

ENGL 5810

Survey of Critical Theory

W 6pm – 8:50pm
GAB 438
Fall 2016
University of North Texas

Professor Ybarra

Email: priscilla.ybarra@unt.edu

Office Hours (virtual): M, 10:30-11:30am, W 10:30am – 12:30pm, or by appointment

any in person meeting needs to be scheduled at least a week in advance to determine time and place of meeting.

Office: Language 408K



Ceci n'est pas une pipe.

Course Description

We will read and discuss works that prompt a better understanding of what it means to take up the art and practice of literary study. Our readings will introduce you to or reorient you towards foundational concepts in literary studies. This course requires on-time reading of assigned texts and of course demands a great deal of in-class participation. You will complete weekly quizzes, deliver at least one presentation over the week's reading, and write a final research essay.

Course Purpose (from the UNT Catalog)

Survey of major theoretical schools with special attention to those influential in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Required Texts:

- check class website regularly: pybarra.weebly.com; password: jlacan
- *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* by Jonathan Culler
- *Literary Theory: An Anthology* edited by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan
- Online readings available on our class website: pybarra.weebly.com; click on tab for 5810;
*****REQUIRED: PRINT PDFs, READ PDFs, AND BRING PDFs TO CLASS*****

Expected Learning Outcomes

- Understanding of assigned reading materials discussing key concepts of literary studies
- Ability to approach texts via multiple possible interpretations
- Ability to orally articulate key concepts in contemporary literary theory
- Ability to write a clear and convincing research essay that employs one or more critical theory

These expected learning outcomes will be measured by means of the assignments listed below, including grade percentages for each assignment:

- (30%) Two in-class presentations over the week's reading: present an overview of the given critical theory and lead the discussion over one or more readings for at least half the class period
- (30%) Regular participation in class discussion; including attendance, asking questions, responding to questions, and responding to other students' comments
- (40%) Final Research Essay

Special Notes



- **ATTENDANCE** Students should endeavor to attend every class. Roll will be taken at every meeting. Up to one absence is permitted. I do not accept notes or explanations. Use your absence wisely. After one absence, the student begins lose one letter grade on zir existing participation grade for each subsequent absence. **Three absences result in an F for the entire course.**
- **Academic Honesty** Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.
- **ADA STATEMENT** The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.
- **Gender neutral pronouns:** This course will challenge you to integrate gender neutral pronouns into your spoken and written communication. Please use "ze" instead of "he or she" and "zir" instead of and "him and her" and "zir" instead of "his and hers."
- **The University Writing Lab**, UNT's Writing Lab offers free face-to-face and online tutoring to all UNT students (from incoming first year students to graduate students). Their website offers schedules of workshops; information about tutoring services; and games and other resources for grammar, punctuation, punctuation, and more. Contact them by phone (940-565-2563); e-mail (writinglab@unt.edu); or in person (Room 105, Auditorium Building). Their website is located at <http://www.unt.edu/writinglab/>.
- **TX SENATE BILL 11 ("CAMPUS CARRY")**. Students must read UNT's policy on concealed handguns on campus (see <http://campuscarry.unt.edu/untpolicy>). Here I note that 1) only licensed persons may legally carry handguns on campus, and 2) this right only authorizes the licensed carrying of "handgun[s], the presence of which is not openly

noticeable to the ordinary observation of a reasonable person.” Per policy, if a gun is “partially or wholly visible, even if holstered,” it’s not legal on campus, whether or not it’s licensed. I report all illegal activities to the UNT police, regardless of their nature.

- **“ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATIONS.”** All students should be aware of UNT’s guidelines for responding to “active shooter situations” (see <http://emergency.unt.edu/get-prepared/Active-Shooter>).

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

(subject to adjustment; come to class every meeting to find out)

UNIT A: On Literary Study

Week One

W 08/31

- Introductions, course overview, initial discussion

Week Two: General Introduction to Theory

W 09/07

- Culler, “Chapter 1: What is Theory?” (online)
- Foucault, Michel. excerpt from *The History of Sexuality* (online)

Week Three: Formalisms

W 09/14

- Culler, “Chapter 2: What is Literature and Does It Matter?” (online)
- Rivkin and Ryan. *Literary Theory*, “Formalisms” (3-7)
- R&R, *Literary Theory*; Bakhtin, Mikhail, “Discourse in the Novel” (32-51)
- R&R, *Literary Theory*, Brooks, Cleanth. “The Formalist Critics” and “The Language of Paradox” (52-70)

Week Four: Marxism

W 09/21

- Culler, “Chapter 3: Literature and Cultural Studies” (online)
- R&R, “Marxism” (231-242)
- R&R, Marx, Karl. *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, “Wage Labor and Capital,” and *Capital* (256-276)
- R&R, Benjamin, Walter. “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (282-289)
- R&R, Althusser, Louis. “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” (294-304)

Week Five: Cultural Studies

W 09/28

- R&R, “The Politics of Culture” (1025-1027)
- R&R, Bordieu, Pierre. *Distinction* (1028-1036)
- R&R, Horkheimer and Adorno. “The Culture Industry as Mass Deception,” (1037-1041)
- R&R, Radway, Janice. *Reading the Romance* (1042-1049)
- R&R, Hall, Stuart. “The Rediscovery of ‘Ideology,’” (1050-1064)
- R&R, Hebdige, Dick. *Subculture: the Meaning of Style* (1065-1075)
- R&R, Bordo, Susan. “Material Girl: The Effacements of Postmodern Culture” (1099-1115)

Week Six: NO CLASS (Ybarra visits Rice University)

W 10/05

- NO CLASS

Week Seven: Structuralism and Linguistics

W 10/12

- Culler, "Chapter 4: Language, Meaning, Interpretation"
- R&R, Culler, Jonathon. "The Linguistic Foundation" (73-75)
- R&R, de Saussure, Ferdinand. *Course in General Linguistics* (76-90)
- R&R, Levi-Strauss, Claude. "The Structural Study of Myth" (101-115)

Week Eight: Poetry and Narrative

W 10/19

- Culler, "Chapter 5: Rhetoric, Poetics, Poetry"
- Eagleton, Terry. "How to Read a Poem" and "Four Nature Poems" (online)
- Culler, "Chapter 6: Narrative"
- R&R, Lukács, Georg. *The Historical Novel* (290-293)

Week Nine: Performativity

W 10/26

- Culler, "Chapter 7: Performative Language"
- R&R, Austin, J.L. *How to Do Things With Words* (96-100)
- R&R, Derrida, Jacques. *Différance* (385-407)
- R&R, Butler, Judith. "Imitation and Gender Insubordination" (722-730)

Week Ten: Identity/Psychoanalysis

W 11/02

- Culler, "Chapter 8: Identity, identification, and the subject"
- R&R, "Strangers to Ourselves: Psychoanalysis" (119-127)
- R&R, Freud, Sigmund. *The Interpretation of Dreams* (128-150)
- R&R, Lacan, Jacques. "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience" (178-183)
- Fanon, Frantz. Excerpt from *Black Skin, White Masks* (online; tba)

Week Eleven: Identity/Ethnic Studies/Postcolonial Studies

W 11/09

- R&R, "English Without Shadows, Literature on a World Scale" (851-855)
- R&R, Dubois, W.E.B. "The Souls of Black Folk" (858-872)
- R&R, Said, Edward. *Orientalism* (873-886)
- R&R, Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera* (887-902)
- R&R, Morrison, Toni. "Playing in the Dark" (923-935)
- Short story by Dagoberto Gilb (online);
- Tuesday, Nov 15, 8pm, University Union 333: Gilb visits UNT! **Please attend.**

Week Twelve: Identity/Feminism

W 11/16

- R&R, “Feminist Paradigms” (527-532)
- R&R, Irigaray, Luce. “The Power of Discourse and the Subordination of the Feminine” (570-573)
- R&R, Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic* (596-611)
- R&R, Lorde, Audre. “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference”
- R&R, Rich, Adrienne. “Notes Toward a Politics of Location” (637-649)
- R&R, Spillers, Hortense. “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book” (656-672)

Week Thirteen: NO CLASS

W 11/23

- TG BREAK

Week Fourteen: Ethics and Aesthetics/Postmodern and Posthuman

W 11/30

- Culler, “Chapter 9: Ethics and Aesthetics”
- R&R, Foucault, Michel. *The Archeology of Knowledge* (421-428)
- R&R, Kristeva, Julia. *Revolution in Poetic Language* (451-463)
- R&R, Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish* (464-487)
- R&R, Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Condition* (509-513)
- Wolfe, Cary. Excerpt from *What is Posthumanism?* (online; tba)

Week Fifteen: Ethics and Aesthetics/Decolonial

W 12/07

- Moya, Paula. “Who We Are and From Where We Speak” (online)
- Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. “On the Coloniality of Being” (online)
- Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. Excerpt from *Against War* (online; tba)
- Mignolo, Walter. Excerpt from *The Darker Side of Western Modernity* (online; tba)

**FINAL ESSAY DUE at priscilla.ybarra@unt.edu:
W, 12/14/16, by 9 PM at the latest**