

Spring 2004
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Department of American Studies
School of English and American Studies, ELTE

American Literary Theory: A Survey

This is an advanced survey of literary theory from the 20th century beginnings to the recent "fall into theory." The various schools and trends to be discussed include Formalism, the New Criticism, Structuralism, Narratology, Archetypal Criticism, Psychoanalytical Criticism, Poststructuralism, Postmodernism and Deconstruction, Feminism, African-American Criticism, and Gay and Lesbian Criticism.

Class requirements: preparation, attendance, participation, intellectual curiosity. Grades will be based on

- (i) class performance (including short written homeworks),
- (ii) midterm exam,
- (iii) final exam (take home).

Only those students are eligible for the take home exam who have

- (i) not missed more than three classes,
- (ii) have come prepared (that is, read ALL the assignments) for ALL the classes where they are present, and
- (iii) have made three substantial/memorable oral contributions to discussions.

IMPORTANT: Not reading the assignments of the day counts as absence and is therefore included into the three possible absences you can accumulate.

Homework: this is a requirement for every class. You are expected to bring examples from culture/literature/history/etc.(most of all: your own [future] dissertation topic/field) for the theoretical problems/issues covered by the readings of the day. This is only a handwritten homework of ca. 100 words. Just convince me you have read the assignments and are able to apply theory to practice.

The **Handouts** on the various schools and movements and the **Packet of Readings** are available in the Department Office.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Feb 10 Orientation

Feb 17 Formalism and the New Criticism

- Viktor Shklovsky, "Art as Technique"
- Cleanth Brooks, "The Language of Paradox"
- T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," "Hamlet and His Problems "

Background reading: Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown" (FIND TEXT)

Homework: bring examples relating to Formalism

Feb 24 Structuralism

- Ferdinand de Saussure, from *Course in General Linguistics*
- Roman Jakobson, "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles"
- Robert Scholes, "What Is Structuralism?," "From Linguistics to Poetics," "Toward a Structuralist Poetics of Fiction"

Background readings: T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (FIND TEXT)

Ernest Hemingway, "A Very Short Story" (FIND TEXT)

Homework: bring examples relating to Structuralism

March 2 Narratology

- Mikhail Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel"
- David Lodge, "Mimesis and Diegesis in Modern Fiction"
- Wayne C. Booth, "Impersonal Narration" (from *The Rhetoric of Fiction*) (esp. 367-)

Background readings: Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw* (FIND TEXT)

Ernest Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants" (FIND TEXT)

Homework: bring examples relating to Narratology

March 9 Psychoanalytic, Myth, and Archetypal Criticism

- Northrop Frye, "The Archetypes of Literature"
- Sigmund Freud, from *The Interpretation of Dreams*

Background readings: Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown" (FIND TEXT)

Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw* (FIND TEXT)

Homework: bring examples relating to Psychoanalytic or Myth or Archetypal Criticism

March 16 READING WEEK

March 23 MIDTERM EXAM

March 30 Poststructuralism & Postmodernism I

- Georges Bataille, "Heterology"
- Michel Foucault, from *The Order of Things*
- Michel Foucault, from *The Archeology of Knowledge*
- Michel Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish*
- Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," "From Work to Text"
- Roland Barthes, *Pleasure of the Text* (poststructuralism + reader-response)

Background readings: Balzac, *Sarrasine* (FIND TEXT) [S/Z]

Homework: bring examples relating to Poststructuralism

April 20 Poststructuralism & Postmodernism II

- Paul de Man, "The Rhetoric of Temporality"
- Jean-Francois Lyotard, from *The Postmodern Condition*

Background reading: Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior* (5 COPIES IN LIB)

Homework: bring examples relating to Poststructuralism or Postmodernism

April 27 Deconstruction

- Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences"
- Judith Butler, from *Gender Trouble*

Background reading: Henry James, *In the Cage* (FIND TEXT)

Homework: bring examples relating to Deconstruction

May 4 Feminist Criticism

- Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, from *The Madwoman in the Attic*
- Annette Kolodny, "Dancing through the Minefield"
- Susan Bordo, from *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body*

Background reading: H. D. [Hilda Doolittle], *HERmione* (5 COPIES IN LIB)

Homework: bring examples relating to Feminist Criticism

May 11 Gay and Lesbian Criticism, Queer Theory

- Judith Butler, "Critically Queer"
- Judith Fetterley, "My *Antonia*, Jim Burden, and the Dilemma of the Lesbian Writer"
- Siobhan B. Someville, from *Queering the Color Line*

Background readings: James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*
(in *Norton Anthology of African American Literature*) (FIND TEXT)
Willa Cather, *My Ántonia* (FIND TEXT)

Homework: bring examples relating to Gay and Lesbian Criticism or Queer Theory

May 18 African American Criticism

- Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Editor's Introduction: Writing 'Race' and the Difference It Makes"
- Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Zora Neale Hurston and the Speakerly Text"
- Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Canon Formation, Literary History ..."

Background reading: Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (FIND TEXT)

Homework: bring examples relating to African American Criticism

READINGS

1. Viktor Shklovsky, "Art as Technique" (*Modern Criticism & Theory*, ed. David Lodge. London: Longman, 1988)
2. Cleanth Brooks, "The Language of Paradox" (*Literary Theory: An Anthology*, ed. Julie Rivkin & Michael Ryan. Malden, M.A.: Blackwell, 1998)
3. T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," "Hamlet and His Problems" (*The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*. London: Methuen, 1974)
4. Ferdinand de Saussure, from *Course in General Linguistics* (*Literary Theory: An Anthology*, ed. Julie Rivkin & Michael Ryan. Malden, M.A.: Blackwell, 1998)
5. Roman Jakobson, "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles" (*Modern Criticism & Theory*, ed. David Lodge. London: Longman, 1988)
6. Robert Scholes, "What Is Structuralism?," "From Linguistics to Poetics," "Toward a Structuralist Poetics of Fiction" (*Structuralism in Literature: An Introduction*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1974)
7. Mikhail Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel" (*Critical Theory Since 1965*, ed. Hazard Adams & Leroy Searle. Tallahassee: Florida State UP, 1986)
8. David Lodge, "Mimesis and Diegesis in Modern Fiction" (*Essentials of the Theory of Fiction*, ed. Michael J. Hoffman & Patrick D. Murphy. Durham: Duke UP, 1996)
9. Wayne C. Booth, "Impersonal Narration" (*The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1961)
10. Northrop Frye, "The Archetypes of Literature" (*The Critical Tradition. Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends*, ed. David H. Richter. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989)
11. Sigmund Freud, from *The Interpretation of Dreams* (*The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch. New York: Norton, 2001)
12. Georges Bataille, "Heterology" (*Literary Theory: An Anthology*, ed. Julie Rivkin & Michael Ryan. Malden, M.A.: Blackwell, 1998)
13. Michel Foucault, from *The Order of Things* (*Literary Theory: An Anthology*, ed. Julie Rivkin & Michael Ryan. Malden, M.A.: Blackwell, 1998)
14. Michel Foucault, from *The Archeology of Knowledge* (*Literary Theory: An Anthology*, ed. Julie Rivkin & Michael Ryan. Malden, M.A.: Blackwell, 1998)
15. Michel Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish* (*Literary Theory: An Anthology*, ed. Julie Rivkin & Michael Ryan. Malden, M.A.: Blackwell, 1998)
16. Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," "From Work to Text" (*The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch. New York: Norton, 2001)

17. Roland Barthes, from *The Pleasure of the Text* (New York: Noonday Press, 1975)
18. Paul de Man, "The Rhetoric of Temporality" (*Critical Theory Since 1965*, ed. Hazard Adams & Leroy Searle. Tallahassee: Florida State UP, 1986)
19. Jean-Francois Lyotard, from *The Postmodern Condition (Literary Theory: An Anthology)*, ed. Julie Rivkin & Michael Ryan. Malden, M.A.: Blackwell, 1998)
20. Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" (*Critical Theory Since 1965*, ed. Hazard Adams & Leroy Searle. Tallahassee: Florida State UP, 1986)
21. Judith Butler, from *Gender Trouble (The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism)*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch. New York: Norton, 2001)
22. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, from *The Madwoman in the Attic (The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism)*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch. New York: Norton, 2001)
23. Annette Kolodny, "Dancing through the Minefield" (*The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch. New York: Norton, 2001)
24. Susan Bordo, from *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body (The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism)*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch. New York: Norton, 2001)
25. Judith Butler, "Critically Queer" (*Literary Theories. A Reader and Guide*, ed. Julian Wolfreys. New York: New York UP, 1999)
26. Judith Fetterley, "My *Ántonia*, Jim Burden, and the Dilemma of the Lesbian Writer" (*Lesbian Texts and Contexts: Radical Revisions*, ed. Karla Jay and Joanne Glasgow. New York: New York UP, 1990)
27. Siobhan B. Someville, from *Queering the Color Line* (Durham: Duke UP, 2000)
28. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Editor's Introduction: Writing 'Race' and the Difference It Makes" (*"Race," Writing, and Difference*, ed. Henry Louis Gates. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1986)
29. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Zora Neale Hurston and the Speakerly Text" (*The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism* (New York: Oxford UP, 1988)
30. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Canon Formation, Literary History ..." (*Falling Into Theory. Conflicting Views on Reading Literature*, ed. David H. Richter. Boston: Bedford Book of St. Martin's Press, 1994)