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## Intensive seminar: Reading with the New Frankfurt School

### Programme

#### Day 1 (Thursday, 5 September 2024)

**10:00–12:00**

#### **“On Resonance”, Lecture, followed by Q&A**

What is resonance and why might it constitute a fundamental human value? My talk draws out affinities between Hartmut Rosa’s theories of resonance and novels of academic life by John Williams and Dionne Brand. Both *Stoner* and *Theory* capture moments when words come alive; they speak to the transformative aspects of books and ideas, while also reckoning with the alienating aspects of academic institutions. The idea of resonance, I argue, is especially well-suited to capturing the qualities of a humanistic education

**12:00–13:30**

**Lunch**

**13:30–15.30**

#### **“The Limits of Critique”, Roundtable**

Participants: Rita Felski, Julia Kuznetski, Eneken Laanes, Marek Tamm

This roundtable discusses Rita Felski’s proposal to rethink the relationship between literature, theory, and experience. How can literature and other arts offer accounts of human experience that do not treat individuals as mere shadows cast by all-determining structures? How does literature communicate our vulnerability and our social and environmental enmeshment? In what ways do the ethics of attention, relationality, and attachment reveal the vital social dimension of literature? What contemporary strands of thought in phenomenology and other fields support such a rethinking?

#### ***Reading:***

Rita Felski, *The Limits of Critique* (The University of Chicago Press, 2015), ch. 1 (pp. 14–51)

Rita Felski, *Hooked: Art and Attachment* (The University of Chicago Press, 2020), ch. 1 (pp. 1–40).

#### Day 2 (Friday, 6 September 2024)

**10:00–12:00**

#### **“Literature and Life Worlds: Szabo, Schutz, Habermas”, Lecture, followed by Q&A**

The idea of the life world has little uptake in literary studies, yet its blend of phenomenological and social meanings seems especially well-suited to capturing life as it is lived. This lecture argues that literature can expand and enrich the accounts of lifeworlds developed by social theorists such as Schutz and Habermas. In Magda Szabo's *The Door*, a novel about the relationship between a novelist and her housekeeper, their shared yet conflicting lifeworlds come to the fore. How are intellectuals seen by those who cook their meals and clean their floors?

**12:00–13.30**

**Lunch**

13.30–15:30

**“Intellectuals and Others”, Seminar**

A discussion-based seminar organized around two other chapters of my forthcoming book. “Recognizing Class” explores the affinities between *Returning to Reims*, Didier Eribon's literary memoir about his estrangement from his working-class origins, and Honneth's reflections on the yearning for recognition. To what extent is the growing chasm between the educated and non-educated a result of mutual misrecognition? “On the Level?” is a theoretical chapter that engages with the work of German social theorist Robin Celikates as well as the hermeneutics of gender and race. Is it possible to criticize others without presuming an epistemological break: a separation of the intellectual's superior vision from the beclouded or benighted understanding of others?

**Reading:**

Rita Felski, “Recognizing Class”, *New Literary History*, Vol. 52, No 1, 2021, pp. 95–117.

Rita Felski, “On the Level?” (unpublished)