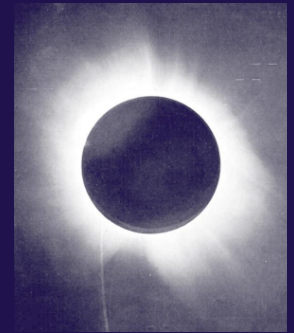


# Lights Out! / Extinction des Feux !

Rutgers University – New Brunswick

Friday, April 12, 2024

"And there is nothing new under the sun," goes the oft-quoted verse, which we understand to mean every place that light might reach. But what comes of darkness? What does the night enable or constrain? From labor night shifts to secret love affairs, queer nightlife and clandestine movements, throughout the French *Ancien Régime* and contemporary postcolonial worlds, various works have engaged with the economy of (in)visibility that structures nocturnal encounters. Through them, we wish to interrogate what drives the desire, or the necessity, to stay in the dark and/or out of sight.



For photography, cinema, and various performance arts, the absence of light is essential. What do we see when we turn our gazes to the *camera obscura* or the darkened space of the theater? How does this technical obscurity complicate, in turn, the role of light in the visual production of social norms and hierarchies such as race, gender, class and legality?

Considering that no Enlightenment is possible without overcoming a concept of obscurantism, it is precisely the moral dimension often signified through 'darkness' which we also seek to examine, by diving into the secrets, lies, and ambiguous discourses engendered by, and excluded from, the hegemonic 'regime of truth'. In short, we seek to interrogate the relationship between nocturnal spaces, negatives, and the inverse acts of revealing and concealing.

We welcome submissions in English or French. Although our reflection starts in the realm of French and Francophone studies, papers are also encouraged that consider night and darkness in various contexts and through various interdisciplinary approaches. They may explore topics related (but not limited) to :

- Sight and other senses
- Intimacy, clandestine affairs
- Gender and sexuality
- Libertinism
- (Im)morality
- Sleep, dream work
- Ghosts and fantasies
- Madness, fear, oblivion
- Labor and racial capitalism
- Migration and migritude
- Postcolonialism
- Performance and film
- Aesthetics of the night
- Urbanity
- Public / private
- Surveillance
- The Anthropocene and ecological threats

Graduate students who wish to participate in the conference should submit an abstract of no more than 250 words, along with a short bio. Abstracts must be sent as attachments to [frenchgso.rutgers@gmail.com](mailto:frenchgso.rutgers@gmail.com) by Friday, March 1, 2024. Emails should include the author's name, institutional affiliation, and contact information. Presentations, whether in English or in French, should not exceed 20 minutes. Keynote speaker TBA.

