

Monsters, Orphans, Robots

115

ETHN studies

Professor K. Wayne Yang

Lecture: Wednesdays 5-7:50pm Peterson 103

Office Hours: Wednesdays 8-9:30p at Muir Woods Cafe

Thursdays 9:30-11a at Sixth College Academic Programs, PCYNH 257

This course considers dark agencies, queer threats, and how they seep through cracks in containers meant to disable them. This class will be writing intensive with an artistic production component. It's a very theoretically intense course. Recommended Prerequisite: ethn 100

I created *Monsters, Orphans, Robots* in order to (1) develop our analyses about race, gender, sexuality, nation, colonialism etc. without taking accepted identity categories as the starting point; and to (2) conceptualize agency in the belly of deep structures, through the idea of the queer gear in machines. Importantly, we are examining these figures of monsters, orphans and robots *in assemblage*, that is, in arrangements and relations of power. In this way, these figures are not identities, even though they help describe how race, gender, sexuality, class, nationality, etc. - things we normally think of in terms of identity - come into existence. It should be strangely fun and unsettling.

The theme for this year's Monsters, Orphans, Robots is **visitations**. This class will culminate in a collective endeavor with a collective final, public project. This year we will create our own radio show series called, *The Weather in San Diego*. Ostensibly, *The Weather* is an evening, college radio program with undergraduate radio hosts discussing trends in "the weather", i.e. popular culture, by critiquing a cultural text: a television show, an outfit at the Oscars, a recent hit song. But in actuality the show is about visitations by ghosts, aliens, monsters, and companions from the past, present and future within the geography of the place currently known as UC San Diego. This will require some research into the history, the present, and the futures of UCSD.

Required Text

- **Womack, Craig S. *Drowning in Fire*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001. Novel.**
- All other readings will be available electronically or in class.

Bring readings to class!

- Please bring readings to class: for current and upcoming weeks.
- You are encouraged to bring and use laptops in class.
- I recommend you print and bind all the readings.

Audio equipment and editing software

- [Tascam DR-05 Audio Recorders](#). Sign out for 24 hours at The Media Teaching Lab, MCC 111. Hours are Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Reserve in advance at <http://ucsdmedialab.tumblr.com> and click “Equipment & Room Reservations”.
- [Audacity](#)® is free, open source, cross-platform software for recording and editing sounds.
- Google sites. You will create a website to post and share all your assignments.

Grading

Individual Assignments

- 20% Weekly reading responses and assignments.
- 15% Post+ card research assignment.
- 20% “Somewhere statement” Midterm + Final paper.
- 10% Individual responsibilities for *The Weather* episode
 - Script
 - Voice recordings
 - Editing
 - Attendance and participation in group activities

Group assignments

- 35% The Weather episode.
 - Intro jingle
 - “The weather”. Popular culture discussion
 - Intern on site. With visitations
 - Guest visit to studio
 - End credits
 - Final published episode
 - Advertising campaign

Unless stated otherwise, assignments are always due Tuesday at 7pm.

Attendance & Participation – (up to negative 100%)

This course demands perfect attendance! We only meet 8 times!

I will allow 1 excused class, provided you communicate with me in a timely way and follow up about your absence. If you miss more than 1 class, do not expect to pass the course.

Make up classes. Because there are 2 missed lectures due to holidays, I am requiring 2 film/video screenings outside of class – one off campus and one hosted by your group.

Listening/speaking. Further, in class discussion, I expect democratic participation that involves careful listening as well as speaking thoughtfully. Because everyone participates differently, it is fine if some people speak often, and others speak infrequently. Some people speak up more in small groups, others in large settings. However it is possible to over-participate, dominating the discussion without listening. It is also possible to be risk-averse, and not speak enough out of a sense of insecurity. Both of these will result in a lower participation grade.

Calendar

Below is an approximate sequence of readings and assignments. Please see the course website for the exact due dates and assignments each week. The calendar will be updated weekly.

Week 1 , 9/30. Overview: Monsters, orphans, robots in assemblage

- In class readings:
 - Jaspir Puar, "I'd rather be a cyborg than a goddess"
 - La Paperson, excerpts from "The postcolonial ghetto" and "A ghetto land pedagogy"
- Assigned readings:
 - Julie Burrelle, "Theater in contested lands"
 - Eve Tuck & C. Ree, "A Glossary of Hauntings"
 - Craig Womack, ch 1 – 3, *Drowning in fire* [Novel]
- Assignments:
 - Theme song lyrics for *The Weather*
 - Create Google site account and follow: [kwayne.tumblr.com](https://www.tumblr.com/kwayne)
 - Register at [Media Lab](#)
 - Download [Audacity](#)
 - "A list of statements" reading response #1
 - Post+ Card, Place Research #1
 - Order the novel, *Drowning in Fire*

Week 2, 10/7 Performance, leakings, and hauntings

- In class readings:
 - Julie Burrelle, "Theater in contested lands"
 - Eve Tuck & C. Ree, "A Glossary of Hauntings"
 - Craig Womack, *Drowning in fire* [Novel]
- Assigned Readings:
 - Craig Womack, *Drowning in fire* [Novel]
- Assignments:
 - Post+ Card, Place Research #2
 - "A list of statements" reading response #2 (visitation sounds)
 - Reserve Audio recorders for next Wed (1 per every 2 groups)

Week 3, 10/14 Monstrous (M)others

- In class readings:
 - Avery Gordon, excerpts from *Ghostly Matters*
 - Bliss C. Lim, excerpts from "The Politics of Horror"
 - Craig Womack, *Drowning in fire* [Novel]
- Assigned Readings:
 - Kit Myers, "Creating Unequal Families"
- Assignments:
 - Post+ Card, Place Research, #3 (remix)
 - "A list of statements" reading response #3
 - Meet with groups, record theme song, assign roles.
 - Episode: Outline script /concept according to your role.

Week 4, 10/21 Orphan monsters and orphan robots

- In class readings:
 - Kit Myers, "Creating Unequal Families"
 - *Whore* [Video by Suboh Suboh]
 - *Tightrope* [Lyrics and Music Video performed by Janelle Monáe]
 - *Many moons* [Lyrics and Music Video performed by Janelle Monáe]
 - Monsters, Orphans, Robots, *A Sketchbook of Nevermades*
- Assigned Readings:
 - Angela Morrill et al, "Beyond Dispossession, Or Surviving It"
- Assignments:
 - "A list of statements" reading response #4
 - Episode: Write script and begin recording by role.

Week 5, 10/28

- In class readings:
 - At Least We Look Good
 - Angela Morrill et al, "Beyond Dispossession, Or Surviving It"
- Assigned Readings:
 - Eve Tuck, "Breaking up with Deleuze"
 - K. Wayne Yang, *A third university is possible*
- Assignments:
 - "A list of statements" reading response #5
 - Episode: Complete unedited recordings of *The Weather* episode by role.

Week 6, 11/4 Visitations

- In class readings:
 - Eve Tuck, "Breaking up with Deleuze"
 - Robot head assembly [Deleted Scene from At least we look good]
 - Preview and crit recordings of *The Weather*
- Assigned Readings:
 - K. Wayne Yang, *A third university is possible*
- Assignments:
 - "Somewhere Statement". Midterm draft due.
 - Episode: Edit recordings of *The Weather* episode by role.

Week 7, 11/11 Veterans Day Holiday

Make up class. San Diego Film festival options: TBA

- Assignments:
 - Edit final episode

Week 8, 11/18

- In class readings:
 - Preview and crit episodes of *The Weather*
- Assignments:
 - Advertise and promote *The Weather*
 - Publish final episode

Week 9, 11/25 No lecture

Week 10, 12/2 "Final". KSDT recording/performance TBD.

References for further study.

Alphabetical order by medium. No particular order.

Apologies for the incomplete bibliographic information.

Film and video

- At least we look good. 2013. Monsters Orphans Robots
- Beloved. 1998. Harpo Films.
- Blade Runner. 1982. Ridley Scott
- Dark Water. 2002. Hideo Nakata
- I am a Ghost. 2012. H.P. Mendoza
- Many moons. 2010. [Lyrics and Music Video performed by Janelle Monáe]
- Onibaba. 1964. Kaneto Shindo
- Paradise Now. 2006. Director: Hany Abu-Assad. FVL DV 3430-1
- Rabbit Proof Fence. 2002. Phillip Noyce
- Rhymes for young ghouls. 2014. Jeff Barnaby
- Ringu. 1998. Hideo Nakata
- Robot head assembly. 2013. [Deleted Scene by Monsters, Orphans, Robots]
- Sleep Dealer. 2008. Alex Rivera
- The Pig's Tail. 1997. Leah Gordon
- The Shining. 1969. Stanley Kubrick
- The Shining. 1990. Director: Stanley Kubrick. FVL DV 2241-1
- Tightrope. 2010. [Lyrics and Music Video performed by Janelle Monáe]
- Whore [Video by Suboh Suboh]

Readings

- Myers, Kit. "Creating (Un)equal Families in the Child Citizenship Act".
- Harney, Stefano and Moten, Fred. 2013. The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study.
- Burelle, Julie. 2015. "Theatre in Contested Lands: Repatriating Indigenous Remains"
- Puar, Jasbir. 2012 "'I Would Rather Be a Cyborg Than a Goddess': Becoming-Intersectional in Assemblage Theory"
- Paperson, La. 2010. "The Postcolonial Ghetto: Seeing Her Shape and His Hand"
- Paperson, La. 2014. "A Ghetto Land Pedagogy: An Antidote for Settler Environmentalism"
- Tuck, Eve & Ree, C. 2013. "A glossary of haunting."
- Monsters, Orphans, Robots. 2012. A glossary of haunting.
- Menez, Herminia. 1996. "The viscera sucker and the politics of gender". *Explorations in Philippine Folklore*, pp.86-94. Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1996.
- Lim, Bliss C. 1997. "The Politics of Horror: the Aswang in Film." *Asian Cinema*. 9.1 (1997): 81-98.
- Spillers, Hortense J. 1987. "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: an American Grammar Book." *Diacritics: a Review of Contemporary Criticism*. 17.2: 65-81.

- Moraga, Cherrie. 2000. "Looking for the Insatiable Woman" in *Loving in the War Years. Lo que nunca pasó por sus labios*, Cambridge, MA: South End Press. Reprinted in LOLA Press, retrieved from http://www.lolapress.org/elec2/artenglish/mora_e.htm 9-25-2010.
- Haraway, Donna J. 1991. "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, pp.149-181. New York: Routledge.
- Tuck, Eve. 2010. "Breaking up with Deleuze: desire and valuing the irreconcilable"
- Albahri, J.I. 2014. "Hands clasped behind her back: Palestinian waiting on theories of change"
- Yang, K. Wayne. (draft manuscript). A third university is possible.
- Pate, Soojin. 2014. From Orphan to Adoptee: U.S. Empire and Genealogies of Korean Adoption.
- Monsters, Orphans, Robots. 2013. A Sketchbook of Nevermades.
- Monsters, Orphans, Robots. 2014. MOR for your desire.

Audio

- Métis In Space Season 2 Episode 3 - Futurama "Where the Buggalo Roam". March 23, 2015. Indian and Cowboy. <http://www.podcastchart.com/podcasts/metis-in-space/episodes/metis-in-space-s-2-ep-3-futurama-where-the-buggalo-roam>
- The Read – Serena and the Hotline Bling. August 27, 2015. Loud Speakers Network. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-zrLBdNtqpE>
- Welcome to Night Vale, "55 - The University of What It Is". October 1, 2014. Night Vale Presents. [5520-20The20University20of20What20It20Is.mp3](http://www.nightvalepodcast.com/55-The-University-of-What-It-Is.mp3)