The Circle</i>
		discussion of the novel
W	04/30	read: Dave Eggers, <i>The Circle</i> (Hunter) peer review of essay #3
		close discussion of the novel
F	05/02	
		final class: conclusions

May 14th: FINAL PAPER due
