

CMST 7943: PERFORMANCE AND CULTURE

Spring 2014 Mon 3:30-6:30pm; 153 Coates Hall

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Office Hours: M 2:00-3:00 pm or by appointment

DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES:

“Culture enunciates itself in performance.” -Elin Diamond

Perhaps this is why performance—as ritual, play, process, and intercultural encounter—has long been a privileged object of study for anthropologists. Performance is both a practice and a site where cultural norms as values are maintained, reproduced, and challenged. The politics of performance emerges out of the contingencies and possibilities that arise when and where a particular performance comes up against the cultural conventions framing our interpretations of that event. In that “risky and dangerous negotiation between a doing and a thing done... we have access to cultural meanings and critique” (Diamond 5).

Throughout the semester, we’ll be concerned with issues related to two main themes: (1) *the politics of performance*, and (2) *the problematic of cultural studies*. The politics of performance refers to the interventionist and utopian possibilities of performance to rework the *as-is* into *what if*. Performance provides a means for contesting and reimagining the conditions of possibility under which we live, love, and labor. In this respect, performance holds promise for those concerned with the politics of intellectual work—a problematic articulated most forcefully by Cultural Studies practitioners. According to Lawrence Grossberg, “Cultural Studies is concerned with the role of cultural practices in the construction of the contexts of human life as milieus of power” (257). Consequently, it uses theory to “enable people to act more strategically in ways that change their context for the better” (261).

As a field that specializes in the way people act, performance studies is uniquely poised to offer theoretical insights and methodological tools useful to people wishing to “change their context for the better.” In this seminar, we will concentrate on performance as a subject of cultural research by reviewing the major approaches and sample case studies, and by exploring methodological questions and analytical techniques.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Bial, *The Performance Studies Reader* 2nd Edition Rutledge 2007 978-0415772754 (Amazon \$39.00 used; \$24.00 Rental)

Soyini Madison and Judith Hamera, *The Sage Handbook of Performance Studies* Sage 2005 2007 978-0761929314 (Amazon \$99.00 Used; \$52.00 Rental)

Plus ONE of the following (or equivalent book length performance studies research published since 2005) each seminar participant must choose a DIFFERENT text to report on and share in our ongoing conversation. First come/ First serve.

Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire* 978-0822331230

Davis, *The Cambridge Companion to Performance Studies* 978-0521696265

Sayre, *The Object of Performance* 978-0226735580

Schneider, *Performing Remains* 978-0415404426

Phelan, *Unmarked* 978-0415068222

Jackson, Social Works 000-0415486017

Dolan, Utopia in Performance 978-0472069071

J. McKenzie, *Perform or Else: From Discipline to Performance*

Kershaw, B. *The Politics of Performance* (Cambridge 2008) ISBN 9780521696265

Moten, F *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minnesota, 2003)

9780816641000

Muzoz JE. *Disidentification: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (Minneapolis:

Minnesota, 1999) 9780816630158

Schechner and Appel *By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual* ISBN-13: 978-0521339155

T. Davis, *Stages of Emergency* Hall, *The Transparent Traveler*, "Introduction: Rethinking

Asymmetrical Transparency: Risk Management, the Aesthetics of Transparency, and the Global

Politics of Mobility"

ASSIGNMENTS/RESPONSIBILITIES:

Assignment	Description	Points
Participation	I expect you to come to class, do your reading, participate in discussions, and be a regularly contributing member of our scholarly community. If you are curious about how you are doing in the class, please come see me during office hours.	100
Reading Responses	Prompts are meant to guide your reading and help you prepare for seminar each week. You are expected to write 1 or 2 pages (typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. font). Bring your work to class each week and be prepared to discuss your response with your classmates. You will be graded on the thoughtfulness with which you engage theory, the succinctness with which you can summarize, and your ability to connect readings with our ongoing class discussions.	100
Mini Performances	Most weeks you will be asked to stage 30 second- 1 minute performance that will help spark discussion. You will be graded on the energy and commitment with which you execute your performances. Performance assignments will be announced in class each week for the following week.	100
Leading Discussion L*	Once during the semester you will lead a discussion of the readings. You will be graded on your knowledge of the content, your organization of ideas, your ability to guide discussion while giving space for differing points of view, and your ability to connect the discussion to our ongoing conversation. (We will draw numbers the first day of class. See L* column on schedule for your assigned day)	100
Dramaturgy D*	One week during the semester you will serve as "dramaturg" for the weeks readings. It will be your responsibility to engage substantively with at least 2 different theories or methods cited in the week's readings (e.g. read the full text of some of the cited theories or related works by the author of the text or full text for the short excerpts in the Bial reader) and be prepared to supplement our discussion, when appropriate, with knowledge gained from this more in-depth engagement. (We will draw numbers the first day of class. See D* column on schedule for your assigned day)	100

Assignment	Description	Points
Book Review B*	Write a 500-1000 word review of a scholarly book in performance studies (see list above) that connects the reading to course themes. Prepare a 5-10 minute report to read in class on the day you are assigned. Your review should be consistent in form and content with book reviews in Text and Performance Quarterly or similar Performance Studies Journals (We will draw numbers the first day of class. See B* column on schedule for your assigned day)	100
Final Project Proposal	Write a 1-2 page description of what you plan to do for your final project. These will be evaluated on the basis of cogency (sound argumentation), completeness (of thought and assignment), and clarity (grammatical, stylistic, organizational, and typographical). Any notes and/or references should be prepared in accordance with MLA or Chicago style. You have two choices for your final project. A long performance and a short paper or a longer paper and a shorter performance: Scholarship AS Performance or Scholarship ABOUT Performance EITHER	100
Final Performance SCHOLARS HIPAS PERFORMANCE	Compose and stage an 10-15 minute fully memorized and committed original performance that either a) interrogates some aspect of academic knowledge production through performance or b) presents some academically relevant knowledge that is better transmitted in performance than through the written word alone. Your performance must cite at least 3 course readings in a meaningful way. he performance should be considered a culmination of the course, especially as it extends academic work (research, writing) into the realm of <u>praxis</u> or ethical action.	250
Artist Statement	Include a 2 page paper that details your artistic choices and grounds them in course theory. It is important that is paper makes clear why you have chosen to present your scholarship in this form rather than as a traditional monograph. They will be evaluated on the basis of cogency (sound argumentation), completeness (of thought and assignment), and clarity (grammatical, stylistic, organizational, and typographical). Any notes and/or references should be prepared in accordance with MLA or Chicago style.	50
OR		

Assignment	Description	Points
Final Paper SCOLARSHIP ABOUT PERFORMANCE	<p>Your major written project for this course is to prepare an analysis of a specific cultural performance, public event, social rite, or performance practice. The central aims of the paper are, first, to elucidate the theatrical underpinnings, the dramaturgical/dramatistic features, or the performance elements in whatever event you choose to study; and, second, to develop a reasoned interpretation of how the theatrical nature of the event and/or the experiential aspects of the performance affect(s) its cultural meaning, form, or function. Finally, your analysis should draw upon one or more of the theoretical approaches that we will be discussing.</p> <p>The choice of topics is quite broad. Your analysis could be based on participant observation of some (performance) event you will attend or have attended. Some examples: Mardi Gras, political spectacle, courtroom trial, wedding, hospital scene, medical treatment, TV news, initiation or graduation ceremony, religious services, legislative session, press conference, shopping/mall-ing, funeral, dinner party/social gathering, family reunion, and so on. Or you might focus on the kind of "theatre" that goes on within a specific group or setting: gang, religious group, sorority/fraternity, labor union, business establishment, restaurant, bar, educational institution, museum, amusement park, the French Quarter. Or you might do a historical study, if you are so inclined: the Boston Tea Party, the Rosenberg trial and execution, a Vietnam War demonstration, the Haymarket riot, etc.</p> <p>The paper should be approx. 10 pp. in length (typed, double-space), plus appropriate end matter (notes, reference list, photos, diagrams, etc.).</p> <p>They will be evaluated on the basis of cogency (sound argumentation), completeness (of thought and assignment), and clarity (grammatical, stylistic, organizational, and typographical). Any notes and/or references should be prepared in accordance with MLA or Chicago style.</p>	250
Conference Presentation	Present a brief (7 minutes or so) oral report on your analysis consistent with what you might do for an academic conference. You may choose to do your presentation in any form you wish, but you must be responsible for the form that you choose. (e.g. if you follow NCA conventions and read from a manuscript that performance choice is not a "default" it is one that you need to be responsible for and "own" in the moment of performance.	50
TOTAL POINTS		1000

GRADING SCALE

A + 98-100%	A 93-97.99%	A- 90-92.99%
B + 88-89.99%	B 83-87.99%	B- 80-82.99%
C + 78-79.99%	C 73-77.99%	C 70-72.99%
D + 68-69.99%	D 63-67.99%	D 60-62.99%
F 0%-59.99%		

Grading is a complex form of communication. Please review the following page to help you interpret your grades:

EXPECTATIONS:

Grade	What it means	How to earn it
A	Excellent Exceeds expectations in multiple ways, is creative, intelligent, committed and prepared.	Make the performance/paper your own. An A performance is fully embodied, committed, full of energy, and it leaves the audience seeing the world just a little bit differently than they did before they encountered it. An A paper is thoughtful, well organized, and considers counter arguments. It builds an idea that leaves the reader seeing the world just a bit differently than she or he did before reading the paper.
B	Very Good Demonstrates work beyond the expected level of competence and preparation	Thoroughly cover everything the assignment asks you to do as competently as possible. Dot your i's, cross your t's. Make sure that you hit every element of the performance or paper assignment guideline and that you clearly demonstrate your understanding of the concepts and ability in the skills asked for. Make sure to point your reader/audience in the right direction every step of the way so that they have a good idea where you are taking them and how all the pieces fit together.
C	Satisfactory Fulfills requirements with average competence and preparation.	Address almost everything on the assignment guidelines. Make sure that you have a working knowledge of the concepts and/or skills involved. In performance: Be memorized. Rehearse enough that you can get through the piece without blanking. Hit every single thing on the assignment list in at least a minimal way. Make at least a couple of strong committed choices. In writing: basically cover the idea asked for. Proofread for errors.
D	Needs Improvement Falls short of several criteria and/or presents major deviation from assignment.	Make an attempt to fulfill the assignment, but do your work at the last minute when you don't have enough time to cover everything the assignment asks for. Don't proofread. Don't rehearse (or if you do, make sure to do it alone and not with someone to watch and give you feedback). In performance: Have a general idea of what you want to do, but make weak choices and don't commit to them. In Writing: Have a general idea of what you want to say, but make sure that your writing meanders and leaves the reader unsure what you are saying.
F	Failing/Unsatisfactory Does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment.	Do nothing at all or do work that does not meet the minimum requirements for the assignment.

The following is a list of what I expect from students in my courses. They are policies based on years of experience in the classroom. I believe that they reflect my commitment to creating an equitable, engaging, and safe learning environment for all students. If you have questions about any of these policies please see me within the first two weeks of the course so that we can discuss them in greater detail.

Cultivate a positive attitude: Embrace this class or drop it. I want us all to have fun and get as much as we can out of our time together. I try and make my courses engaging and avoid "busy work." For your own (and your classmates') mental health, make it the best experience you can or

find another course that better meets your needs. If you choose to stay I expect that you will engage the class in a mature way, demonstrate commitment to the learning goals, contribute your thoughts and insights, ask questions, work hard, and challenge yourselves.

Engage with respect: This is a highly participatory course in which you will learn collectively (together and from each other) and kinesthetically (with your whole body, not just your mind). Performance requires that we take risks. Therefore, this course requires an ethical commitment to approach one another with care and respect so that we can collectively create a safe and supportive learning environment. Provide constructive comments for your fellow classmates. Respect diversity and each other. Challenging ideas is encouraged. Challenging people is not.

Be on time: Being late will hurt your ability to learn and is disrespectful to everyone else's time. If you are late for some reason beyond your control, make sure not to interrupt anything as you come in (especially not someone else's performance).

Use technology appropriately: If some piece of technology is helping you to learn and not distracting your classmates you are welcome to use it. Monitor yourself to make sure that your ipad/iphone/laptop/ kindle/ thingamajig is not getting in the way of your or someone else's ability to learn. Unless you NEED it to help you learn what you need to learn for THIS class RIGHT NOW, turn it off.

Manage your time: Success in a three-unit college course is based on the expectation that students will spend, on average, three hours per week in class and **6 hours per week outside of class** reading, writing, preparing, studying, rehearsing, discussing and otherwise engaging with course materials. If you find that you are spending significantly more time than this on the course, please come and see me as early as possible to discuss better study strategies. If you choose to spend significantly less time than this on the course, please adjust your expectations for your final grade accordingly.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and Rehabilitation Act of 1973: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letter, please meet with me at some point during the first two weeks of class to discuss the provisions of those accommodations. See LSU PS-26 for details.

Do not ask for special deals: In order to maintain a fair and equitable learning environment all students must take the same course. Any opportunities to earn points, or retake or make-up or take late quizzes and assignments must be available to all students in the class (see LSU PS-44). Adding extra credit and other accommodations (other than those specified above) adds

significantly to my workload and limits my ability to teach the class as designed. It is unfair to other students for me to take into account whether or not the grade you earn will prevent you from graduating, maintaining eligibility for sports or other activities, getting financial aide, becoming disqualified, etc.

Take Responsibility: Please remember that your actions and decisions have consequences. This isn't personal. I don't grade your life choices, I grade you as I grade everyone else, as fairly as possible within the confines of the course.

Do not plagiarize: unless you put something in quotation marks and cite where you got it from I will assume that you are presenting all work you turn in for this course as your own original work. If you try to pass off work done by others as if it is your own work this is grounds for serious repercussions. I will report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the office of Student Advocacy and Accountability. For more details see saa.lsu.edu/plagiarism/html.

Discuss grades respectfully: My primary motivation is to help you meet the course learning objectives. I understand that it can be very disappointing to not receive the grade that you desire or feel you deserve. I do not want such disappointment to inhibit your learning. I also know that I do, sometimes make mistakes. Accordingly, I am happy to discuss your grades with you. Please come to see me in person after you've had at least 24 hours to consider your response but within two weeks of the grade posting to discuss your grade on any assignment. If you believe you deserve a higher grade than you have received please bring a written statement with you that explains why you think your work on a given assignment is deserving of a higher grade based on the criteria above (e.g. if you believe you deserve an "A" be prepared to help me see how your paper "exceeds expectations in multiple ways").

Turn in your work when it is due: No late papers. No exceptions. Know when assignments are due and plan ahead. I will NOT extend the deadline for written work for any reason. All papers are turned in to Moodle in electronic form with deadlines announced significantly in advance. In the rare event that Moodle is down during the time frame that the paper is due I will accept a paper copy of the assignment (during the next class period after the due date ONLY) as a temporary stand in until you can upload the paper online. Fried hard drives and the like are no excuse. I expect that you have a redundant back up system for your files (e.g. save them to more than one of the following: Google docs, on your hard drive, in a dropbox, on a flash drive, e-mail it to yourself). I expect that you will plan ahead and have the bulk of your paper done the day before it is due and use those last few hours to proofread and copy edit. That way if something does arise at the last minute you will still have something to turn in for the bulk of the points. You are strongly encouraged to upload early drafts of your major assignments early and then replace them with a more complete versions later. If you turn in a partial assignment by the time the assignment is due I *may* give you (and all other students) the opportunity to revise the paper for

additional points, but I will NOT extend the deadline for written work for any student for any reason.

Be present for in-class exams: As a general policy, I do not give make-up tests. If a make-up is necessary because of an extenuating circumstance, it will be in essay format.

Plan to perform on your assigned dates: There will be NO make-ups for any in class quizzes or performances worth less than 5% of your final grade. In rare circumstances (e.g. university excused absence, communicable illnesses, earthquakes, death in the immediate family), I may offer you the opportunity to reschedule a **major** performance or in class presentation if doing so does not disrupt the schedule for the rest of the class but my priority will always be to provide the best learning opportunity for the entire class, even if doing so inconveniences you personally. If such a situation arises please let me know as soon as possible so that I can make appropriate modifications to the schedule. (HINT: If you know you will be missing class your best bet in preserving both your own sanity and the integrity of the course schedule is to find another student who is presenting on a different day who is willing to switch with you well ahead of time.)

Remember it is your responsibility to be at all class sessions: PS-22 “Student Absence from Class” defines attendance as “the responsibility of the student” and an expectation that if unfulfilled requires the student to not only contact the professor beforehand (if applicable) but also to “[compensate] for what may have been missed.” I expect you to come to class. Period. If you do have to miss a meeting because of a "valid reason for absence" (also defined in the policy) such as a communicable illness or death in the immediate family, please recognize that it is **YOUR responsibility** to obtain the day’s notes and announcements both from Moodle and from communication with another student **before** making an appointment to meet with me. I am glad to help you clarify things that you might have trouble with, but I will not re-teach material I already covered in class until you have shown this good faith effort and communicated with me about your absence in an honest, upfront and conciliatory tone (i.e. make it clear you understand that, even when life events are out of your control, course work is your primary responsibility as a student). Any e-mail asking me "what did I miss in class?" that does not follow these guidelines and does not begin with a summary of what you learned from your conversation(s) with your classmate(s) and your consultation of Moodle will not receive a reply.

Beware the end of semester temporary empathy lapse The last few days of the session are stressful for us all. While I will always do my best to help you learn, please keep in mind that I am significantly more able to help you raise your grade early in the semester than later on. ***A lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on mine.***

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE Subject to change as the semester progresses

Date	Topic(s)	Discussion Prompt(s)	Readings from Bial Reader (by chapter number)	Readings from Madsion and Hamera Handbook (By chapter number)	L	D	P
					*	*	*
J 1 8	MLK DAY						
J 2 5	Performance Studies and the Problematic of Cultural Studies		Volume Intro; 41. Conquergood	Volume Intro 19. Madison 20. Conquergood	0	0	0
F 1	Disciplinary Ontology and Institutional Performance ***** DUE: Book Review Selection (first come/ first serve)	Prompt 1: Where do this weeks authors locate performance as an academic field of study? What are the political implications of those locations? How do this week's scholars take up Conquergood's call for Radical Interventions (or not)?	Part 1 Intro 1. Schechner 2. Worthen 4. Jackson 5. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 8. Geertz 11. Phelan 42. Taylor	Part II Intro Merril 5. Jackson 28. Dolan	1	2	9
F 8	MARDI GRAS						
F 1 5	Social Roles	Prompt 2: Summarize Goffman's depiction of social roles as performance. What are the social and political implications of His view? How do other scholars this week challenge and extend that view of social performance?	Part II Intro 7. Goffman 9. Carlson 10 Gabler 30. Harding 34. Marinis	9. Langelier and Peterson 10. Miller and Taylor	3	4	5
F 2 2	Ritual	Prompt 3: Define the term "liminality" as it is used by turner (and cited by others in this week's readings). Is it it primarily a subversive cultural force that challenges cultural norms? Something that ultimately reinforces those norms? Some combination thereof? Please Explain.	All of Part III 3. McKenzie		6	7	8

Date	Topic(s)	Discussion Prompt(s)	Readings from Bial Reader (by chapter number)	Readings from Madsion and Hamera Handbook (By chapter number)	L	D	P
					*	*	*
F 2 9	Play	Prompt 4: Prompt #5: Each author makes the case that play, if not serious, is something that should be taken seriously. Briefly rehearse each author's argument for what Victor Turner has called, "the human seriousness of play." Then describe the Bowman's playful approach to academic writing.	All of Part IV	12. Bowman and Bowman	9	10	11
M 7	Performativity	Prompt #7: What is the difference between performance and performativity? How do theories of performativity challenge Goffman's understanding of subjectivity and social identity?	All of Part V	re-read introduction Part1 Introduction (Pollock) 1. Munoz 4. Hamera	2	3	1
M 1 4	Conspicuously Staged Aesthetic Performance in/as scholarship	This weeks readings ask you to engage with work that is conspicuously made AS performance by those whom the scholars study. What role does such conspicuous performance making play in the politics of performance studies? Many (most?) performance studies programs do not encourage graduate students to make performances like these. What is lost or gained by this?	27. Brecht 28. Grotowski 29. Strasberg 31. Blair PART VII Intro 32 Meyerhold 33 Okpewho 35 Barba 36 Zimmerman	Part III Introduction 13. Edwards 23. Madison	5	6	4
M 2 1	SPRING BREAK						
M 2 8	Intercultural Performance and Otherness *****D UE: FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL	How and why do this week's authors privilege performance in their research method? What are the promises and limitations of performance centered scholarship for understanding Others whom our own culture has taught us to view as radically different than ourselves?	Part VII Intro 37. Turner and Turner	Part V Intro 6. Pollock 21. Goldman 22. Browning	8	9	7

Date	Topic(s)	Discussion Prompt(s)	Readings from Bial Reader (by chapter number)	Readings from Madsion and Hamera Handbook (By chapter number)	L	D	P
					*	*	*
A 4	Power and Resistance	How does a performance centered approach complicate our understanding of power and resistance? Where/how do this week's author's locate dominant power structures and where do they locate agencies that might resist those structures?	6. Bell 38. Bhabha 39 Gomez- Pena 40. Lane	3. McKenzie 2. Schneider Part VI Introduction 24. Cohen-Cruz 25. Johnson 26. Conquergood	11	1	10
A 1 1	Pedagogy in/as Performance	What are the implications of understanding pedagogy as a form of performance? How do this week's readings differ in their understanding of what kind of performances are at play in the classroom?		11. Henderson Part IVIntro 14. Sticky 15. Schutzman 16. Dimitriadis 17. Valentine 18. Denzin	4	5	2
A 1 8	TBA We will use this class to return to readings or concepts with which we are having trouble or that we find particularly productive as a group	Discussion leader and Dramaturge for this week will be responsible for determining which readings we should revisit and let us know with at least one week notice			7	11	3
A 2 5	FINAL PERFORMANCES for ODD NUMBER DRAWS	Discussion leader for this week will lead a discussion about the performances/presentations. Dramaturge for this week can research any 2-3 topics of her choosing NOT covered by others during the semester			10	8	6
M 2	FINAL PERFORMANCES FOR EVEN NUMBER DRAWS *****D UE: FINAL PAPER OR ARTIST STATEMENT						
M 9	FINAL MEETING TBA						

