

## ***“...and the cradle will rock”***

U.C. Irvine  
Visual/Culture, Section-C, spring 2001  
Sergio Munoz-Sarmiento  
Monday and Wednesday: 1-3:20pm, 6-8:20pm  
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Pertinent to our departure last quarter, we will continue our dismantling of preconceived notions and beliefs by investigating and deconstructing one of the “foundations” of our social fabric...the social contract. Gilles Deleuze has noted that we are all familiar with societies’ three great instruments of codification (legislation): law, contracts, and institutions. Thus, we will look at how certain institutions, singular and plural, discursive and material, help to “enplace”, perpetuate and legislate systems of mores, morality. In a word—law. This will be done by taking a critical perspective on architecture, film, literature, and visual art. Concurrently, we will also look at the easily accepted and implicit responsibility of the individual to the social. What is a social contract? Who is responsible? Why, to whom, and when should you be responsible? Is there, or better yet, has there ever been such as thing as “freedom of expression?” Thus, we will primarily focus on individuals and movements that have taken it upon themselves to not only shake the foundations, but cause earthquakes and volcanic eruptions that to this day have left an impressionable impact. We will attempt to tease out differing manners in which “individuals” and groups attempt to usurp, forestall, or undermine law and legislation. To quote Nietzsche: “The good have always been the beginning of the end.”

Necessary to the undertaking of this dilemma, we will need to see and experience more visual material than “written”, thus, it is necessary that you have a certain knowledge and understanding of certain concepts and terms that I have covered in sections “A” and “B”, such as: semiotics, structuralism, Marxism, deconstruction, feminism, ideology, fetish, bourgeoisie, etc.. Although there will only be only one book and a small and compact reader, you will need to read the assigned reading(s) per week. This will be followed by a short one page brief on your part and a mandatory class discussion on the date of the due reading.

\*\*\*\*NOTE: As always, if any class material, be it written, visual, verbal, or any material hereby not listed, is found by any student to be offensive or not to their (your) liking, you have the option to not partake in the class discussion and/or leave the classroom. The student will then need to see the instructor for make-up material.

Thanks to a fellow UCI student, Eric Hess, we now have a web site that you can access that gives you readily understandable and comprehensive information on Semiotics, Structuralism, Deconstruction, and other theoretical concepts.

The web site is: <http://www.medicalrecordshome.com/derridasproject/index.html>

Thanks also to fellow UCI student Khang Hoang, this class will also include a “chat room”, where questions, statements, and comments regarding the readings, covered material, field trips or any pertinent subject matter can be posted and replied to.( I will give this information via a handout)

I have also included a debate that will take place during the 7<sup>th</sup> week of the quarter. You will be divided into two groups, and given a position regarding a pre-selected issue or subject. You will be required to work as a team, and structure and delegate roles so as to strengthen the argument of your team. (More on this via handout)

The class will take the form of readings, films (I’d like to see at least one in an actual theater), field trips, slides, debates, and guest speaker(s), and the most crucial, critique of class projects.

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Most field trips will be during the weekend, so please start planning on this. NOTE: Field trips will be indicated by four asterisks. (\*\*\*\*)

WARNING: This class will require a significant amount of time and energy on your part. Thus, if you cannot invest the required, please opt to take the class at another time or during another quarter. As always, the logic or systematic of the syllabus falls prey to chance and improvisation, thus, we might sidetrack where deemed necessary.

**MANDATORY class materials:**

Class reader, (this you will need to purchase from me for \$12.00 by Wed, April 4<sup>th</sup>)  
Oleanna, by David Mamet (You need to purchase this yourself from Amazon.com or nearby bookstore, approx \$9 dollars)

**We will take field trips to locations and sites such as:**

The Museum of Jurassic Technology  
The Museum of Contemporary Art  
The Geffen Contemporary  
The Norton Collection  
Watts Towers

**Films will include:**

One Flew Over the Cuckoos Nest, by Milos Forman  
Reservoir Dogs, by Quentin Tarantino  
Four Days in September, by Bruno Barretto  
Amores Perros (Love's a Bitch), Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu (to be seen in theater)  
Homicide, by David Mamet  
Thelma and Louise, by Ridley Scott

**Your grade will depend on:**

(1) Class participation (includes entries in chat room); (2) Participation in debate; (3) Weekly briefs on readings; (4) Two class projects

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**WEEK ONE**

**MONDAY: April 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Review syllabus.

Introduction to "the social contract"

**WEDNESDAY: April 4<sup>th</sup>**

View: "One Flew Over the Cuckoos Nest", by Milos Forman

**WEEK TWO**

**MONDAY: April 9<sup>th</sup>**

Discuss: "One Flew Over the Cuckoos Nest". Read for next Monday: "The Final Freedom", by Alan Wolfe; "Social Contract: The Basis of Civil Society", by John Locke; "Why I Am A Destiny", by Friedrich Nietzsche

**WEDNESDAY: April 11<sup>th</sup>**

View: "Thelma and Louise", by Riddley Scott

**WEEK THREE**

**MONDAY: April 16<sup>th</sup>**

Read for next Monday: "Friedrich Nietzsche as Aestheticist", by Allan Megill, "Masculinity, the Rule of Law, and Other Legal Fictions", by Kendall Thomas,

**WEDNESDAY: April 18<sup>th</sup>**

View: "Homicide", by David Mamet

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**WEEK FOUR**

MONDAY: April 23<sup>rd</sup>

Read: "Topic Four. An Ethical Problem", by Alburey Castell

"A New Mexican...", by Lynn Hirschberg, *The New York Times Magazine*

WEDNESDAY: April 25<sup>th</sup>

Discuss: *Oleanna*, by David Mamet, Chess?

\*\*\*\*SUNDAY, April 29<sup>th</sup>:

Film field trip: "Amores Perros", (Love's a Bitch), by Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu

Location to be decided.

**WEEK FIVE**

MONDAY: April 30<sup>th</sup>

Discuss, "Amores Perros (Love's a Bitch)", "Topic Four.." and "A New Mexican".

Read for next Monday: "Museum Matters", by Gyan Prakesh

Begin Critiques (Project #1)

WEDNESDAY: May 2<sup>nd</sup>

Continue critiques

**WEEK SIX**

'Arkitectura'

MONDAY: May 7<sup>th</sup>

"What is going on?", by Richard Patterson, "U.S. Welcomes Calatrava", by David Ebony

"Who's That Peering Out of the Grid?", Herbert Muschamp

"Imaginative Leaps into the Real World", Herbert Muschamp

WEDNESDAY: May 9<sup>th</sup>

Slide lecture: Calatrava, Eisenman, Gehry.

**WEEK SEVEN**

MONDAY: May 14<sup>th</sup>

"Minority Men, Misery, and the Marketplace of Ideas", by Delgado and Stefancic, "Masculinity,

Sexism, and Censorship Law", by Marjorie Heins

WEDNESDAY: May 16<sup>th</sup>

BEGIN DEBATE

**WEEK EIGHT**

MONDAY: May 21<sup>st</sup>

"Scattered Speculations on the Value of Harvey Keitel", by Clint Burnham

WEDNESDAY: May 23<sup>rd</sup>

View: "Reservoir Dogs", by Quentin Tarentino

**WEEK NINE**

MONDAY: May 28<sup>th</sup>

Discuss "Reservoir Dogs" and essay, "Scattered Speculations..."

WEDNESDAY: May 30<sup>th</sup>

View: "Four Days in September", by Bruno Baretto

**WEEK TEN**

MONDAY: June 4<sup>th</sup>

Begin critiques

WEDNESDAY: June 6<sup>th</sup>

Finish critiques

*Debate Problem*

A 27yr old pregnant woman is in a hospital about to give birth. The woman is currently sedated and unconscious. The doctors have concluded that in order for the child to live the mother must die, or, in order for the mother to live the child must die. Additionally, the mother has a terminal illness that doctors have stated will only allow her a maximum of one year to live. Ultimately, who shall live?