A genealogy and a practicum. The course will explore the varieties of experience from Montaigne and Bacon to Dewey and Agamben, with attention to epistemology and aesthetics, science and religion; readings will guide a series of practical experiments in the transfiguration and/or instauration of knowledge, and of the classroom as a home for it. Our shared project will be to imagine how humanistic inquiry might hold itself open to the demands of a concept that refuses concepts.

Work for the course, beyond the shared space of the seminar room, will consist of weekly exercises in (initially) the recording and (eventually) the making of experience. Experiments in a variety of media, situations, temporalities are encouraged.

WEEK 1:
Introductory and Organizational Meeting
Michel de Montaigne, “On Experience” (1588)
Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Experience” (1844)

WEEK 2:
Experience and the Experimental Philosophy
Francis Bacon, New Organon (1620) selection
Rene Descartes, Discourse on Method (1637) selection
Martin Jay, Songs of Experience, chap. 1 (“The Trial of Experience”)

WEEK 3:
The Conditions of Experiential Possibility
Kant, The Critique of Pure Reason (1781) selection
Martin Jay, Songs of Experience, chap. 2 (“Experience and Epistemology”)
WEEK 4:
The Feeling of (a) Thought
Kant, *The Critique of Judgment* (1790) selection
Martin Jay, *Songs of Experience*, chap. 4 (“Returning to the Body through Aesthetic Experience”)

WEEK 5:
God-speak and the Heart’s Language
Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* (1799)
William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) selection

WEEK 6:
Poetry and Experience
William Blake, *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1794)
William Wordsworth, “Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*” (1798) and *The Prelude* (1805) selection

MIDTERM

WEEK 7:
Visitor
Readings to be determined

WEEK 8:
Wait, Start Again—from Here, Now, This…
Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (ca. 1937) selection
William James, “A World of Pure Experience” (1904)
Bergson, *Matter and Memory* (1896) selection

WEEK 9:
Art
John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (1934)
Martin Jay, *Songs of Experience*, chap. 7 (“The Cult of Experience in American Pragmatism”)
WEEK 10:
Language and Anguish
Walter Benjamin, “Experience” (1913) and “Experience and Poverty” (1933)
Theodore Adorno, selection
Georgio Agamben, “Infancy and History” (1978)
Martin Jay, Songs of Experience, chap. 8 (“Lamenting the Crisis of Experience”)

WEEK 11:
Ecstasis
George Bataille, Inner Experience (1943)
Michel Foucault, “A Preface to Transgression” (1963)
Michel Foucault, “How an Experience Book is Born” (1978)
Martin Jay, Songs of Experience, chap. 8 (“The Poststructuralist Reconstruction of Experience”)

WEEK 12:
The Past: Experience/Experiment
Frank Ankersmit, Sublime Historical Experience (2005)

TERM ENDS