

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF LETTERS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERATURE

Syllabus

Title of the Course: IED 444 ( 03) Literary Criticism II  
Instructor: Prof. Dr. Serpil OPPERMAN  
Year and Term: Spring 2017  
Classroom and Hours: B2-205 Wednesday, 13:00-15:50

**Aim and Content:** This course is a survey of contemporary literary theories and their application to literary texts. 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 and to 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>  
Bedford- Critical Approaches: [http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/virtualit/poetry/critical\\_define/crit\\_newcrit.html](http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/virtualit/poetry/critical_define/crit_newcrit.html)

**Course Outline :**

**Week I-II:**

Introduction : T. S. Eliot, I. A Richards, William Empson, R. P. Blackmur, Cleanth Brooks, John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, and William K. Wimsatt

The New Criticism: that received its name from John Crowe Ransom's 1941 book *The New Criticism*  
Irony, tension, ambiguity, paradox, close reading.  
William K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley: "The Affective Fallacy," and "The Intentional Fallacy."  
Cleanth Brooks: *The Well Wrought Urn* (Chapters 7 and 8) (students' responsibility)  
Ted Hughes-"The Thought Fox."  
Edgar Allen Poe- "The Tell-Tale Heart."

**Week III :**

Russian Formalism: Formal effects, Literariness, Defamiliarization, Fabula and Sjuzet, Skaz theory, Material and Device. OPOYAZ in St. Petersburg and Moscow Linguistic Circle  
Victor Shklovsky, Roman Jakobson, Yuri Tynianov Vladimir Propp, Boris Eichenbaum, Boris Tomashevsky  
Craig Raine- "A Martian Sends a Postcard Home."

**Week IV-V:**

Structuralism: Relating texts to a larger structure. Figurative levels in the discourse, binary oppositions, metaphor-metonymy, synchronic-diachronic approach. Paradigmatic and Syntagmatic analysis, Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Levi Strauss, Roland Barthes. Semiotics

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."

Daniel Chandler: "Semiotics for Beginners": <http://visual-memory.co.uk/daniel/Documents/S4B/semiotic.html>

### **Week VI-VII:**

Post-Structuralist Theories (Deconstruction):

Intertextuality, Discourse, Logocentrism, Phonocentrism, Differance, repressed, silenced moments in texts, reading the text against its logic, trace, readerly and writerly texts, .

Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, Roland Barthes;

The Yale School: Paul de Man, Geoffrey Hartman, Harold Bloom, J. Hillis Miller

Foucault- "What is an Author?"

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

Derrida- "Differance."

Jonathan Culler- *On Deconstruction*

(Application texts selected in class)

Purdue Univ- 20WL Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/722/08/>

### **Week VIII:**

The New Historicism:

Historicity of texts, textuality of history. Parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts. Stephen Greenblatt, Hayden White, Louis Montrose, Louis O Mink, Dominick La Capra, Aram Veesser,

Stephen Greenblatt- "The Invisible Bullets."

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

Midterm I (April)

### **Week IX:**

Reader-Response Theory, and Hermeneutics : Reception Theory, gaps, indeterminacies, fusion of horizons, implied and informed readers, interpretive communities, repertoire, the phenomenology of reading, hermeneutical circle, theories of interpretation, meaning making, understanding, fusion of horizons

Wolfgang Iser, Stanley Fish, Hans Robert Jauss, Norman Holland, David Bleich, Hans Georg Gadamer, William Dilthey

Jane Tompkins: *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Poststructuralism* (1980).

Wolfgang Iser: *The Act of Reading*; and *Implied Reader*

Stanley Fish: *Surprised By Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost*

### **Week X-XII:**

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), gender, Gynocriticism,

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

Elaine Showalter: *A Literature of Their Own*

Susan Gubar and Sandra Gilbert: *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*

Toril Moi: *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*

Anette Kolodny: "Dancing through the Minefield: Some Observations on the Theory, Practice, and Politics of a Feminist Literary Criticism."

Ecofeminism (Greta Gaard, Karren Warren, Val Plumwood, Carolyn Merchant, Catriona Sandilands),

Greta Gaard, ed. *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*

Noel Sturgeon. *Ecofeminist Natures: Race, Gender, Feminist Theory and Political Action*

Val Plumwood. *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*

<http://users.clas.ufl.edu/bron/pdf--christianity/Hobgood-Oster--Ecofeminism-International%20Evolution.pdf>

### **Week XIII:**

Ecocriticism: from the first wave to recent developments in ecocritical theory and praxis: nature-writing, bioregionalism, ecoglobalism, postcolonial ecocriticism, urban ecocriticism, and material ecocriticism and posthuman directions.

Cheryll Glotfelty. "Introduction: Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis." *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. Eds. Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1996.

Barry, Peter. "Ecocriticism." *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester, UK: U of Manchester P, 2002. 248-71.

Serpil Oppermann. "The Rhizomic Trajectory of Ecocriticism." *Ecozon@* 1.1(2010): 17- 21.

WLA position papers at ASLE: (<http://www.asle.org/site/resources/ecocritical-library/intro/defining/>)

PMLA letters ((<http://www.asle.org/site/resources/ecocritical-library/intro/forum>)).

#### **Week XIV: Midterm II ( optional-May)**

**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 (optional) 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. (Essays here)

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