

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF LETTERS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERATURE

Syllabus

Title of the Course: IED 444 ( 02) Literary Criticism II  
Instructor: Prof.Dr. Serpil OPPERMAN  
Year and Term: Spring 2012  
Classroom and Hours: Wednesday 13:00-15:45 B2 201

**Aim and Content:** This course is a survey of contemporary literary theories and their application to literary texts. It is thus a reading course in foundational texts of contemporary literary theory. The aim of the course is to develop a critical awareness of literary theory and its role in the interpretation of literary texts. Examining and applying the major texts of contemporary theorists of literature from the New Criticism to Post-structuralist theories, post-colonial theory and Ecocriticism, will provide the students with a broad view of the contemporary debates on reading and interpreting literary texts. By the end of the course the students will be familiar with the terminology and the key concepts of literary theory.

The major objectives for students can be listed as follows:

1. understanding of the basic theoretical concepts underlying contemporary approaches to literature and of the major differences between them;
2. understanding of the aims of literary criticism; knowledge of key forms and terminology of literary criticism; ability to read the writings of literary scholars and critics with understanding and appreciation;
3. knowledge of the methods of literary analysis;
4. ability to generate and articulate personal responses to literary and critical texts, and to explain the premises and assumptions underlying such personal responses;
5. ability to write a critical essay that states a clear thesis and supports it persuasively, integrating literary research with personal ideas.

**Online literary resources:**

VOS-Literary Resources-Theory: <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Lit/theory.html>  
John Lye-Contemporary Literary Theory: <http://www.brocku.ca/english/courses/4F70/index.html>  
Mary Klages : <http://www.colorado.edu/English/courses/ENGL2012Klages/lecturelinks.html>  
Introductory Guide to Critical Theory: <http://www.cla.purdue.edu/academic/engl/theory/index.html>  
Introduction to Modern Literary Theory: <http://www.kristisiegel.com/theory.htm>  
Glossary of Literary Theory: <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/utel/glossary/headerindex.html>

**Course Outline :**

**Week I-III:**

Introductory Lecture. (A conceptual survey of the linguistic revolution); and the difference between theory and criticism

The New Criticism: Irony, tension, ambiguity, paradox, close reading.

Ted Hughes-"The Thought Fox."

Edgar Allen Poe- "The Tell-Tale Heart."

Cleanth Brooks: The Well Wrought Urn (Chapters 7 and 8) (students' responsibility)

Wimsatt and Beardsley: "The Affective Fallacy," and "The Intentional Fallacy."

**Week IV :**

Russian Formalism: Formal effects, Literariness, Defamiliarization, Fabula and Sjuzet, Skaz theory, Material and Device.

Victor Shklovsky, Roman Jakobson (only)

Craig Raine- "A Martian Sends a Postcard Home."

**Week V:**

Structuralism: Relating texts to a larger structure. Figurative levels in the discourse, binary oppositions, metaphor-metonymy, synchronic-diachronic approach.

Saussure- "Course in General Linguistics"

Barthes- "The Structuralist Activity" and "From Work to Text"

Claude Levi-Strauss- "The Structural Study of Myth."

Hemingway- "Cat in the Rain."

**Week VI:**

Post-Structuralist Theories (Deconstruction): Intertextuality, Discourse, Logocentrism, Phonocentrism, Differance, repressed, silenced moments in texts, reading the text against its logic.

Foucault- "What is an Author?"

Barthes- "Death of the Author." "Theory of the Text"

Derrida- "Differance."

Jonathan Culler- On Deconstruction.

(Application texts selected in class)

**Week VII:**

The New Historicism: Historicity of texts, textuality of history. Parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts.

Stephen Greenblatt- "The Invisible Bullets."

Dominick LaCapra, Louis Montrose, Hayden White

H. Aram Veesser (ed): The New Historicism (1989)

Extracts from Peter Ackroyd's *Hawksmoor*, Jeanette Winterson's *Boating for Beginners*

Midterm I ( April 25, 2012)

**Week VIII:**

Reader-Response Theory, and Hermeneutics : gaps, indeterminacies, fusion of horizons, implied and informed readers,

Wolfgang Iser, Stanley Fish, Hans Robert Jauss.

**Week IX:**

Feminist Criticism. and French Feminist Theory (Psychoanalytical theory including Freud's and Lacan's ideas and their influence on Feminist critics will also be dealt with in depth)

Elaine Showalter, Susan Gubar and Sandra Gilbert; Helene Cixous, Julia Kristev, Luce Irigaray

Gynocriticism, eco-feminism,

(Application texts selected in class)

**Week X-XI:**

Postcolonial theory and Ecocriticism (Marxist theory's influence on postcolonial theories will also be introduced)

Homi Bhabba, Edward Said; and various ecocritics including Lawrence Buell, Glen A. Love, Dana Phillips, etc.

**Week XII:** Midterm II ( May 16, 2012)

**Week XIII-XIV:** General Summary of contemporary literary theory and future developments

**Method of Instruction:** Lectures and discussions

**Requirements:** Attendance is obligatory. More than 11 hours of absence will result in F1.

Each student is obliged to read every text listed here, and those that I will name during the class. Internet is useful, but do not depend on it

This is a rather difficult course for those who are not familiar with critical and philosophical discourse; therefore an intensive reading and thinking is a must. The language of the above material is the intricate language of philosophy in general. The discourse of critical theory is not however based on incomprehensible jargon as some think in their resistance to theory. Concepts and terms that are coined by the theorists come naturally out of the complexity of thought-systems themselves. Human language and human thought evolve together in mutual interaction as the famous scientist Karl Popper once declared; and as Heisenberg famously put it, "it would be our task to adapt our language and thought to this new situation." Especially today, when the natural sciences and literary theory are in mutual alliance, it is meaningless to stick to the outmoded and obsolete models of approach in literary studies.

**Assessment:** In grading exam papers 25% of the total mark will be taken off for grammatical and writing mistakes.

The final assessment will be made on the following basis:

Midterm I and II 50%

Final Exam 50%

**Textbooks:**

Raman Selden: *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*. Kentucky: UP of Kentucky, 1993.

Charles Bressler: *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*. 1994. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1999.

Raman Selden: *Practising Theory and Reading Literature*. Kentucky:UP of Kentucky, 1989.

Peter Barry: *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1995.

Hans Bertens. *Literary Theory: The Basics*. London: Taylor and Francis, 2008

Mary Klages. *Literary Theory: A Guide for the Perplexed*. New York: Continuum, 2006.

Hazard Adams and Leroy Searle. Eds., *Critical Theory Since 1965*. Florida State UP. 1986. (Articles here)

Cheryl Glotfelty and Harold Fromm. *Ecocriticism: A Reader*. Georgia: U of Georgia P, 1996.

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