

Carleton University
Late Summer 2015
Department of English

ENGL 4125A/5002S: Theories of Authorship, from Plato to Post-Copyright

Mondays and Wednesdays / 10:35 am – 1:25 pm

Location: 1816 DT

Please confirm location on Carleton Central

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Office hours: by appointment

“What is an author?” is a perennial question, currently at the heart of debates over intellectual property and the nature of cultural production. This seminar will explore theories of authorship articulated by Plato, Sidney, Shelley, Freud, Nietzsche, Eliot, Borges, Barthes, Foucault, and others. We will examine topics such as inspiration and its secularization; the relationship between the “death of the author” and politics; the ethics of authorship; the origins of intellectual property; notions of social authorship; the relationship between the material book and concepts of authorship; the implications of new media; and contemporary “post-copyright” cultural formations.

Evaluation and Assignments

Participation (includes responses to two assigned questions): 15%

Presentation: 30%

Final Essay / Exam (due 21 Aug): 55%

Participation: This course requires that you not only read the required texts for each class, but that you thoroughly engage with those texts. This means that you must come to class with a well thought-out response to the readings, as well as some questions and/or topics for discussion generated by your reading. Commit to contributing at least one comment or question every class. It is essential that you bring the assigned readings to class, either in electronic or paper form. One missed class results in a 5% deduction from your total grade, two missed classes in a 10% deduction, and three missed classes in an “F.”

In addition, you will be providing in-class responses to two assigned discussion questions. You do not need to submit anything written for this.

Presentation: Students will sign up for a presentation on one of the designated readings or groups of readings. Your presentation can focus on one, some, or all of the readings for which you are signed up. The presentation consists of the formal delivery of a 5-6 page (double-spaced) paper which takes a position on and critically analyzes the reading(s) in question. This

means the presentation must not be a mere summary or explication of the reading; you must contextualize it (that is, discuss the relevant intellectual backgrounds of the reading, talk about specific debates the reading participates in) as well as develop an argument with respect to the reading. Your presentation must also provoke discussion by posing specific questions about the reading, and/or by directing the class to particularly complex or problematic issues it raises. This presentation is designed to give students experience delivering a conference paper, and therefore the quality of the presentation style will be taken into account in the grading. After you deliver your paper, it must be submitted with a list of works cited.

Final Essay / Exam: Students are given the option of an essay or exam for their final assignment, both of which will result in pieces of writing at least 4000 words in length. The essay option is for students who wish to develop their own critical analysis of course readings in ways which go beyond the class discussion, or who wish to develop a topic closely related to the course subject matter, and that engages course readings. The essay can be based on critical study of literary texts alongside course readings and other theoretical texts treating the central themes of the course. If you choose this option, you must set up an appointment to meet with me before the final seminar to discuss your essay. The exam option is for students who prefer to be tested on their ability to analyze and synthesize course readings and the topics we discuss in class. Students will have one week to submit the take-home exam, which will be handed out on the final day of class. The exam will consist of three sections, each involving a choice of topics. The exam is to be written individually, not collaboratively. Essays and exams must be submitted to the English Department's main office on or before 21 August.

Course Materials

All readings are available through Carleton Library e-reserves, the Library website's databases, or on the Internet.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is making someone else's work or ideas appear as your own. The consequences for this infraction are severe: expulsion from and an "F" in the course and, in some cases, expulsion from the university. For the code outlining plagiarism, see the section on "Instructional Offences" in the Graduate Calendar. Please note that plagiarism includes recycling your own work used in other courses, and that "Minor modifications and amendments, such as changes of phraseology in an essay or paper, do not constitute a significant and acceptable reworking of an assignment."

Academic Accommodations

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation.

If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable).

After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Schedule (Subject to Alteration)

Unless noted, all readings are available through Carleton Library e-reserves (ARES, accessed through the Library website). Readings designated with an asterisk (*) are available either through Library website databases or on the Internet. For specific locations of these items, see the bottom of this outline.

July 6: Introduction

July 8: Early Theories

Plato, *Ion**

Plato, *The Republic* (excerpt)*

Minnis, "The Significance of the Medieval Theory of Authorship" (excerpt)

Sidney, *Defence of Poesie* (excerpt)*

Teskey, "The Ethics of Inspiration"

Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition* (excerpt)*

Shelley, "A Defence of Poetry" (excerpt)*

July 13: Modern Theories I

Mallarmé, "Crisis in Verse"
 Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming"*
 Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent"*
 Tomaševkij, "Literature and Biography" (in Metejka, *Readings in Russian Poetics*)
 Wimsatt and Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy"*

July 15: Modern Theories II

Poulet, "Phenomenology of Reading"*
 Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (excerpt)
 Bloom, "A Meditation upon Priority, and a Synopsis"
 Borges, "Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quixote*"; "Kafka and his Precursors";
 "Everything and Nothing"; "Borges and I"*

July 20: Death of the Author

Barthes, "The Death of the Author"*
 Foucault, "What is an Author?*" *
 Derrida, "The Exorbitant. Question of Method"
 Burke, *The Death and Return of the Author* (prologue; chapter 1)

July 22: Feminism

Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic* (excerpt)
 Cixous, "Castration or Decapitation?*" *
 Jardine, "Feminist Tracks"
 Miller, "Changing the Subject: Authorship, Writing and the Reader"

July 27: The Political

Benjamin, "The Author as Producer"*
 Sartre, "Writing for One's Age"*
 Macherey, "Creation and Production"
 Pease, "Author"
 Ni Fhlathúin, "Postcolonialism and the Author: The Case of Salman Rushdie"

July 29: Copyright

Hesse, "The Rise of Intellectual Property, 700 BC-AD 2000: An Idea in the Balance"*
 Woodmansee, "The Genius and the Copyright"*
 Saint-Amour, "Intellectual Property and Critique"

August 3: NO CLASS

August 5: Marketing

Gardiner, "Recuperating the Author"
 Wernick, "Authorship and the Supplement of Promotion"
 Mota, "What's in a Name? The Case of jeannettewinterson.com"*

August 10: Ethics

Nietzsche, "Why I am a Destiny"*
 Burke, "The Ethics of Signature"
 Burke, *The Ethics of Writing* (introduction)
 Jaszi and Woodmansee, "The Ethical Reaches of Authorship"
 Schaffer and Smith, *Human Rights and Narrated Lives* (chapter 1)

August 12: Collaboration

McGann, "The Socialization of Texts"
 Stillinger, *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius* (chapter 9)*
 McKenzie, "The Book as an Expressive Form"
 Woodmansee, "On the Author Effect: Recovering Collectivity"

August 14: After Copyright?

Vaidhyathan, *Copyrights and Copywrongs* (chapter 5)
 Lessig, *Free Culture* (introduction; chapter 1)
 Jaszi, "Is There Such a Thing as Postmodern Copyright?"

Readings Not on E-Reserve

Plato, *Ion*: <http://www2.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/plato/ion.pdf>

Plato, *The Republic* (excerpt):

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0168%3Abook%3D10%3Apage%3D605> (pages 605c-608b)

Sidney, *Defence of Poesie* (excerpt):

<https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1794/816/defence.pdf;jsessionid=D307AB7BA80F512F7BC3AECD8A01EB3E?sequence=1> (pages 13-17, 24-29)

Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition* (excerpt):

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=fom1AAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q=parake&f=false> (pages 9-27)

Shelley, "A Defence of Poetry":

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/learning/essay/237844?page=8> (sections 8-10)

Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming":

<http://narrativetheory.wikispaces.com/file/view/freudreadings.pdf>

Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent":

http://essays.quotidiana.org/eliot/tradition_and_the_individual/

Wimsatt and Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy":

<http://faculty.smu.edu/nschwartz/seminar/Fallacy.htm>

Poulet, "Phenomenology of Reading," *New Literary History* 1:1 (Oct. 1969) pp. 53-68.

Barthes, "The Death of the Author":

<http://bobbybelote.com/!!teaching/Readings/BarthesAuthor.pdf>

Cixous, "Castration or Decapitation?", *Signs* 7.1 (1981)

Foucault, "What is an Author?":

http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/file.php/3423/!via/oucontent/course/69/a840_1_michel_foucault.pdf

Benjamin, "The Author as Producer":

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/theatre_s/postgraduate/maipr/teaching_1112/warwick/st2/kobialka_reading_-_benjamin_w_-_the_author_as_producer.pdf

Sartre, "Writing for One's Age": <http://www.scribd.com/doc/74782745/Sartre-Jean-Paul-What-is-literature%C2%BF-Introducing-Les-Temps-modernes-The-nationalization-of-literature-Black-orpheus> (pages 239-45)

Borges, "Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quixote*":
<http://vahidnab.com/menard.pdf>

Borges, "Kafka and his Precursors"; "Everything and Nothing"; "Borges and I"
http://www.public.asu.edu/~detric/CSUSA.2003/pages/tier1b_content.html

Hesse, "The Rise of Intellectual Property, 700 BC-AD 2000: An Idea in the Balance," *Daedalus* 2002 (Spring)

Woodmansee, "The Genius and the Copyright," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 17.4 (1984)

Mota, "What's in a Name? The Case of jeannettewinterson.com," *Twentieth-Century Literature* 50.2 (2004)

Nietzsche, "Why I am a Destiny":
http://www.lexido.com/EBOOK_TEXTS/ECCE_HOMO_.aspx?S=15

Stilling, *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius*, chapter 9: available as an e-book through Library site