

CLCS 3610: Trends in Critical Thinking

Spring 2015
M/W 11:50-1:10

Professor Katharina Gerstenberger
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New Criticism Post-Structuralism
Deconstruction Eco-Criticism Feminism
New Historicism Critical Theory
Structuralism **Theory** Modernism
Psychoanalysis Queer Theory
Cultural Studies Post-Modernism
Humanism Post-Feminism
Marxist Criticism Post-Humanism

How do stories produce meaning? How do we read them? What is the relationship between literature and culture? How can theory help us make sense of a text? This course will walk students through the tangled web of 20th- and 21st-century theoretical perspectives and issues.

Fulfills the CW requirement.



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MBH 105

Professor Katharina Gerstenberger
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Office hours: M 1:15-2:15; Th 2:00-3:00

Description:

This course will walk students through the tangled web of 20th- and 21st-century theoretical perspectives and issues. Our aim is to explore the ways in which theory illuminates central literary problems for the critic: How do stories produce meaning? What elements of narrative give us insight into how to read it? What is the relationship between literature and culture? How can theory help us make sense of a text? The course makes no assumptions about your familiarity with these theories, but I do expect that students entering this class have some familiarity with literary interpretation and are willing to engage with the challenging texts we will be reading, discussing, and writing about in this course.

Learning Outcomes:

-In this class students will gain an overview over different literary theories as they have developed over the course of the 20th and 21st centuries. They will be able to offer definitions of these different theoretical approaches to literature and discuss how one builds on the other.

-Students will acquire the intellectual tools to read and understand challenging texts. They will be able to summarize complex arguments in their own words and they will begin to develop the skills to work creatively with literary theory. They will become better informed and more critical consumers of culture and cultural artifacts.

-Students will enhance their writing skills in this class.

This course fulfills the **Critical Writing** requirement:

Throughout the semester you will be asked to speak and write about the particular theoretical and critical issues at hand, and to interrogate the positions and arguments of the writers and artists that we examine. The writing assignments (“homework”) will typically take the form of a short response paper (1-3 pages), and several times during the semester students will be charged with sharing their views and engaging in discussion. In addition you will write three analytical essays (4-6 pages), one on a theoretical text, one on a literary or cultural object, one on a class-related topic of your choice. Lastly, as part of your studies in this course, you will be asked to attend a play on campus (see Schedule below).

- multiple forms of writing and communication include note-taking, pre-writing assignments, writing first drafts, revising and rewriting of paragraphs and larger texts
- forms of verbal communication include in-class discussion, presentations, collaboration on writing assignments, providing feedback to peers
- feedback will come from peers as well as the instructor; each formal writing assignment will be reviewed by peers and instructor
- presentation from Writing Center-staff and Librarian will provide support in the writing and research process; instructor will provide detailed instructions with each assignment

Grading Policy:

Grading Policy

Your work in this class will be evaluated quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantity refers to attendance and the number of assignments and the timeliness and thoroughness with which you complete them. Quality refers to the overall intellectual effect of your work, both in terms of its thoughtfulness and its formal integrity. Showing up, participating, and turning in all assignments (completed and on time) are the basic requirements for this course, and for satisfying the Upper Division Communication/Writing (CW) requirement. Your final grade will be based on these three categories, with your best work counting most: Attendance and participation, short writing assignments, and essays.

Class participation: 30%

Short writing assignments: 25%

3 Essays: 15% each

Rules and Responsibilities:

By signing up for this class, you agree to the following rules and responsibilities:

1. Barring disaster or legitimate obligation, you are expected to arrive on time and attend each class. It is in your best interest to tell me when you know in advance that you cannot attend or will arrive late. Missing class more than twice will harm your grade. Coming late three times will constitute an absence.
2. Carefully read all assigned texts, taking notes while you do so. In some cases, we will re-read a text. Reading a text more than once is crucial to developing an understanding of its form and and content.
3. Plagiarism, the use of another person's intellectual property without acknowledgment, is a criminal offense off campus and is considered a serious infraction against academic integrity within the University community. In this class, we will learn how to document the use of intellectual property in accordance with the law. Acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the paper, likely lead to failure of the course, and can, in extreme cases, result in expulsion from the University. Plagiarism is unethical, anti-intellectual, and an all-around bad idea. Learn the facts! Avoid it! Please read our University

definition of plagiarism and student code of conduct at:
<http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>

4. University Policies and Academic Support
 - a. ADA. “The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020 (V/TDD). <http://disability.utah.edu/>. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.
 - b. Academic Honesty: <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>
 - c. Grading: <http://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/grading.php>
 - d. ASUU Tutoring Center <http://www.sa.utah.edu/tutoring/>
 - e. University Writing Center <http://www.writingcenter.utah.edu/>
 - f. Campus Wellness Connection (helps students find, access, and utilize campus resources and services they may need in relation to physical, mental, intellectual, social, and spiritual wellness))
<http://www.wellness.utah.edu>

Required Texts:

Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. New York: Palgrave, 2002.

Literary Theory: An Anthology. Ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan. New York: Blackwell, 2000.

All other readings will be available to you on the web (from links on the syllabus).

Class Schedule:

INTRODUCTION

January 12 Terry Eagleton, "What is Literature?" (pdf)

January 14 Jonathan Culler, "What is Literature and Does it Matter?" (pdf)

FOUNDATIONS

Formalism

January 19 No class; **Martin-Luther-King Day**

January 21 Rivkin and Ryan, "Introduction: Formalisms," (Rivkin/Ryan, 3-6)
Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel" (Rivkin/Ryan, 674-685)

Structuralism

January 26 Structuralism, Barry 38-48
Jonathan Culler, "The Linguistic Foundation" (Rivkin/Ryan, 56-58)
Ferdinand de Saussure, "Course in General Linguistics" (Rivkin/Ryan, 59-71)

January 28 Roland Barthes, "Mythologies" (Rivkin/Ryan, 81-89)

Psychoanalysis

Freudian Psychoanalysis, Barry 92-103
Rivkin/Ryan, Strangers to Ourselves, 389-396

February 4 Freud, "The Uncanny" (Rivkin/Ryan, 418-430)

FIRST PAPER DUE

February 9 E.T.A Hoffmann, The Sandman
http://www.fln.vcu.edu/hoffmann/sand_e.html

February 11 Presentation: Anne Ernest, Writing Center

February 16 **Marxism**
No class; **President's Day**

February 18 Marxism, Barry 150-161
Rivkin and Ryan, "'Starting with Zero': Basic Marxism," 643-646.
REVISION OF FIRST PAPER DUE

February 23 Karl Marx, "Capital" (Rivkin/Ryan, 665-672)

February 25 Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical
Reproduction" (Rivkin/Ryan, 1235-1241)

POST-ISMS

Post-Structuralism

March 2 Post-Structuralism, Barry 59-71
Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Will to Power" (Rivkin/Ryan, 266-270)

March 4 Michel Foucault, "Discipline and Punish" (Rivkin/Ryan, 549-566)

March 9 **Introduction to library use and resources in 1120 Marriott Library**

March 11 Georges Bataille, "Heterology" (Rivkin/Ryan, 273-277)

SECOND PAPER DUE

Spring Break March 15-22

March 23 **Post-Modernism**
Postmodernism, Barry 81-91
Jean-Francois Lyotard, "The Postmodern Condition," (Rifkin/Ryan, 355-
364)

March 25 Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, "A Thousand Plateaus," (Rifkin/Ryan,
378-388)

March 30 **Deconstruction**
Poststructuralism and Deconstruction, Barry 59-77
Jacques Derrida, "Différance," (Rivkin/Ryan, 278-299)

REVISION OF SECOND PAPER DUE

- April 1 Jacques Derrida, "Différance," (Rivkin/Ryan, 278-299, **re-read!**)
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- April 6 **Post-Colonialism**
Post-Colonial Theory and Ethnic Studies, Barry 185-195
- April 8 Ania Loomba, "Situating Colonial and Postcolonial Studies"
(Rivkin/Ryan, 1100-1111)
- ***
- April 13 Edward Said, "Jane Austen and Empire" (Rivkin/Ryan, 1112-1125)
Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders" (Rivkin/Ryan, 1167-1184)
- April 15 Class Visit to Museum of Fine Arts <http://umfa.utah.edu/>
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- April 20 **Feminism**
Feminisms, Barry 116-131
Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining
Difference," (Rivkin/Ryan, 854-860)
THIRD PAPER DUE
- April 22 Hélène Cixous, "Laugh of the Medusa"
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/3173239.pdf>
- ***
- April 27 Final Discussion

Final paper (=REVISION OF THIRD PAPER) due on Monday, April 27, 5pm.