Fall 2015

ENG 294 Introduction to Contemporary Theory:

How to Survive the Twenty-First Century



**Professor Gregory Castle ♣ MW 10:30am-11:45am ♣ Ln. 86514**

**SATISFIES THEORY REQUIREMENT**

This course is designed to introduce students to key ideas and concepts in contemporary critical and cultural theory. This is not a historical survey course, but rather one in which these ideas and concepts will be applied to literary and cultural texts (books, film, music, video games, the artful body). We use a theory “primer” that will provide short bursts of background on earlier theories, but the primary texts we read will be in the newest theories out there. In addition to the “posts”—postmodernism, poststructuralism, post-Marxism, postcolonial studies, post-feminism and posthumanism—we will explore new theoretical formations that have emerged in response to our contemporary social condition, such as queer theory, trauma theory, disability studies, cognitive studies, the new “object-oriented” philosophies and materialist theories. And then there’s the “trans” domains—transnationalism, transgender studies and transhumanism— which, like so many contemporary theoretical formations opens up new perspectives on where and how we live, who we are and even *what we are*. The contemporary theories studied in this course provide the tools for understanding twentieth-first century life and the limits and enjoyments of our humanity—and our posthumanity, for we are living on the cusp of a transformation: from a humanism that has reached its limit to a posthuman dispensation the limits of which are as yet unknown. Be prepared for this “brave new world.”

**≠≠≠≠**~~itisnotequalman~~**≠≠≠≠≠≠≠≠≠≠**~~itisnotequal~~**≠≠≠≠≠≠≠≠≠≠**cf.=#=#cf.**≠≠≠≠≠≠≠≠≠**cf.###~~cf.ccf.itisnot~~

**Required Text**: Castle, *Literary Theory Handbook* (Wiley-Blackwell)

Additional readings will be assigned as needed, either on Blackboard or online.

*For more information, write to dedalus@asu.edu*