READING SEMINAR IN THE HUMANITIES
HONS 1010-04 / F15 / PROFESSORS TUEDIO & AFZAL

Precarious Life and Collective Identity:
Transgressing Boundaries to Become Who We Are

Course Texts

Assigned materials (bolded titles @ KIVA):

Documentary: “Portrait of an Artist: Frida Kahlo”
Sandra Cisneros, The House on Mango Street
Cherie Moraga, “The Welder” (poem)
Adrienne Rich, “In the Wake of Home” (poem)
bell hooks, “Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness”
Judith Butler, Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence
Ahmed Afzal, “‘Being gay has been a curse for me’: Gay Muslim Americans, narrative and negotiations of belonging in the Muslim ummah”
Donald Freed, Agony in New Haven: the Trial of Bobby Seale, Ericka Huggins and the Black Panther Party
Martha Nussbaum et al., For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism

Additional recommended reading:
Stuart Hampshire, Justice as Conflict

Calendar of Reading Assignments

M 8/24 Introductions; overview of course themes and assignments
W 8/26 documentary film: “Portrait of an Artist: Frida Kahlo”
M 8/31 Cisneros, The House on Mango Street (pp. 3-32)
W 9/02 Cisneros, The House on Mango Street (pp. 33-64)
M 9/07 Labor Day holiday (no class)
W 9/09 Cisneros, The House on Mango Street (pp. 65-83)
M 9/14 Cisneros, The House on Mango Street (pp. 84-110)
Rich, “In the Wake of Home” (poem: pp. 56-60)
Moraga, “The Welder” (poem)
W 9/16 hooks, “Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness” (pp. 145-53)
M 9/21 Butler, Precarious Life, pp. 1-18
W 9/23 Butler, Precarious Life, pp. 19-34
M 9/28 Butler, Precarious Life, pp. 35-49
W 9/30 Butler, Precarious Life, pp. 50-72
M 10/05 Butler, Precarious Life, pp. 73-100
W 10/07 Butler, Precarious Life, pp. 101-127
M 10/12 Butler, Precarious Life, pp. 128-142
W 10/14 Butler, Precarious Life, pp. 142.9-151
M 10/19 Freed, Agony in New Haven, pp. 13-67
W 10/21 Freed, Agony in New Haven, pp. 68-124
Writing Assignments

**Paper One (1000 words):** Belonging/Not-Belonging and the Space of Radical Openness: Kahlo, Cisneros, Moraga, Rich, hooks, and Butler (Due: Oct. 16th) [25%]

**Paper Two (1000 words):** Precarious Life and the Struggle for Justice: Butler and Freed (Due: Nov. 13th) [25%]

**Paper Three (1500 words):** Patriotism, Cosmopolitanism and Collective Identity: hooks, Freed, Nussbaum, Appiah, Butler, Scarry, Afzal, Bok, Himmefarb, Sen, Gutmann, McConnell, Taylor and Walzer (Due: Dec. 16th) [30%]

**In-class or take-home final exam (2 hours of writing):** critical reflective writing in response to an array of questions drawing on themes developed in our class discussions (Dec. 14th if in-class; due Dec. 18th if take-home). [20%]

**Plagiarized work is unacceptable.** Citations are required for all sources (author, title, and page reference), including not only the sources of quotations and paraphrased passages but also the sources from which you draw ideas to help frame or develop your discussion in the paper. To be safe, include a bibliography listing all sources consulted in the process of developing your topic and writing your paper, along with specific references (when relevant) in the body of the paper. **NOTE:** Significant plagiarism (where insights of others are passed off as insights of your own) is grounds for failing the course. It’s fine to consult others, but in the end, calibrate your ear to think for yourself, and, above all, trust your own voice! (Ethics lesson #1: it’s not about property!)