

**Carleton University
Winter 2014
Department of English**

ENGL 5002W: Aesthetics and Politics

**Tuesdays 2.35-5.25 pm
Location: DT 1816**

**Instructor: Sarah Brouillette
Office: Dunton 1904 Office hours: Tues 1-2
Email: sarah_brouillette@carleton.ca**

“The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it.” – Karl Marx

This course is offered under the general heading of “Aesthetics and Politics,” and I do hope that our conversation will range widely. However, our readings will be in the tradition of Marxist literary criticism almost exclusively. Our focus will be theories of how the aesthetic dimension of literary expression (or, literature’s sensuous and formal aspect) relates to a dominantly capitalist economics and to the various challenges that have always attended that dominance.

Method of Evaluation:

15%: Students will be expected to participate in class discussion in an informed way.

25%: Students will on one occasion lead class discussion by giving a presentation and posing discussion questions.

60%: Students will write a 15 to 20 page paper

Texts to Purchase (at Haven Books):

Terry Eagleton and Drew Milne, eds., *Marxist Literary Theory*
Tom McCarthy, *Remainder*
Luther Blissett / Wu Ming, *Q*

*** All other texts will be available via cuLearn or ARES (library e-reserves).

Schedule:

7 January: Introductions

14 January: Marx / Engels / Benjamin

- Marx / Engels, “Social Being and Social Consciousness” (1845-6 / 1859) – in *MLT*
- Engels, “Against Vulgar Marxism” (1890) – in *MLT*
- Engels, “On Realism” (1888) – in *MLT*
- Benjamin, “The Author as Producer” (1934) – cuLearn

21 January: Lukács / Brecht

- Brecht, “A Short Organum for the Theatre” (1949) – in *MLT*
- Lukács, “Realism in the Balance” (1938) – ARES
- Lukács, “The Ideology of Modernism” (1957) – in *MLT*
- Brecht, “Against Georg Lukács” (1967) – ARES

28 January: Balibar / Macherey / Goldmann

- Goldmann, “Introduction to the Problems of a Sociology of the Novel” (1963) – in *MLT*
- Balibar and Macherey, “On Literature as an Ideological Form” (1974) – in *MLT*
- Macherey, from *A Theory of Literary Production* (1978) – ARES

4 February: Adorno / Marcuse

- Adorno, “Commitment” (1965) – in *MLT*
- Marcuse, “The Affirmative Character of Culture” (1968) – ARES

11 February: Althusser / Williams

- Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” (1970) – cuLearn
- Williams, “Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory” (1973) – ARES
- Williams, “Literature” (1977) – in *MLT*

25 February: Eagleton / Callinicos

- Eagleton, “Towards a Science of the Text” (1976) – in *MLT*
- Eagleton, from *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (1990) – cuLearn
- Callinicos, “The Jargon of Postmodernity” (1989) – in *MLT*

4 March: Jameson / Ahmad

- Jameson, “On Interpretation” (1981) – in *MLT*
- Jameson, “Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capital” (1986) – ARES
- Ahmad, “Jameson’s Rhetoric of Otherness and the ‘National Allegory’” (1987) – in *MLT*

11 March: Spivak / Parry / Lazarus

- Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak” (1988) – ARES
- Parry, “Signs of our times” (on H. Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*) (1994) – ARES
- Lazarus, from *The Postcolonial Unconscious* (2011) – ARES

18 March: Recent Work I (Literature and Finance)

- Leigh Claire La Berge, “The Men Who Make the Killings: *American Psycho*, Financial Masculinity, and 1980s Financial Print Culture” (2010) – cuLearn
- Annie McClanahan, “Investing in the Future: Late Capitalism’s End of History” (2013) – cuLearn

25 March: Recent Work II (Poetry and/as Revolution)

- Joshua Clover and Keston Sutherland, “Always Totalize: Poetry and Revolution” (2013) – cuLearn
- Benjamin Noys, “The Aesthetics of Communization” (2013) – cuLearn
- Daniel Spaulding, “There is no ‘Aesthetics of Communization’” (2013) – cuLearn

1 April March: Tom McCarthy, *Remainder* (2005)

8 April: Luther Blissett / Wu Ming, *Q* (1999)

ACCOMMODATION

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your letter of accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by November 7, 2008, for December examinations, and March 6, 2009, for April examinations.

Religious Observance: To be worked out on individual basis with instructor. Consult Equity Services Website or an Equity Advisor (ext. 5622) for Policy and list of Holy Days (www.carleton.ca/equity)

Pregnancy: Contact Equity Services (ext. 5622) to obtain letters of accommodation.

Note: If one of your assignments is lost, misplaced, or not received by the instructor, you are responsible for having a backup copy that can be submitted immediately upon request.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism: Plagiarism means passing off someone else’s words or ideas as your own or submitting the same work in two different academic contexts (self-plagiarism). The consequences of plagiarism are severe and are issued by the Dean and the University Senate. In

order to avoid plagiarism, you must correctly and fairly attribute the sources of the ideas you pick up from books, the internet, and other people. For additional information, consult the section on Instructional Offenses in the *Undergraduate Calendar*.