

Brian Dugan:

In his book *French Theory: How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & Co. Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States*, Francois Cusset criticizes the American university system for adapting the narrative of deconstruction and poststructuralism to fit domestic demands. Cusset argues that this re-contextualization has established a conventional academic discourse in which we endlessly reapply elements of French Theory to cultural, ideological, and literary implications. Cusset encourages the implementation of a new literary theory to *break* the routinization of discourse, but fails to propose any method for developing this theory. *Breaking* the routinization of discourse may be as simple as reversing Cusset's approach: we must first *break from* conventional academic discourse to create new theory, which will in turn further alter the current discourse. However, the current discourse will remain if we continue to teach writing solely based on process and product theories because both endorse conventional academic discourse as their final product. This presentation will explore the adoption of post-process pedagogies and their advocacy of *imaginary destruction* as a means of *breaking from* conventional discourse. UNF writing courses have already begun to implement such pedagogies so that its students progress written discourse as a means of founding of the next major literary theory.

“Doing Things with the Law”

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Abstract

The relationship between law and the humanities has been widely debate by scholars across disciplinary boundaries such as Richard Posner and James Boyd White. However, the prevailing perspectives have only scratched the surface on what these interdisciplinary fields have to offer one another. In this paper, I analyze the law in relation to J.L. Austin's speech act theory, paying close attention to how citing of precedent in the legal system operates as a performative speech act which, ultimately, generates the law itself. Next, I examine who or what authors the law in context of Roland Barthes' and Michel Foucault's theories of authorship to demonstrate how, if the law must be said to have an author, the law has numerous authors as it is reflective of community. In conclusion, this paper sheds new light on how the study of the language of law functions as a unique analytical tool for contemporary humanities scholars.

Shanee Campbell Erasing the Feeling: An Analysis of Aesthetic Writing and Complicated Emotions in Percival Everett's *Erasure* (2001)

This year, the Spring 2014 English Graduate Organization's theme questions the current boundaries in English studies. One such "boundary" exists between two schools of literary thought: the reader response theory and formalism. These schools debate whether the value of art inheres in the emotional response it elicits in reader or whether it inheres in the aesthetics of the

work itself. This paper considers how Percival Everett's *Erasure* (2001) encompasses and deals with this persistent tension. *Erasure* is not simply about an African American having a difficult time writing a novel, but rather about how the social conditions of daily life coincide with emotional turmoil over an inability to connect with others through the highbrow literature the narrator, Monk Ellison, writes and enjoys.

Nan Kavanaugh The Echoes of the Master Voice: The Disembodiment of the Plantation Owner in Contemporary American Identity

In American primary and secondary public education curriculum, the holocaust of Africans and African Americans followed by a century of sanctioned terrorism committed against these citizens is a subject that is hauntingly absent. The enslavement of African Americans was well documented by its perpetrators, first-hand accounts of the barbarity of plantation life, the daily torture and rape of African Americans, is information that is easily accessible, yet within the public education curriculum the voice of the Master has been untethered from the history of slavery. This unchaining from American identity has allowed the Master voice to undergo a process of dehumanization, resulting in a phantom whose uncanny presence still hovers within American society, from the high notes of the Star Spangled Banner sung at every ball game, to the high schools named in honor of the Confederacy, to the gated communities which tout the word "plantation" on their well lit signs. In my essay, I will examine how recognizing the Master voice as an integral part of the American identity and treating its presence as something essential to the foundations of that identity can serve curriculum by providing a holistic understanding of what it means to be an American. Through the perspective of both an educator, and as the descendant of multigenerational plantation owners, I will explore how American curriculum currently serves the Master voice by supporting its disembodiment, and how that repression denies Americans the ability to garner strength and compassion from their shared history.

Cory Chamberlain: Euphemisms: The Real Bad Language?

My progressing research aims to examine the effects of euphemistic language, both on its audience and its user in terms of what many term "bad language," specifically in academia . In his 1971 article "Do You Use 'Clean Language'? Old Testament Euphemisms and Their Translation" Bible translator Jan De Waard writes "a euphemism is a word or expression which is used in ordinary circumstances as a substitute for a taboo word." According to linguistics professor Gary Simon's 1982 article "Word Taboo and Comparative Austronesian Linguistics," "when a word becomes tabooed the users must change the way it is pronounced or replace it altogether." English professor Peter J. Reed calls this manipulation of language to make it more pleasant to ourselves "Self-Sparing Usage" arguing that such utilization of language will always leave us "feeling threatened" by it. While previous research

has focused on the social aspects of euphemistic language, the intent of this study is to find the implications of euphemisms on the study of literature in an academic setting at a college level.

Nicholas Darby

This paper will address the conference's theme "Out of Bounds" by considering the implications of the boundaries the Common Core curriculum places on the education system. My paper analyzes the debate about implementing these standards. The essence of my paper's argument is not to decide whether one side of the debate is more effective than the other, but to illustrate and interpret the details of the two opposing sides' perspectives. To that end, I consider journalistic and scholarly assessments of the common core. Journalists can be informative and apply historical context to the problematic issue, while scholars tend to use theory to reason combatively with their opposition. By analyzing the various approaches writers have taken to defend or critique the Common core, I hope to cut through the wealth of opinion and myth circulating about this plan. In order to remain objective, I consider multiple voices and the perspective from which they emerge. For instance, if the Common Core *is* obviously flawed, who is it that continues supporting the curriculum and why? I focus my attention on the debate about the Common Core's decimation of fiction studies. This debate raises important questions about the value of studying literature today. My paper will explore analytical reports of the effectiveness of cutting literature out of the curriculum and the subsequent backlash. In an effort to be objective and critical, my paper will ask readers: is the future of our students still subject to debate, or have we already put it out of bounds?

Jeanne Coutant Resistance is Never Futile: Ideological State Apparatuses and Education in American Fiction

Recent debates about the American education system seek to promote homogeneity, typically through institutionalized methods of education, such as the Common Core. However, alternative models might better allow different learning needs or interests to flourish. Jack London's *Martin Eden* (1909) and Nella Larsen's *Quicksand* (1928) both raise questions about institutionalized education by depicting it as an agent of assimilation, or what Louis Althusser would call an "ideological state apparatus." This paper brings together Althusser, Joseph Epstein, Lewis A. Coser and other theorists to examine the affirmative and critical depictions of education in these texts. By doing so, I argue that these texts promote an educational model that balances resistance and accommodation. This paper offers new readings of these fictional pieces by interpreting them through the lens of education and reflecting on the current state of English studies, which this conference seeks to address. Ultimately, I examine some alternative methods of education, particularly those focused on an individualization of education and resistance to institutional apparatuses, as described and theoretically practiced within American fiction.

William MacKey

Our generation grew up with Harry Potter. Millions of 11 year-olds sat by their letterboxes, looking for an owl to deliver them from the world of the banal, and to transport them into the world of the magical. J.K. Rowling's multimedia *Harry Potter* franchise may appear to be a childhood fantasy, however, a closer examination of the text reveals a more dangerous under-current. Rowling's world of witchcraft and wizardry calls for an ideological reading to unmask the agent lying dormant in the inky recesses of the printed page. Below the printed ceiling of the text, Rowling cleverly interweaves a strong political message, with her finger pointed at one person—the Wicked Witch of 10 Downing Street—the Iron Lady, Former Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. By mirroring the Iron Lady in the world of the magical, Rowling—as if through a crystal ball—sees a decade into the future and predicts—with startling accuracy—the death and legacy of Margaret Thatcher.

Nathaniel Cameron

Cultural assimilation and cultural identity are important aspects of early education in a society. The assimilation of newcomers into the national culture and mindset is important for creating harmony and unity for the citizens. This aspect of cultural assimilation is central for utopian societies. Two societies that practice cultural assimilation and are striving for their utopian ideals are the citizens of *Herland* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman and the Borg Collective from *Star Trek*. Both civilizations use a forced form of cultural assimilation to indoctrinate new members into their society. This paper will examine the representations of cultures in which the assimilation is explicit: *Herland* and the Borg from *Star Trek*.

In looking at how these two societies utilize cultural assimilation, the essay will examine an understanding of certain dynamics and ideologies that utopian societies hold as core values for the continued existence of their states. Additionally, this essay will look at the notions of homogeneity over heterogeneity in the minds of a utopian society and the political mindset that *Herland* and the Borg gravitate towards.