

Instructor: Mark Rasmussen

Class times: Monday, Wednesday, 8:30 – 11:30

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### Required Text

Vincent B. Leitch, general editor, *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, third edition

### Schedule of Classes and Assignments

#### Monday, June 30th

Introduction to the course.

Canon fodder.

#### Wednesday, July 2nd

##### **Classical Theory**

Plato, introduction and excerpts from *Republic* VII and X (43-46, 75-89).

Aristotle, introduction and *Poetics* (95-127). Chapters 19-22 may be skipped.

#### Monday, July 7th

##### **Neoclassicism and Romanticism**

Samuel Johnson, introduction and selections from *The Rambler*, *Rasselas*, and “The Preface to *Shakespeare*” (383-405).

Laura Bohannon, “Shakespeare in the Bush” (Canvas).

William Wordsworth, introduction and “Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*” (563-83).

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, introduction (587-89), “Shakespeare’s Judgment Equal to His Genius” (Canvas), and selection from *Biographia Literaria* (590-97).

John Keats, selection from *Letters* (Canvas).

#### Wednesday, July 9th

##### **Victorians and Moderns**

Matthew Arnold, introduction and “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time” (681-703).

Oscar Wilde, introduction, “Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*” and selection from “The Decay of Lying” (762-70).

T.S. Eliot, introduction and “Tradition and the Individual Talent” (881-90).

Susan Sontag, “introduction and “Against Interpretation” (1717-30).

**\*\*\*Introduce midterm paper.**

#### Monday, July 14th

**Formalist criticism.** Reading: Cleanth Brooks, introduction in Norton (1179-82) and “The Naked Babe and the Cloak of Manliness” (Canvas); William Empson, selection from *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (Canvas).

**Reader-response criticism and hermeneutics.** Reading: Norman Holland, “Who Reads What How” (Canvas); Stanley Fish, “Interpreting the *Variorum*” (Canvas).

**\*\*\*Prep session for midterm paper.**

Wednesday, July 16th

**Marxist criticism.\*** Reading: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, introduction and selections from *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, *The German Ideology*, and *The Communist Manifesto* (652-64).

**Bakhtin: The carnivalesque and dialogism**

Mikhail M. Bakhtin, selection from *Rabelais and His World* (Canvas); introduction and selection from *Discourse in the Novel* (997-1030, especially 997-1003 and 1021-30).

### **MIDTERM PAPER DUE BY E-MAIL, FRIDAY, JULY 18TH**

Monday, July 21st

**Psychoanalytic criticism\*** Reading: Sigmund Freud, introduction, selections from *The Interpretation of Dreams*, and “The Uncanny” (783-816; pages 793-99 may be skimmed.)

**Feminist Criticism\*.** Reading: Virginia Woolf, introduction and selection from *A Room of One’s Own* (854-65); Simone de Beauvoir, introduction and selection from *The Second Sex* (1211-21); Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, introduction (1839-41) and “The Queen’s Looking Glass” from *The Madwoman in the Attic* (Canvas).

Wednesday, July 23rd

**Structuralism and Semiotics.** Reading: Ferdinand de Saussure, introduction and selections from *Course in General Linguistics* (820-40); Claude Lévi-Strauss, introduction (1222-25) and “The Structural Study of Myth” (Canvas).

**Deconstruction and Post-Structuralism.** Reading: Jacques Derrida, introduction (1602-07); “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences” (Canvas).

Monday, July 28th

**Gender Studies\*.** Reading: Judith Butler, introduction and selection from *Gender Trouble* (2372-88); Judith Jack Halberstam, introduction and selection from *Female Masculinity* (2525-49).

**Queer Theory\*.** Reading: Michel Foucault, introduction and selection from *The History of Sexuality* (1388-94, 1421-40); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, introduction and selection from *Between Men* (2277-83).

**New Historicism\*.** Reading: Stephen J. Greenblatt, introduction (2027-29) and Introduction to *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance* (Canvas), and Renée Bergland, “The Eagle’s Eye: Dickinson’s View of Battle” (Canvas).

Wednesday, July 30th

**Race and Ethnic Studies\*.** Reading: W.E.B. Du Bois, introduction, selections from *The Souls of Black Folk* and “Criteria of Negro Art” (841-53); Victoria Santa Cruz, “Mi gritaron negra” (video); Toni Morrison, introduction and selection from *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Canvas); bell hooks, introduction and “Postmodern Blackness” (2316-25); Childish Gambino, “This is America” (video); Pew Research Center, “Being Asian in America” (webpage).

**Postcolonial Theory\*.** Reading: Chinua Achebe, introduction and “An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*” (1534-1546); Homi K. Bhabha, introduction (2150-2) and selection from “Signs Taken for Wonders” (Canvas).

Monday, August 4th

**Ecocriticism.\*** Reading: selections from Cheryl Glotfelty and Harold Fromm, eds., *The Ecocriticism Reader*; Timothy Morton, introduction and selection from *The Ecological Thought* (2619-31).

**Cultural Studies.** Reading: Louis Menand, “What Doctor Seuss Really Taught Us” and Richard Rorty, “The Inspirational Value of Great Works of Literature” (both on Canvas).

**FINAL PAPER DUE BY E-MAIL, TUESDAY, AUGUST 5TH**

Course Requirements and Grading

Midterm Paper	50 points
Final Paper	100 points
Leading of class discussion (in pairs)	25 points
Class participation	<u>25 points</u>
	200 points/2 = your grade

A+=100-97, A=96-93, A-=92-90, B+=89-87 B=86-83 B-=82-80

\*Opportunities for student-led discussion.

## APPENDIX

Other Juicy Bits from Norton and Canvas  
(None are required for this course.)

### **Formalism:**

Brooks, “The Heresy of Paraphrase” (1183-95); William K. Wimsatt, Jr., and Monroe C. Beardsley, introduction and “The Intentional Fallacy” (1195-1211); Victor Shklovsky, “Art as Technique” (Canvas).

### **Reader-response criticism and hermeneutics:**

Wayne C. Booth, “Control of Distance in Jane Austen’s *Emma*” (Canvas); Wolfgang Iser, introduction and “Interaction Between Text and Reader” (1450-60); E.D. Hirsch, Jr., “Objective Interpretation” (Canvas); Roland Barthes, introduction and selections from *Mythologies*, “The Death of the Author,” and “The Reality Effect” (1262-77).

### **Marxist criticism**

Marx and Engels, selections from *Capital* (667-78); Walter Benjamin, introduction and “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility” (973-96).

### **Bakhtin: The carnivalesque and dialogism**

Erich Auerbach, introduction and “Odysseus’ Scar,” from *Mimesis* (954-73), makes an interesting pairing with Bakhtin.

### **Psychoanalytic criticism**

Freud, “Creative Writers and Daydreaming” and “Mourning and Melancholia” (both on Canvas); Harold Bloom, introduction and selections from *The Anxiety of Influence* (1572-82).

### **Feminist Criticism**

Annette Kolodny, “Dancing Through the Minefield” (Canvas); Laura Mulvey, introduction and “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” (1952-65).

### **Structuralism and Semiotics**

Roman Jakobson, introduction and selections from “Linguistics and Poetics” and “Two Aspects of Language” (1064-78); Roland Barthes, “The World of Wrestling” (Canvas).

### **Deconstruction and Post-Structuralism**

Michel Foucault, introduction and “What is an Author?” (1388-1409); Jacques Derrida, selections from *Dissemination* (1608-36); Barbara Johnson, “Melville’s Fist: The Execution of *Billy Budd*” (Canvas).

For post-structuralist Marxism, see Louis Althusser, introduction and selection from *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (1282-1311), and Fredric Jameson, introduction, selections from *The Political Unconscious*, and “Postmodernism and Consumer Society,” 1731-71.

For post-structuralist psychoanalysis, see Jacques Lacan, introduction, “The Mirror Stage,” and “The Signification of the Phallus” (1105-17, 1129-37), and Slavoj Žižek, introduction and selection from *Looking Awry* (2221-42).

**Gender studies**

Hélène Cixous, introduction and “The Laugh of the Medusa” (1865-86).

**Queer Theory**

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, “Jane Austen and the Masturbating Girl” (Canvas); Steven F. Kruger, “Claiming the Pardoner” (Canvas).

**Race and Ethnic Studies**

Henry Louis Gates, Jr., introduction and “Talking Black: Critical Signs of the Times” (2242-52); Alondra Nelson, introduction and “AfroFuturism: Past-Future Visions (2631-38).

**Postcolonial Theory**

Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Taban Lo Liyong, and Henry Owuor-Anyumba, introduction and “On the Abolition of the English Department” (1909-16); Edward Said, introduction and selections from *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism* (1780-1821).

**New Historicism**

Stephen Greenblatt, selection from “Resonance and Wonder” (2029-40), “Invisible Bullets” (Canvas).

**Ecocriticism and Post-Humanism**

Rob Nixon, introduction, selection from “Introduction” to *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, and “The Anthropocene: The Promise and Pitfalls of an Epochal Idea” (2353-72); Donna Haraway, introduction and selection from “A Manifesto for Cyborgs” (2040-65); N. Katherine Hayles, introduction and “How We Read: Close, Hyper, Machine” (2071-94), and “Inside the Mind of an AI” (Canvas).

**Cultural Studies**

Ian Bogost, introduction and “The Rhetoric of Video Games” (2650-72); Martha C. Nussbaum, introduction and selection from *Cultivating Humanity* (2136-52).

**Surface and Reparative Reading**

Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus, introduction and selection from “Surface Reading: An Introduction” (2603-19); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, “Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading; or, You’re So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Introduction is about You” (Canvas).