

Spring 2008  
Tuesday 11:30-13:00

American Studies, ELTE  
Rm 356, R5

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AM-340.111

Enikő Bollobás

## Contemporary Theories of Literature and Culture

Reading and understanding texts by Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, J. L. Austin, Patricia Waugh, Judith Butler, Sandra Kemp, Judith Squires, Catharine McKinnon, Toril Moi, Diana Fuss, Jeremy Hawthorn, E. Ann Kaplan, Susan Bordo, Fiona Tolan, students will familiarize themselves with some of the main currents of contemporary theories of literature and culture. Topics discussed: value criticism, deconstruction, feminisms, theories of the gaze, theories of the subject, theories of the performative, theories of sexualities, and postcolonialism.

Grades will be based on

- (i) class participation,
- (ii) two presentations each student is required to give, and
- (iii) an in-class final test.

*February is reading month.* February is devoted to reading the first three survey texts, which we will discuss in our first joint class (March 11).

*Visibility, active participation.* Be visible. Mere physical presence, even when you have read the assignments, is not enough: you have to prove your skills in reading, analysis, and argument in class discussions.

*Oral presentation.* Each student is required to give two short oral presentations (max. 5-10 minutes). First presentation: March 11; these are team presentations introducing one of the three overviews (Value criticism, canons, evaluation; Jacques Lacan; Deconstruction). Second presentation: choose a text from the subsequent topics. Here your job is to help us understand the text, give its main points. Try to follow up on the books and essays mentioned in the assigned reading. If possible, contextualize and interpret your text too. You are advised not to read your presentation but speak without notes as much as possible.

*In-class final test.* This test will cover all the readings, discussions, and presentations.

## Schedule of topics and assignments

**February 4**                    **Registration**

**February 11**                **Orientation**

**February 11-March 4**

**READ:**

**1. Value criticism, canons, and evaluation**

- Patricia Waugh, "Value criticism, canons, and evaluation"

**2. Jacques Lacan**

- Josiane Paccaud-Huhuet, "Lacan"

**3. Deconstruction**

- Alex Thomson, "Deconstruction"

**March 11**                    **Discussion of readings, team presentations**

**Value criticism, canons, and evaluation**

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**Jacques Lacan**

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**Deconstruction**

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**March 17**

**Feminisms**

- Ch 23, Fiona Tolan, "Feminisms"

- Toril Moi, "Feminist, Female, Feminine"

- Diana Fuss, "The 'Risk' of Essence"

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**April 1**

**Theories of the gaze**

- Ch 33, Jeremy Hawthorn, "Theories of the Gaze"
  - E. Ann Kaplan, "Is the Gaze Male?"
  - Susan Bordo, "Normalisation and Resistance in the Era of the Image"
  - Kate Chedgoy, "Frida Kahlo's 'Grotesque' Bodies" (optional)
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**April 8**

**Theories of the subject**

- from Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses"
  - Michel Foucault, "About the Beginnings of the Hermeneutics of the Self: Two Lectures at Dartmouth"
  - Judith Butler, "Contingent Foundations"
  - Patricia Waugh, "Modernism, Postmodernism, Gender: The View from Feminism"
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**April 15**

**Theories of the performative I**

- J. L. Austin, "Performative Utterances"

**April 22**

**Theories of the performative II**

- Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory"
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**April 29**

**Theories of sexuality**

- Sandra Kemp and Judith Squires, "Sexualities"
  - Catharine McKinnon, "Toward a Feminist Theory of the State"
  - Mary McIntosh, "Queer Theory and the War of the Sexes"
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**May 6**

**Postcolonialism**

- Ch 24, Elleke Boehmer, "Postcolonialism"

**May 13**

**In-class final test**

**Texts used:**

Atkins, Kim, ed. *Self and Subjectivity*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005.

Conboy, Katie, Nadia Medina, and Sarah Stanbury, eds. *Writing on the Body. Female Embodiment and Feminist Theory*. New York: Columbia UP, 1997.

Kemp, Sandra, and Judith Squires, eds. *Feminisms*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997.

Leitch, Vincent B., ed. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. New York: Norton, 2001.

Snitow, Ann, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson, ed. *Powers of Desire—The Politics of Sexuality*. New York: Monthly Review P, 1983.

Waugh, Patricia, ed. *Literary Criticism and Theory*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006.

## PACKET OF READINGS

**AM-340.111 Contemporary Theories of Literature and Culture Enikő Bollobás**

1. Patricia Waugh, "Value criticism, canons, and evaluation," *Literary Criticism and Theory*, ed. Patricia Waugh, 70-80
2. Josiane Paccaud-Huhuet, "Lacan," *Literary Criticism and Theory*, ed. Patricia Waugh, 280-290
3. Alex Thomson, "Deconstruction," *Literary Criticism and Theory*, ed. Patricia Waugh, 290-318
4. Fiona Tolan, "Feminisms," *Literary Criticism and Theory*, ed. Patricia Waugh, 319-339
5. Toril Moi, "Feminist, Female, Feminine," *Feminisms*, ed. Sandra Kemp and Judith Squires, 246-250
6. Diana Fuss, "The 'Risk' of Essence," *Feminisms*, ed. Sandra Kemp and Judith Squires, 250-258
7. Jeremy Hawthorn, "Theories of the Gaze," *Literary Criticism and Theory*, ed. Patricia Waugh, 508-518
8. E. Ann Kaplan, "Is the Gaze Male?" *Powers of Desire*, ed. Ann Snitow, et al, 309-327
9. Susan Bordo, "Normalisation and Resistance in the Era of the Image," *Feminisms*, ed. Sandra Kemp and Judith Squires, 451-455
10. Kate Chedgzoy, "Frida Kahlo's 'Grotesque' Bodies," *Feminisms*, ed. Sandra Kemp and Judith Squires, 455-467 (optional)
11. from Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch, , 1476-1479, 1483-1509
12. Michel Foucault, "About the Beginnings of the Hermeneutics of the Self: Two Lectures at Dartmouth," *Self and Subjectivity*, ed. Kim Atkins, 211-219
13. Judith Butler, "Contingent Foundation," *Feminist Contentions*, ed. Seyla Benhabib, et al., 35-57
14. Patricia Waugh, "Modernism, Postmodernism, Gender: The View from Feminism," *Feminisms*, ed. Sandra Kemp and Judith Squires, 206-212
15. J. L. Austin, "Performative Utterances," *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch, 1427-1442
16. Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Writing on the Body. Female Embodiment and Feminist Theory*, ed. Katie Conboy, et al., 1997. 401-417
17. Sandra Kemp and Judith Squires, "Sexualities," *Feminisms*, ed. Sandra Kemp and Judith Squires, 316-319
18. Catharine McKinnon, "Toward a Feminist Theory of the State," *Feminisms*, ed. Sandra Kemp and Judith Squires, 351-358
19. Mary McIntosh, "Queer Theory and the War of the Sexes," *Feminisms*, ed. Sandra Kemp and Judith Squires, 364-368

20. Elleke Boehmer, "Postcolonialism," *Literary Criticism and Theory*, ed. Patricia Waugh, 340-361