Comparative Literature 390
Literary and Cultural Theory Since 1900
Fall 2010

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**Literary and Cultural Theory Since 1900: A Survey for Comparatists**

"What's left of theory?" The title of a recent collection of essays speaks to anxieties voiced by many of us who study literature. What is it we do as comparatists, as students of literature, and as humanists? This survey of recent literary theories will begin with these questions. Haun Shaussy's anthology of essays on the status of the Comparative Literature suggests how the field has changed over the past six decades. Selections from two essay collections on the humanities will help us situate transformations in Comparative Literature in a broader context.

In the weeks that follow, we will read texts that exemplify various critical positions and approaches, ranging from Anglo-American New Criticism to various schools inspired by developments in linguistics to recent interdisciplinary work that refuses traditional distinctions between literature and other forms of human expression. Our focus on these texts will be twofold: we will look at them closely, often reading them against themselves; but we will also try to come to grips with the usefulness of the theories they expound.

**Assignments and grading**: One oral report of not more than twenty minutes on a theorist or text (10%); four short position papers (70%); class participation (20%).

Texts on reserve at PCL are followed by the call number.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**
Leitch et al.: *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. 2nd edition. First edition on reserve: PN 86 N67 2001 PCL

**RECOMMENDED:**
Adams: *Critical Theory Since Plato* 2nd edition. PN49 C683 1992
Auerbach: *Mimesis*: PN 56 R3 A8313 1957 PCL Stacks
Auerbach: *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature* PN710 A83 1984
Bernheimer, ed.: *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism* PN 863 C586 1995 PCL Stacks
Casanova: *The World Republic of Letters* PN 703 C3713 2004 PCL
Eagleton: *Literary Theory*: PN94 E2 1983 PCL Stacks
Hall, ed. *Professions: Conversations on the Future of Literary and Cultural Studies.* U of Illinois Press, 2001. PR 51 U6 P76 2001 PCL
Hayward, Susan. *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts.* 2nd ed. Routledge, 2000. PN 1993.45 H36 2000 PCL; also online: http://www.lib.utexas.edu:2048/login?url=http://www.netLibrary.com/urlapi.asp?action=summary&v=1&bookid=61022
Lodge: *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*: 2nd ed. PN94 M57 2000 PCL Stacks
Lodge: *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism: A Reader* (UTCAT entry begins with "20th-century"): PN94 L6
Milner: *Literature, Culture & Society*: PN51 M48 1996B
Mitchell, W. J. T and Mark B. N. Hansen, eds. *Critical Terms for Media Studies* PN56 T37 C75 2010
Moi: *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*. PN 98 W64 M65 1991, PN98 W64 M65 2002

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Rimmon-Kenan: *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*. PN 212 R55 1983; 2nd edition online: http://www.lib.utexas.edu:2048/login?url=http://www.netLibrary.com/urlapi.asp?action=summary&v=1&bookid=102885

Rivkin and Ryan: *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. PN 45 L512 1998 PCL Stacks

Saussy: *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization*. Johns Hopkins UP 2006. PN 863 C585 2006 PCL Stacks

Warhol and Herndl: *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism.* 1st ed. PN 98 W64 F366 1991. See also second edition, 1997.

For specific topics, such as performativity, memory, ecocriticism, and subjectivity, see the individual volumes in the series "The New Critical Idiom," published by Routledge.

**Reference Works:**

*The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory*. Ed. David Macey

*A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory*. Ed. Payne et al. HM 101 D527 1996 PCL Reference

*Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms*. Ed. Makaryk. PN 81 E43 1993 PCL Reference

*The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism*. Ed. Groden and Kreiswirth. PN 81 J64 1994 PCL Reference; 2nd ed. PN 81 J64 2005 PCL Reference. Online edition: http://www.lib.utexas.edu/indexes/titles.html?id=422

*Key Contemporary Social Theorists*. Ed. Elliott and Ray: H 61 K473 2003

*The Columbia History of Twentieth-Century French Thought*. PCL Reference; DC 33.7 C575 2006

Useful Web Site:
http://www.grad.washington.edu/envision/index.html

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**Course Outline**

Week 1: Introduction: Erich Auerbach
Aug. 25

Week 2: Foundations? 1: Nietzsche, Wilde, Heidegger
Aug. 30
Sept. 1

Week 3: Foundations? 2: Freud,
Sept. 6 LABOR DAY HOLIDAY!
Sept. 8

Week 4: Foundations? 3. Marx; Saussure
Sept. 13
Sept. 15

Week 5: Formalisms: Brooks, Eichenbaum, Shklovsky (photocopy), Jakobson, Todorov

Sept. 20 **FIRST POSITION PAPER DUE IN CLASS**
Sept. 22

Week 6: Race and Interpretation: W.E.B. DuBois, Zora Neale Hurston, Henry Gates Jr., bell hooks;
Sept. 27
Sept. 29

Week 7: Marxisms: Gramsci, Althusser, Williams Benjamin, Horkheimer and Adorno
Oct. 4
Oct. 6

Week 8: Ordinary Language: J. L. Austin, Wittgenstein (photocopy), Bakhtin
Oct. 11
Oct. 13

Week 9: Desire, Spectatorship, and Performance: Lacan, Mulvey, Butler
Oct. 18 **TIMED WRITING ASSIGNMENT (TAKE-HOME) DUE IN CLASS**
Oct. 20

Week 10: Cultures, Fields, and the Public Sphere: Habermas, Bourdieu, and Casanova
Oct. 25
Oct. 27

Week 11: Power and Narrative Discourse: Michel Foucault and Hayden White
Nov. 1
Nov. 3

Week 12: Deconstruction and French Feminisms: Derrida; Cixous and Kristeva
Nov. 8
Nov. 10

Week 13: Language, Gender, Identities, and Emotions—Anzaldua, Berlant and Warner
Nov. 15 **SECOND POSITION PAPER DUE IN CLASS**
Nov. 17

Week 14: History, Postcolonialism, Style, and Hypertext: Greenblatt, Fanon, Hebdige, Moulthrop
Nov. 22
Nov. 24
Nov. 25-26 T H A N K S G I V I N G H O L I D A Y

Week 15: Conclusions
Nov. 29
Dec. 1 **IN-CLASS TIMED WRITING ASSIGNMENT**