First Person Experience and the Argument from [Human] Creativity [1]

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For God produces out of nothing whatsoever He will, which we call "create." But men, on the contrary, are not able to make anything but out of given matter. The Poet, however, though he does not quite make a poem without any matter . . . Nevertheless, thanks to the story which he holds the whole work together, he, covertly and cunningly, includes into the story, nearly out of nothing, the deepest meanings.

Christoforo Landino.   "What Poetry and Poets are, and of their Divine and Most Ancient Origins (1481)"

We make, by art, in . . . orchards and gardens, trees and flowers to come earlier or later than their seasons; and to come up and bear more speedily than their natural course they do. We make them also by art greater than their nature; and their fruit greater and sweeter and of differing taste, smell, color, and figure, from their nature.

Francis Bacon, 1st Viscount St Albans.   The New Atlantis (1624)

Thus the distinct boundaries and offices of reason and of taste are easily ascertained. The former conveys the knowledge of truth and falsehood: the latter the sentiment of beauty and deformity, vice and virtue. *The one discovers objects as they really stand in nature,* without addition or diminution: the *other has a productive facult*y and *gilding or staining all natural objects with the colors, borrowed from internal sentiment*, raises in a manner a new creation.

David Hume.   Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals (1751)

We have thus divided our problem into two parts. The child program and the education process. These two remain very closely connected. We cannot expect to find a good child machine at the first attempt. One must experiment with teaching one such machine and see how well it learns. One can then try another and see if it is better or worse. There is an obvious connection between this process and evolution, by the identifications

__ Structure of the child machine = hereditary material
__ Changes of the child machine = mutation,
__ Natural selection = judgment of the experimenter

Turing, A.M.   Computing Machinery and Intelligence (1950)

The attempt is made to address the question of the "production of subjectivity" in relation to those who refer to such productions – that is, the imagined reader of this journal. The envisaged challenge is that of escaping the web of conflicting definitions, which Latour has connected with the "invincibility of the moderns", of   fabricating a "line of flight", which does not denounce, but rather reveals, makes perceptible, the special power of the modern territory. An important step, introduced by William James, is to abandon epistemological questions in favor of the care and concern demanded by that which is "coming into existence", and by its milieu, which may nurture or poison it. Poisoning is easy but nurturing is a craft, the neglect of which may be understood in relation to our vulnerability to capitalism.

Isabelle Stengers.   "Experimenting with Refrains: Subjectivity and the Challenge of Escaping Modern Dualism (2008)"

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[1] Note, the phrase "The Argument from {Human} Creativity' is taken for my paper, "Computation, Aesthetics, and Representation: A Critical Examination of the "The Thesis of Computational Sufficiency & Explanation" and the Incorporation of "The Argument from {Human} Creativity,'Refresh / First International Conference on the Histories of Media, Art, Science and Technology, Banff New Media Institute, 2006.

Introduction ___

Notwithstanding the seemingly normative nature of the presence of the term "creation" in David Hume's "Enquiry" his usage of the term was, in actuality, part of a larger set of discursive and institutional transformations that speak to the history of Modernity. Thus, the Renaissance, Italian orator Christoforo Landino's use of the ecclesiastical Latin term *creare* in his commentary on Dante's *Divine Comedy* (1481) marks, at the very least, a terminological event in the history modernity / post-modernity that backgrounds a set of emergent debates and controversies that pivot around the philosophical status of the "Argument from [Human] Creativity." Some 48 years later, Martin Luther saw the publication, in 1529, of his *Large Catechism;* a theological and philosophical event which also backgrounds these "debates and controversies" with respect to "Argument from the [Epistemic Primacy] of First Person Experience." For with Luther we are witness to the emergence of the "Argument of Consciousness *as* (Self) Consciousness. As Reiner Schurmann notes, 'After Luther, "to be" means "to be for consciousness" .'

This course will pivot around the analysis and discussion of how the discourses that surround the linkage of 'creativity' and 'first-person' experientiality plays out across various disciplinary lines of contact with respect to either the explicit, and/or, tacit roles in arguments developed by five preeminent scholars. In particular, we will focus our work on a specific set of texts: René Descartes' "Discourse on the Method . . . " and "*Correspondence*" with L'Abe Marin Mersenne, Isabelle Stengers', *Cosmopolitics I,* Drucilla Cornell's, *Moral Images of Freedom: A Future for Critical Theory*, Reiner Schürmann ((O.P), *Broken Hegemonies*, and, Alan Turing's seminal 1950 paper, "*Computing Machinery and Intelligenc*e."

Course Prerequisites ___

Any Humanities Ph.D. student may take this course as it has been so designed that one need *not necessarily* carried out any substantive course work on the research areas of study that this course will address.

Course Methodology and Pedagogy ___

The course has been premised around two primary pedagogical principles. *One*, an interdisciplinary approach to the research areas to be covered by the course. Among these "areas" are philosophy of science, political and ethical philosophy, theology, aesthetics, psychology, anthropology, feminism, computationalist theories of mind and intelligence, neuroscience, and, history (critical).. *Two*, the formation of Reading-Discussion Groups that a redesigned to address the issue of interdisciplinarity with respect to the differential research interests of membership of the class.   * *See "Workload Expectations & Grading" below.*

Workload Expectations & Grading ___

1.   50 % _ Participation in one of the Reading-Discussion Groups.

Each group will be comprised of 2 to 3 members who will decide on a course of reading(s) that both address selected issues with regards course content, and, which pertain to the specific research interests of each member of the group. The expectation is that each group will present overview of their research to the class, its {possible} pertinence with regards to each persons respective Ph.D. work, and, engage the class in a critical discussion of the issues raised by the group.

2.   50 % _ Research paper of between 30 to 40 pages on area of study decided upon by each member of the class

Office Hours ___

My office is located in EV Bldg., Room 6.823. *Please make your appointments in class or by e-mail only*.

Mandatory Readings / Monographs * ___

* Note: This texts may be purchased at the University bookstore .
The url addresses following each scholar's name are active. I would ask everyone to visit the web-sites of each of the listed scholars before the course commences next term. The only exception to the request is the URL below for the Descartes text. You may download this work.

Cornell, Drucilla.   Moral Images of Freedom: A Future for Critical Theory. Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.

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Descartes, René.   Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason in the Search for Truth in the Sciences (1637)*,* edited Haldane and Ross; Cambridge University Press, 1964.
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http://www.turingarchive.org/browse.php/B/4

Selected Optional Readings / Monographs * ___

* Note: Again, the url addresses following each scholar's name are active. I would ask everyone to visit the web-sites of each of the listed scholars before the course commences next term.

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Bostrum, Nickolas   Whole Brain Emulation: A Roadmap.Technical Report #2008-3, Future of Humanity Institute, Oxford University, 2008.

Bostrum, Nick   http://www.nickbostrom.com/

Chalmers, David J.   The Conscious Mind: In Search of a Fundamental Theory. Oxford, Oxford University, Press, 1996.

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Karl Popper.   The Self and Its Brain: An Argument for Interactionism (1977). Routledge; Reprint edition, 1984.

        Popper, Karl   http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Popper

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Foucault, Michel.   The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the College de France, 1982-1983. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

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    Nagel, Thomas**.**   http://philosophy.as.nyu.edu/object/thomasnagel

Negri, Antonio.   The Labor of Job: The Biblical Text as a Parable of Human Labor. Duke University Press Books, 2009

Negri, Antonio.   http://www.egs.edu/faculty/antonio-negri/biography/

Smith, Pamela H.   The Body of the Artisan: Art and Experience in the Scientific Revolution, University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Smith, Pamela H.   http://www.columbia.edu/cu/history/fac-bios/Smith/faculty.html

Simpson, David   Situatedness, or, Why We Keep Saying Where We're Coming From. Duke University Press Books, 2001.

Simpson, David.   http://english.ucdavis.edu/people/directory/desimpso

Selected Optional Readings / Papers - Book Chapters ____*

* Note: If anyone so wishes I can send a folder containing PDF versions of *most* of the texts cited below.

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"Creativity and Unpredictability," SEHR, volume 4, issue 2: Constructions of the Mind Updated 4, June 1995.

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