

Summer 2006 Session A

Instructor: Enikő Bollobás

Monday-Fri 10:15-12:15

Office hours: by appointment

LIT/ANT 400: Topics in World Literature

Office: 109 DePerno Hall

tel.: x3086

**Textual Performances of Gender, Sexuality, and the Animal:  
an International Perspective**

This is a course exploring the discursive constructedness of gender, sexual, and animal identity in American and European literary texts as well as in films and popular culture. Reading various narratives of identity and passing, we will explore how, for example, scripts of womanhood, color, and “animalness” are being performed and how boundaries are being crossed (such as between male and female, human and animal, real and fictioned). In addition to reading short literary texts, we will view and discuss several films and popular ads, where identity performances can be linked to objecthood (becoming objects of gaze and/or desire).

**WEEK 1**

Monday, May 22

Orientation, Introduction

Speech acts, speech act theory

Tuesday, May 23

Performative historical documents

READ: *The Declaration of Independence*

*Seneca Falls Declaration*

Wednesday, May 24

Fictions of reality

READ: Mark Twain, *The Mysterious Stranger*

Thursday, May 25

Transgressing boundaries between reality and fiction

READ: Ambrose Bierce, “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge”

in-class viewing of film adaptation

Friday, May 26

Alternative realities in film: performative creations

films to be discussed/viewed: *Matrix*, *eXistenZ*, *The Truman Show*

Research assignment/I: short oral presentation of one film

## **WEEK 2**

Monday, May 29 NO CLASS (Memorial Day)

Tuesday, May 30

Performing sexual identity

READ: Henry James, *The Beast in the Jungle*

Wednesday, May 31

Performing sexual identity (cont.)

in-class viewing of *The Ballad of the Sad Cafe* (adaptation of Carson McCullers' novel)

Thursday, June 1

Performing sexual identity (cont.)

in-class viewing of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (adaptation of Oscar Wilde's novel)

Friday, June 2

Performing gender identity

READ: Ignatius, "Madame Récamier"

Géza Szócs, "A Meeting on József Square"

Jonathan Swift, "A Beautiful Young Nymph Going to Bed"

## **WEEK 3**

Monday, June 5

Performing gender identity (cont.)

READ: Sándor Hunyady, "Adventure in Uniform"

Kate Chopin, "The Story of an Hour"

Tuesday, June 6

Performing gender identity (cont.)

READ: David Hwang, *M. Butterfly*

in-class viewing of film adaptation

Wednesday, June 7

Performing gender and sexual identities in popular ads  
Research assignment/II: bring and discuss one advertisement

Thursday, June 8

Performing racial identity  
READ: Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find"

Friday, June 9

Performing racial identity (cont.)  
READ: William Faulkner, "A Rose for Emily"

#### **WEEK 4**

Monday, June 12

Passing as social performance  
in-class viewing of film *Suture*

Tuesday, June 13

Passing as social performance (cont.)  
READ: James Weldon Johnson's *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*

Wednesday, June 14

Passing as social performance (cont.)  
in-class viewing of *The Human Stain* (Philip Roth's novel)

Thursday, June 15

Discursive constructions of non-human identities  
READ: D.H. Lawrence, *The Fox*

Friday, June 16

Discursive constructions of non-human identities (cont.)  
READ: Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*

Monday, June 19

Wrapping up  
Submit research paper

Course requirements:

Grades shall be based on

- (i) class participation,
- (ii) two short oral presentations, and
- (iii) a short research paper.

Students are expected to do the assigned readings (max. 2hrs/day) for each class, and creatively participate in the discussions. Also, you are required to give two oral presentations of 5-10 minutes each (May 26, June 7). The deadline of the ca. 8 page paper is 10 a.m. Monday, June 19. You can either expand your oral presentations in the paper or discuss other topics dealt with in class.

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**COURSE PACKET**

1. *The Declaration of Independence*
2. *Seneca Falls Declaration*
3. Mark Twain, *The Mysterious Stranger*
4. Ambrose Bierce, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"
5. Henry James, *The Beast in the Jungle*
6. Ignotus, "Madame Récamier"
7. Géza Szöcs, "A Meeting on József Square"
8. Jonathan Swift, "A Beautiful Young Nymph Going to Bed"
9. Sándor Hunyady, "Adventure in Uniform"
10. Kate Chopin, "The Story of an Hour"
11. David Hwang, *M. Butterfly*
12. Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find"
13. William Faulkner, "A Rose for Emily"
14. James Weldon Johnson's *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*
15. D.H. Lawrence, *The Fox*
16. Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*