

**English 773**  
**The Affects of Modernity**  
**Spring 2004**  
**Bennett 321 Tuesdays 12-3**

**Heather Love**  
**office: Bennett 320**  
**loveh@english**  
**8-0128**

This course will serve as an introduction to the concept of modernity and to recent work on affect and subjectivity. Critics have spent a lot of time trying to describe "the experience of modernity"; in this class, we will take up this tradition of thought and push it a bit further, asking whether it makes sense to understand modernity as a number of characteristic *ways of feeling*. The course is interdisciplinary in aim: we will consider literary and philosophical texts as well a range of writing on affect and modernity in history, sociology, biology, psychoanalysis, and cultural studies. We will consider topics including: the relation between modernism and modernity; the uses of sentiment; technology and the history of the senses; the physiology of affect; mass culture and mass feeling; stigma and the (re)constitution of the subject; intimacy and distance; and historical and racial melancholy.

At the Penn Book Center:

Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (1918)  
Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757)  
Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848)  
Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852)  
Charles Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872)  
Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872)  
Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw* (1898)  
W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)  
Rebecca West, *The Return of the Soldier* (1918)  
Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny* (1919) and *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920)  
Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (1925)  
Radclyffe Hall, *The Well of Loneliness* (1928)  
Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*  
*Shame and Its Sisters: A Silvan Tomkins Reader*, eds. Sedgwick and Frank

There will be two course packs for the course, both at Wharton Reprographics. Books for the course are on reserve at Rosengarten.

Course requirements include:

- A seminar paper of at least 20 pages, due **May 7**. I will ask you to turn in a one-page abstract for this paper by **April 16**.
- A substantial presentation to the class on a book beyond the required reading for the course.
- One supplementary course meeting.

## Course Schedule

\* course pack reading

† available online

### **Week 1: Introduction**

#### **January 13**

Affects, Feelings, Emotions, Passions, Sentiment, Structures of Feeling  
Modernism, Modernity, Modernization

Raymond Williams, “Structures of Feeling” from *Marxism and Literature* (handout)

### **Week 2: The Modernity of Affect**

#### **January 20**

Marshall Berman, “Modernity—Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow” from *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (handout)

Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*

Max Weber, “Asceticism and the Spirit of Capitalism” from *The Protestant Ethic* (handout)

Frederic Jameson, “Culture” from *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (handout)

### **Week 3: The Ontology of Affect**

#### **January 27**

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank, “Shame in the Cybernetic Fold: Reading Silvan Tomkins” (Introduction to *Shame and Its Sisters*)

Tomkins, “What are Affects?” (*Sisters*)

Excerpt from Charles Darwin, Chapters I-III (“General Principles of Expression”) from *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*

William James, “On the Emotions” from *Principles of Psychology*, vol II\*

Report: Rei Terada, *Feeling in Theory: Emotion after the “Death of the Subject”*

### **Week 4: Shock I: Damage**

#### **February 3**

Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*

Rebecca West, *The Return of the Soldier*

Darwin, “Surprise-Astonishment-Fear-Horror” (*Expression*)

Report: Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*

### **Week 5: Shock II: Experience**

#### **February 10**

Charles Baudelaire, “The Painter of Modern Life” and selected poems\*

Walter Benjamin, “On Some Motifs in Baudelaire” and “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” in *Illuminations*

Georg Simmel, “The Metropolis and Mental Life”\*  
William James, “Habit” from *Principles of Psychology*, vol. I\*

Report: Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*

**Week 6: Feeling for Others I: Uses of Affect**  
**February 17**

Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*  
Lauren Berlant, “Poor Eliza”†

Report: Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*

**Week 7: Feeling for Others II: Sentimental Modernism**  
**Week of February 23 (this class will need to be rescheduled)**

Radclyffe Hall, *The Well of Loneliness*  
Jay Prosser, “‘Some Primitive Thing Conceived in a Turbulent Age of Transition’: The Transsexual Emerging from *The Well*” from *Palatable Poison*\*

Report: Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism*

**Week 8: Feeling Like a Problem I: Double Consciousness**  
**March 2**

W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*  
Peter Coviello, “Intimacy and Affiliation: Du Bois, Race, and Psychoanalysis”†

Report: Shamoan Zamir, *Dark Voices: W. E. B Du Bois and American Thought, 1888-1903*

**Week 9: Feeling Like a Problem II: The Closet**  
**March 16**

Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw*  
Sedgwick, “Henry James, The Art of the Novel” from *Touching Feeling*\*  
Sedgwick, “Axiomatic” from *Epistemology of the Closet*\*  
Tomkins, “Shame-Humiliation and Contempt-Disgust” (*Sisters*)  
Darwin, “Self-Attention-Shame-Shyness-Modesty: Blushing” (*Expression*)

Report: Erving Goffman, *Stigma: On the Management of Spoiled Identity*

**Week 10: The Uncanny and the Sublime**  
**March 23**

Freud, *The Uncanny*  
Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas on the Sublime and the Beautiful*

Report: André Green, *The Fabric of Affect in the Psychoanalytic Discourse*

## **Week 11: Distance, Intimacy, and Enjoyment**

**March 30**

Franz Kafka, *The Trial*

Dr. Paul Schreber, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, excerpts\*

Eric Santner, “The Passions of Psychoanalysis” from *My Own Private Germany*\*

Report: Jacques Ribot, *The Psychology of the Emotions*

## **Week 12: Melancholia I: Loss and Subjectivity**

**April 6**

Freud, “Mourning and Melancholia”\*

Freud, excerpt from “The Ego and the Id”\*

Frantz Fanon, “The Fact of Blackness” from *Black Skin, White Masks*\*

Anne Anlin Cheng, “The Melancholy of Race” and “Difficult Loves” from *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation, and Hidden Grief*\*

Report: Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*

## **Week 13: Melancholia II: Loss and History**

**April 13**

Marx, *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*†

Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History” (*Illuminations*) and “Left Melancholy”\*

Wendy Brown, “Against Left Melancholy” from *Loss*\*

Judith Butler, “After Loss, What Then?” from *Loss*\*

Joseph Roach, “History, Memory, and Performance” from *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance*\*

Report: Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*

## **Week 14: Mania**

**April 20**

Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*\*

Bataille, “Nietzschean Chronicle” from *Visions of Excess*\*

Marinetti, “Futurist Manifesto”†

Gilles Deleuze, “Ethology: Spinoza and Us” from *Incorporations*\*

Deleuze and Guattari, “The Subject and Enjoyment” from *Anti-Oedipus*\*

Darwin, “Joy-High Spirits-Love-Tender Feelings-Devotion” (*Expression*)

Tomkins, “Interest-Excitement” (*Sisters*)

Report: Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*

## **Final Meeting: Learning From Feeling**

Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams*