

190.608 - Influx and Efflux

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Political Science / Anthropology
Johns Hopkins University
Spring 2018, Thursdays 2-4 PM
Mergenthaler 439

Howler and scooper of storms, capricious and dainty sea,
I am integral with you, I too am of one phase and of all phases.

Partaker of influx and efflux I, extoller of hate and conciliation,
Extoller of amies and those that sleep in each others' arms.

I am he attesting sympathy,
(Shall I make my list of things in the house and skip the house
that supports them?)

"Song of Myself"
Walt Whitman

Drawing on political philosophy, ethnography, poetry, and fiction, this course will explore ways of rethinking the "I" of agency and experience beyond the limits of a bounded human subject, in relation to the vicissitudes of atmosphere, the experience of affect and influence, the multiplicity of the body and the processual flow (influx-and-efflux) of things.

Texts. There are eight books that you can purchase for the course (Bloom, Lepselter, Jullien, Solomon, Godfrey-Smith, Alaimo, McLean, Whitman), all available at the Bird in Hand bookstore, 11 E. 33rd Street in Charles Village. The remaining readings will be shared with you.

Requirements. This course is a seminar; attendance at all class sessions is expected, as is active participation in discussion. By the crack of dawn each Thursday, please post to Blackboard a few sentences about the week's reading, to help kick off discussion that afternoon. You will also be asked to write one final paper for the course, 12-15 pp 1.5 spaced: pick an idea, an image, a word, a concept, or a figure of speech that you've encountered in the course, and explore it further by looking closely at two or three of the texts we have read.

Schedule

Introductions	February 1	Walt Whitman, "This Compost" and "Sparkles from the Wheel" in <i>Leaves of Grass</i>
<u>Influence</u>	February 8	Steven Mentz, "Seep," in <i>Veer Ecologies</i> Harold Bloom, <i>The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry</i>
	February 15	Susan Lepselter, <i>The Resonance of Unseen Things: Poetics</i> ,

		<i>Power, Captivity and UFOs in the American Uncanny</i>
<u>Metabolism</u>	February 22	Francois Jullien, <i>Vital Nourishment: Departing from Happiness</i>
	March 1	Harris Solomon, <i>Metabolic Living: Food, Fat, and the Absorption of Illness in India</i>
<u>Sensation</u>	March 8	Roger Caillois, “Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia” and “The Praying Mantis: From Biology to Psychoanalysis” Hugh Raffles, <i>Insectopedia</i> , selections
	March 15	Peter Godfrey-Smith, <i>Other Minds: The Octopus, The Sea, and the Deep Origins of Consciousness</i>
<u>Exposure</u>	March 27 [note date]	Stacy Alaimo, <i>Exposed: Environmental Politics and Pleasures in Posthuman Times</i>
	April 5	James Miller, <i>China’s Green Religion: Daoism and the Quest for a Sustainable Future</i> , selections
<u>Poeisis</u>	April 12	Henry Thoreau, <i>A Year in Thoreau’s Journal: 1851</i> , selections, and “Spring” in <i>Walden</i> Jane Bennett, “Thoreau and Natural Influence” (draft)
	April 19	Stuart McLean, <i>Fictionalizing Anthropology: Encounters and Fabulations at the Edges of the Human</i>
<u>Contagion</u>	April 26	Jean Raspail, <i>The Camp of the Saints</i> , selections Julia Hahn, “‘Camp of the Saints’ Seen Mirrored in Pope’s Message,” <i>www.breitbart.com</i> Anand Pandian, “The Wall, and Other Walls” (draft)
	May 3	Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself” and “Passage to India” from <i>Leaves of Grass</i> Jane Bennett, “Whitman’s Sympathies,” <i>Political Research Quarterly</i> Anand Pandian, “‘Let the Water for the Paddy Also Irrigate the Grass’: On the Sympathies of an Aqueous Self,” in <i>Crooked Stalks: Cultivating Virtue in South India</i>