

COMM 750
Communication Contexts:
Seminar in Performance Studies

Instructor: Dr. Kurt Lindemann
Office: Communication 221
Office Hours: MW 3:30-4:30, 6:00-6:30
Phone: (619) 594-4945
E-Mail: klindema@mail.sdsu.edu

Course Texts

Bial, Henry, ed. *The Performance Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
Carlson, Marvin. *Performance: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2004.
Dailey, Sheron J., ed. *The Future of Performance Studies: Visions and Revisions*.
Annandale, VA: National Communication Association, 1998.

Various readings in PDF on our BlackBoard site

Course Description

Performance Studies is an interdisciplinary scholarly practice that critically examines the embodiment of written and spoken human communication in a variety of social and cultural contexts and practices, including ritual, play, narrative, storytelling, folklore, and popular media. Performance studies scholars employ multiple methods—primarily ethnography, critical textual analysis, and performance—to study the ways humans embody and enact their identities and relationships in everyday life.

In this course, you will become familiar with a broad range of conceptual perspectives and scholarly applications of performance studies through reading, writing, and performing original writing and research. While performing your writing and research in this class, you will not be expected to be good actors but rather to display appropriate and competent verbal and nonverbal communication choices. In this way, you will come to know your research in a way different from only writing a research or response paper. In other words, this class is not about “acting.” Rather, it is about recognizing the way we are all performers in our everyday lives and the ways performance scholarship pedagogically allows us insight into human communication.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Identify intersections among performance studies and your own research interests
2. Distinguish major theoretical threads and research trends in performance studies
3. Enact research that employs theories and practices germane to performance studies
4. Apply performance studies concepts in original research projects
5. Evaluate performance studies research in the communication discipline

Assignments

In this class, you will complete two major assignments: a midterm paper (100 points) and a final paper (150 points, abstract 25 points, references page 25 points), both original research

projects. Additionally, you will be required to write and “perform” (write broadly) responses to Units 1, 2, 3, 4 and your choice of Unit 5, 6, or 7 of our readings (5 responses total, 20 points each, 100 points total), lead class discussion one week (25 points), and attend and critically respond to one outside performance event (50 points), which may be a staged performance, poetry slam, cultural performance, protest or another such event approved by me. You will also receive up to 25 points for participation in class discussions.

By “original research,” I mean research generated and written by you on topics developed by you. Given the focus of this class, this research will likely be rhetorical, textual-analytical, (auto)ethnographic, and/or performative in nature, though I am open to other ideas and proposals. The class readings are structured to stimulate your thinking about potential topics, projects, and research. So, while some students may be new to performance studies, no one should be at a loss for paper ideas. I expect the final papers to be more substantial in both length and content, with the midterm paper being a shorter piece likely be narrative, autoethnographic, or performative in nature. I encourage you to use your unit responses as building blocks for your papers.

MLA or APA style?

As you read this syllabus, you will notice both MLA-style citations and APA-style citations. This is because while the NCA and WSCA Performance Studies Divisions require MLA citation style (as do the major publications in performance studies), other performance studies-friendly journals (like *Qualitative Inquiry*, *Southern Journal of Communication*, and *Western Journal of Communication* among others) require APA-style citations. I do not have a preference for citation style as long as you write in the required style of your target publication or conference. Make it easy on yourself and decide early on where and to what division you might submit your papers to (if any), then write in that citation style.

Attendance and Participation

Obviously, attendance is important in any graduate seminar. Often, the thoughts and ideas you share with classmates leads to paper topics, paper angles, and insight into ongoing research projects. In a class like this, attendance is all the more important because performance requires embodiment, and embodiment requires a body in the classroom! While points will be given for participation, I hope to be able to award full points to everyone for insightful discussion and participation.

Disability Accommodations

If you need additional accommodations, you must first contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473, TDD/TTY (619) 594-2929, and provide the appropriate paperwork to me before I can provide any accommodations.

Sensitive Subject Matter

We will be experiencing work that deals with issues of a potentially sensitive nature. Some of our readings will frankly address race, ethnicity, health, and sexuality among other topics. While you are not required to self-disclose in assignments or discussion information with which you are uncomfortable, I do expect you read and discuss in class the articles and chapters assigned. If you anticipate problems completing the readings or participating in

class discussions, please talk to me well in advance. A good grade in this class is not dependent on what you disclose in your writings and performance, though self-reflexivity is a necessary and important characteristic of performance studies research. So, please take care to be aware of what topics about which you are comfortable writing.

Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. Students caught plagiarizing, defined as misrepresenting another's work as one's own through omission, evasiveness, and/or improper citation, may receive an F on the assignment and in the class. Common yet no less egregious plagiarism includes using verbatim other authors' summaries of research and then citing the primary source rather than citing the author who summarizes that primary source. For more information on the university's policy on plagiarism, see <http://coursecat.sdsu.edu/catalog/UP.pdf>.

Teaching Style

I prefer structured discussion to lectures, but I understand that sometimes it may be necessary for the instructor to "break it down." For the most part, I will expect class discussion to be sustained by you, your classmates, and the discussion leader for that day. I find activities to be useful ways to embody and enact learning, and a seminar in performance studies lends itself perfectly to such an approach. So, expect to be *doing* things in class in addition to talking about the readings.

Evaluation and Assessment

Your final grade will be determined according to the following grading scale:

465-500=A
450-464=A-
435-449=B+
415-434=B
400-414=B-
385-399=C+
365-384=C
350-364=C-

Some grading rubrics are included with this syllabus, and more detailed assignment descriptions and rubric will be posted on BlackBoard well in advance of the assignment due dates.

COMM 750 Tentative Schedule

The following is a tentative schedule for class. The pace of class and the readings may change based upon the progress of the class as a whole. For the purposes of this schedule, *C* stands for the Carlson text, *B* represents the Bial-edited text, *D* stands for the Dailey-edited text, and the page numbers are for those particular chapters or entries listed herein. If no letter appears next to a name or series of names, the reading is an article (a PDF on our BlackBoard site). When a reading and/or assignment appears on a particular date, you should have the reading and/or assignment done *by that date*.

Week	Topic	Readings and Assignments Due
Week One		
January 21	<i>Martin Luther King Day—no class</i>	You might want to get a head start on the readings for the next few weeks ↓
Week Two		
Unit One: Introductions		
January 28	What is Performance/Studies?	Jackson (pp. 32-42), Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (43-56), Goffman (57-63) (B); and Introduction (C)
Week Three		
Unit One continued		
February 4	Performance Studies and the Communication discipline	Chapters 2 and 3 (C); Strine, Pelias, Conquergood (3-37) (D)
Week Four		
Unit One continued		
February 11	Foundations of Performance: Ritual and Play	Response 1 due ; Turner (77-87), Huizinga (115-120), Bateson (121-131), Kaprow (139-144) (B); Chapter 1 (C)
Week Five		
Unit Two: Performing Identities		
February 18	<i>WSCA Convention</i>	Chapter 7 (C)
Week Six		
Unit Two continued		
February 25	Performing Gender and Sexualities	Corey; Johnson; Scheibel; Butler (154-166) (B) (original is on BlackBoard);
Week Seven		
Unit Three: Personal Narrative and Performative Writing		
For Unit Three (during weeks 7-8), please take a look at The Personal Narrative: Problems and Possibilities, pp. 199-300 (D)		
March 3	Personal Narrative: Theory and Performance	Response 2 due ; Langellier; Peterson and Langellier; Park-Fuller
Week Eight		
Unit Three continued		
March 10	Performative Writing	Corey and Nakayama; Fox; Madison; Parker and Sedgwick (167-174) (B)
Week Nine		
Unit Four: Performing the Other		
March 17	Historical Legacies, Contemporary Problems: Performing Literature, Performing Ethical Ethnographies	Response 3 due ; Conquergood “Moral Act”; Conquergood “Rethinking Ethnography”; Katner; Miller (51-55) (D); Turner (with Turner) (265-278) (B)
Week Ten		
March 24	Midterm paper performances and presentations	Midterm papers and presentations due

Week Eleven	<i>Spring Recess</i>	
March 31	<i>Spring Recess—no class</i>	Please come to the 4/7 class with a tentative abstract for your final paper
Week Twelve	Unit Five: Performing Technologies	
		For Unit Five (week 11), please check out the American Communication Journal (see link in BB Course Documents); Check out <i>Liminalities</i> (see link in BB Course Documents)
April 7	Performing Technologies: Narrative, Identity, and Play	<i>Response 4 due</i> ; Chvasta; Lindemann “Lives Online”; Soukup [see link on BB]
Week Thirteen		Note: Response Five (On Unit 5, 6, or 7) is due by May 5 th and be presented any class period before that.
April 14	Discuss final papers	<i>Final paper abstract and tentative references page due</i>
Week Fourteen	Unit Six: Performing Culture(s) and Resistance	
April 21	Performance Interventions	Chapter 8 (C); Conquergood (311-322), McKenzie (26-31) (B); Warren
Week Fifteen	Unit Seven: Performance Contexts	
April 28	Organizational Communication as Performance	Bell and Forbes; Murphy; Pacanowsky and O’Donnell-Trujillo
Week Sixteen	Unit Seven continued	
May 5	Tourism and Performance	Lindemann “A Tough Sell”; Spangler; Wiley
Week Seventeen	Final Papers and Performances	
May 12	In-class presentations and performances	<i>Final Papers and Performances due; Outside Performance Responses due</i>

Other Suggested and Recommended Readings

These readings are *not required for class* but may help you in your research and to better understand the scope and nature of performance studies scholarship. Feel free to draw on them in either or both research papers.

- Auslander, P. (1997). *From acting to performance: Essays in modernism and postmodernism*. London: Routledge.
- Ashcraft, K.L. & Flores, L.A. (2003). "Slaves with white collars": Persistent performances of masculinity in crisis. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 23, 1-29.
- Banks, S. P. (1994). Performing public announcements: The case of flight attendants' discourse. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 14, 253-267.
- Boal, A. (1998). Invisible Theatre. In Jan Cohen-Cruz (Ed.), *Radical street theatre: An international anthology* (pp. 121-124). New York: Routledge.
- Boal, A. (1995). *The rainbow of desire: The Boal method of theatre and therapy* (Trans. Adrian Jackson). New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1998). Performative acts and gender constitution. *Theatre Journal*, 40, 519-31.
- Capo, K.E. (1983). From academic to social-political uses of performance. In D.W. Thompson (Ed.), *Performance of literature in historical perspectives* (pp. 437-457). New York: University Press of America.
- Conquergood, D. (2000). Rethinking elocution: The trope of the Talking Book and other figures of Speech. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 20, 325-341.
- Corey, F.C. (1996). Personal narrative and young men in prison: Labeling the outside inside. *Western Journal of Communication*, 60, 57-75.
- Denzin, N.K. (1997). *Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for the 21st Century*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Diamond, E. (2000) Re: Blau, Butler, Beckett, and the politics of seeming. *The Drama Review*, 44: 31-43.
- Diamond, E. (1989). Mimesis, mimicry, and the "true real." *Modern Drama*, 32, 58-72.
- Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. P. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*, (2nd ed., pp. 733-768). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Fine, E.C. (1992). Performative metaphors as ritual communication. In E.C. Fine & Jean Haskell Speer (Eds.), *Performance, culture, and identity* (pp. 23-45).
- Gingrich-Philbrook, C. (1998). Disciplinary violation as gender violation: The stigmatized masculine voice of performance studies. *Communication Theory*, 8, 203-220.
- Gingrich-Philbrook, C. (1994). 'Good Vibration' or Domination?: Stylized Repetition in Mythopoetic performance of masculinity. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 14, 21-45.
- Goffman, E. (1986). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Boston: Northeastern UP, 1986.
- Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: Doubleday.
- Gourgey, H. & Smith, E. B. (1996). "Consensual hallucination": Cyberspace and the creation of an interpretive community. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 16: 233-247.
- Jones, J.L. (2002). Teaching in the borderlands. In N. Stucky and C. Wimmer (Eds.), *Teaching Performance Studies* (pp. 175-190). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University.
- Langellier, K.M. (1983). A phenomenological approach to audience. *Literature in Performance*, 3, 34-39.
- Lindemann, K. (2004). Tales of an amateur magician: Embodying grief, loss, and masculinity through performative writing. *Kaleidoscope*, 3(1), 63-69.

- Logan, C. (2003) Presence and absence in online performance: Configurations in the problematics of access." *American Communication Journal*, 6. Available: <http://www.acjournal.org/holdings/vol6/iss3/responses/logan.htm>.
- Madison, D.S. & Hamera, J. (Eds.). (2006). *The Sage Handbook of Performance Studies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pollock, D. (1998). Performing Writing. In P. Phelan & J. Lane (Eds.), *The ends of performance* (pp. 73-103). New York: NYU Press.
- Richardson, L. (2000). Evaluating ethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 6, 253-256.
- Richardson, L. (2000). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*, (2nd ed., pp. 923-948). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ronai, C. (1992). The reflexive self through narrative: A night in the life of an exotic dancer/researcher. In Ellis, C. & Flaherty (Eds.). *Investigating subjectivity: Research on lived experience* (pp. 102-124). London: Sage.
- Schechner, R. (1985). *Between Theatre and Anthropology*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.
- Schechner, R. & Appel, W. (1990). *By means of performance: Intercultural studies of theatre and ritual*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University.
- Spry, T. (2001). Performing autoethnography: An embodied methodological praxis. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7, 706-732.
- Stucky, N. & Wimmer, C. (Eds.). (1999). *Teaching performance studies*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University.
- Taft-Kaufman, J. (1983). Deconstructing the text: Performance implications. *Literature in Performance*, 4, 55-59.
- Taylor, J. (1983). Performance centered research: Post-structuralist implications. *Literature in Performance*, 4, 37-40.
- Trujillo, N. (1985). Organizational communication as cultural performance: Some managerial considerations. *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 50, 201-224.
- Valentine, K. (2002). Yaqui Easter ceremonies and the ethics of intense spectatorship. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 22, 280-296.
- Valentine, K., & Matsumoto, G. (2001). Cultural performance analysis spheres: An integrated ethnographic methodology. *Field Methods*, 13(1): 68-87.
- Van Maanen, J. (1988). *Tales of the field: On writing ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Vrooman, S. S. (2002). The art of invective: Performing identity in cyberspace. *New Media and Society*, 4, 51-70.
- Wilshire, B. (1990). The concept of the paratheatrical. *The Drama Review*, 34, 169-178.
- Wilshire, B. (1982). *Role playing and identity: The limits of theatre as metaphor*. Bloomington, IL: Indiana University.

Class Participation Grading Rubric

I will assess participation in class based on the following rubric:

1. Student consistently contributes to class discussions.	25-23 points = Outstanding 22-20 points = Excellent 20-18 points = Good
2. Student contributions substantively relate to the assigned readings.	
3. Student contributions illustrate a genuine and sincere attempt to understand materials.	
4. Student contributions illustrate an attempt to make connections among readings and other areas of communication research.	
5. Student contributions reflect a respect and understanding of other perspectives.	
	Total Points (out of 25)

Unit Responses Grading Rubric

I will assess each of the five unit responses based on the following rubric:

1. Written work makes a genuine attempt to connect with the readings and material from that particular unit.	<p>20-18 points = Outstanding 17-15 points = Excellent 14-13 points = Good</p>
2. Performance or presentation portion illustrates an understanding of the ways embodiment and enactment contributes to scholarly understanding.	
3. Response illustrates clear, decisive performance or presentation choices.	
4. Response is offered on the appropriate due date.	
	Total Points (out of 20)

Discussion Leading Grading Rubric

I will assess discussion leading based on the following rubric:

1. Discussion leader illustrates a grasp of the readings.	25-23 points = Outstanding 22-20 points = Excellent 20-18 points = Good
2. Discussion leader effectively engages students in an exploration of the readings and concepts.	
3. Discussion leader encourages students to probe material in a way that moves past a surface reading of the articles or chapters.	
	Total Points (out of 25)

Outside Performance Event Grading Rubric

For this assignment, you are to attend and respond to any performance event that satisfies the characteristics we discuss in class. For this assignment, a performance event can be: a staged theatre play, a music concert, a cultural performance (belly dancing, drum circle, parade, ritual, etc.), a sporting event, a protest or other performance intervention, and perhaps other events approved by me.

For this short (4-5 pages) paper, you will first provide a brief summary or synopsis of the performance event then apply any appropriate and relevant class concepts to analyze the success, competence, and efficacy of the performance. Finally, you will explain the ways in which your analysis has helped you better understand particular class concepts.

Content	Points									
1. The author describes the performance event using characteristics and concepts discussed in class and the readings.	5	4	3	2	1					
2. The author applies appropriate and relevant concepts to the performance event.	5	4	3	2	1					
3. The author uses specific, concrete examples from the performance event to illuminate and illustrate class concepts.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. The author applies class concepts in a way that sheds light on the performance event and helps the reader understand the success, competence, and/or efficacy of the performance event.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. The author explains the ways this performance event has helped him or her better understand class concepts.	5	4	3	2	1					
Style										
1. The author uses complete sentences and paragraphs in a manner consistent with graduate-level writing.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. The author cites readings in proper APA or MLA citation style.	5	4	3	2	1					
Comments:										
Total Points (out of 50)										