

Attention!

This is a representative syllabus. The syllabus for the course you are enrolled in will likely be different.

Please refer to your instructor's syllabus for more information on specific requirements for a given semester.

Studies in Orality and Literacy

NELC 5568

Comparative Studies 5668

Professor

Office Hours:

REQUIRED TEXTS

See below (subject to revision)

Course Materials:

All course materials except one book are available on line through CARMEN. You will need to bring hard copies (print outs) of articles and your notes to class.

REQUIREMENTS

Class Attendance, Discussion and Summaries 40%

Students will be expected to complete readings and prepare a brief, 250-500 word, interpretive typed statement and questions for each assigned reading. These also serve as your introduction to class discussion if you are chosen to be discussion leader. (See Carmen under "Content," "Course Mechanics.") Your statement should set the stage for, and end by raising, your discussion question. Send roughly half the reading responses to me by Sunday night at the latest and half by Wednesday night (except for the first class). You decide which readings to respond to first and which second. Also print out a copy of the statement and question to bring to class. Since active participation in the course is required, no late statements will be accepted.

This seminar is collaborative. Students will actively discuss materials in class, of course, and offer insights into how you or your fellow students might use the course materials for their own research projects. Insights into how new readings tie into issues and concepts raised by previous readings are especially appreciated.

Final Research Paper Draft and Oral Presentation: 20% credit: The last three weeks of class will be taken up with students' presentations of draft versions of their final papers for class discussion. Prepare about 15 minutes' (6 pages double-spaced or equivalent) presentation, with similar time available for discussion.

Final Research Paper: 40% of credit, approximately 20 pages. (More is fine.): Topics to be decided on in conversation with me. The goal is to explore further the now enormous literature concerned with the intersections among orality, literacy and secondary orality in directions to be determined by the student's own interests and needs. The paper could be a review of literature, a comparing and critiquing of materials beyond but informed by the class assignments, or an application of a body of theory derived during this seminar to a case or cases of your choosing.

All work must be completed to receive a passing grade in the course. Please keep copies of all work for your protection. Please also always make a backup copy of any work you turn in.

Grading Scale: Standard OSU

Electronics: Interruptions are distracting to learning. All cellphones and related devices must be turned OFF and stored out of sight during (the) class period. Text messaging during class is unacceptable. Students interested in using a tablet or similar device for note taking must seek permission of the instructor prior to doing so.

Academic Misconduct It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp).

Disability Services Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.”

Class Schedule

[Subject to Revision]

...the question is not of whether, but rather of how the oral and textual are integrated.

Courtney MacNeil

Week One Aug 27

Introduction to Concepts

Reading Due:

(a) Schmandt-Besserat, Denise. “The Earliest Precursor of Writing,” pp. 1-21

(b) “Review of ‘The Singer of Tales’” pp. 301-306 IN *An Ong Reader*.

(c) Coleman, Joyce. “Orality and Literacy” pp. 1-4.

(d) Street, Brian. *Literacy in Theory and Practice*, 1984, pp. x-xi, 1-16

[Two interpretive essays (your choice) uploaded to the Dropbox in Carmen by August 25, 11:30 PM, and the second two by August 26, 11:30 PM—or earlier]

Week Two Sept 3

...the advent of contemporary internet culture has encouraged the recognition that oral and textual need not be viewed from a hierarchical perspective.

Courtney MacNeil

Reading Due:

(a) Ranke, Kurt. “Einfache Formen” pp. 17-31

(b) Street, Brian. *Literacy in Theory and Practice*, 1984, pp. 19-65

(c) Ong, Walter. “Digitization Ancient and Modern” IN *An Ong Reader* pp. 527-548.

Week Three Sept 10

The old model of the Great Divide between orality and literacy has given way in most quarters, pointing toward the accompanying demise of the absolutist dichotomy of performance versus document. . . .

Consequently, text can no longer be separated out as something different by species from the oral tradition it records or draws upon; the question becomes not whether but how performance and document speak to one another.
John Foley

- (a.) Carr, David. "Torah on the Heart: Literary Jewish Textuality within Its Ancient Near Eastern Context" IN *Oral Tradition*, Volume 25, Number 1, March 2010 pp. 17-40.
- (b) Davies, Anna Morpurgo. "Forms of Writing in the Ancient Mediterranean World." IN G. Baumann ed. *The Written Word* 1986 pp. 51-77
- (c) Niditch, Susan. "New Ways of Thinking about Orality and Literacy" Ch. 3 of *Oral World and Written Word* pp. 39-59
- (d) Street, Brian. *Literacy in Theory and Practice* pp. 66-94.

Week Four Sept 17

Ottoman Medieval and Early Modern Manuscript Culture. TBD

- (a) Hirschler, Konrad. "Literacy, Orality, Aurality," pp. 12-17, "Popular Reading Practices" pp. 164-193 plus notes, and "Conclusion" pp. 197-201 IN *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands*. (b) Jaffee, Martin S. "Oral Traditions in the Writing of Rabbinic Oral Torah" 3-32.
- (c) Street, Brian. *Literacy in Theory and Practice* pp.95-125.

Week Five Sept 24

Transgress the Frame

I cannot help feeling...that writing has one grave fault in common with painting; for the creations of the painter stand there true as life, and yet if you ask them a question they maintain a solemn silence. And the same may be said of written words.
Plato/Socrates

- (a) Jakobson, Roman. "Grammatical Parallelism and Its Russian Facet" IN *Language*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (Apr. - Jun., 1966), pp. 399-429
- (b) Coleman, Joyce. "Preface" xi-xiv and "On Beyond Ong" pp. 1-33 in *Public Reading and Reading Public*.

Week Six Oct 1

Local Power

First, there is the problem of history, the need to link series of speech events into historical systems of interrelationship in discourse-centered terms.
Bauman and Briggs

- (a) "What is Meant by Local Literacies?" Brian V. Street, in *Language and Education* 1994
- (b) Gary C. Fouse, pp. 19-24, 83-107, 163-192, 217-225 in *The Story of Papiamentu: A Study in Slavery and Language*.

Week Seven Oct 8

- (a) Ruth Finnegan "Tradition, But What Tradition and for Whom?" pp. 104-124
- (b) Deborah Tannen "The Oral/Literate Continuum in Discourse." IN *Spoken and Written Language* pp. 1-16
- (c) Borland, Katherine. "Spoken to Written Language" IN *Constructing Rhetorical Education* pp. 43-60

Week Eight Oct 15 No CLASS

Canonicity

We have begun to see how work goes into constituting oral genres as something capable of repetition, evaluation, and exegesis—that is, something that can be treated as the object of commentary—by the communities that produce them, and not just by the collector or ethnographer.

Karin Barber

Interpretive Statements due for: Webber "Canonicity and Middle Eastern Folk Literature" in *Edebiyat* pp. 35-48
Bauman, R "Performance" TBD

Week Nine Oct 22

[A sort of magical projection] placed [John Locke's] epistemology outside of the social and historical setting in which it emerged and fashioned it into a powerful historical tool for unifying and reifying the heterogeneous ideologies and practices associated with the people and positions that Locke embraced and opposing these to a reified construction of those embraced by Others—who happened to represent nearly all of English society and most of the rest of the world [women, the poor, merchants, cooks, lovers, the residents of Asia and America and the pre-modern].

Bauman and Briggs

Orality as Counterhegemonic Discourse?

Interpretive Statements Due: Scott, James C. excerpt from "Revolt, Survival, and Repression" IN *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* pp. 231-240 and Ch. 6 ½ "Orality, Writing and Texts" pp. 220-237 IN *The Art of Not Being Governed*.

Upload to Carmen Dropbox Paper Outlines OR Long Abstract plus Preliminary Bibliography.

In Class Updates on Paper Projects

Week Ten Oct. 29 Electronic Literature/Electronic Orality

Writing is pre-eminently the technology of cyborgs, etched surfaces of the late 20th century. Cyborg politics is the struggle for language and the struggle against perfect communication, against the one code that translates all meaning perfectly, the central dogma of phallogocentrism. D. Haraway

Penny, Simon. "Bridging Two Cultures: Towards an Interdisciplinary History of the Artist–Inventor and the Machine–Artwork" pp. 1-18

Hayles, Katherine. "Electronic Literature: what is it?" IN *Electronic Literature: New Horizons for the Literary*. pp. 1-39

Week Eleven Nov 5 Oral Literacy-Visual Orality

Whose Performance is it anyway?

(a) *Salam/Pax*

(b) "'Flippin' the Script' / 'Blowin' Up the Spot': Puttin' Hip-Hop Online in (African) America and South Africa" by Elaine Richardson and Sean Lewis

(c) "surprise, non-sequitur, revolution"

(d) *Sling Shot Hip Hop*

PAPER DRAFTS DUE ON NOVEMBER 9 BY NOON (Upload to Carmen dropbox)

PAPER DRAFT READER RESPONSES FOR FIRST FIVE PAPERS DUE ON NOVEMBER 11 BY 11:30 PM. Insert under Discussions list in Carmen (not yet created)

Week Twelve Nov 12

Student Presentations of Research Papers

PAPER DRAFT READER RESPONSES FOR SECOND FIVE PAPERS DUE ON NOVEMBER 18 BY 11:30 PM. Insert under Discussions list in Carmen (not yet created)

Week Thirteen Nov 19
Student Presentations of Research Papers

Week Fourteen Nov 26 No Class (Thanksgiving)

PAPER DRAFT READER RESPONSES FOR LAST FIVE PAPERS DUE ON DECEMBER 2 BY 11:30 PM. Insert under Discussions list in Carmen (not yet created)

Week Fifteen Dec. 3
Student Presentations of Research Papers

Research Paper Due on Friday, December 11 at midnight