

English 202-03/Introduction to Literary Theory

Professor Richard Feldstein

Spring 2010 Class Time: M/TH 12:00-1:50

Class Location: Craig-Lee Hall 051

My Office: Craig-Lee 364

Office Phone: 456-8670

Office Hours: M: 2:00-3:00/We: 3:00-4:00/and by appointment

Course Description:

This course will provide an introduction to cultural criticism as it applies to the study of literature. More specifically, we will apply theories of race, class, and gender to the literature we read and the films we watch. We will also study the production of knowledge in the postmodern classroom as a contested event, which deconstructs the teacher's position as "master-educator" and the text's position as "master-resource." Texts that will guide our study are George Orwell's Animal Farm, Oscar Wilde's The Portrait of Dorian Gray, F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby, Sandra Cisneros's The House on Mango Street as well as Octavia E. Butler's Kindred. We will also watch several films in class. Since this is an introductory course, students are not expected to have any previous knowledge of the topics we will study; the intention is to proceed slowly and to integrate past material with new topics. You will write three formal essays.

Texts (which can be purchased at the Campus Bookstore):

T Sandra Cisneros, The House on Mango Street

T F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby

T Oscar Wilde, The Portrait of Dorian Gray

T Octavia E. Butler, Kindred (Beacon Press)

T George Orwell, Animal Farm (Signet Classics)

T Microsoft Office 2007 (purchasable for 12.00 at the bookstore)/buy this if you do not already own Microsoft Office 2003

T English 3200 (Joseph Blumenthal) on reserve at the library or purchasable online for those with grammar issues)

Requirements:

-- **Essay Requirements:** You will have three writing assignments. You will write three essays this semester, one of which is a cumulative essay comprised of four or five paragraph assignments. Each essay must demonstrate your ability to work with MLA documentation style (70% of your grade). When you write these essays, I want you to engage intellectually with significant ideas from the works we are reading. Please think carefully about the texts we read, and bring your interpretations of the assigned material to our class discussions. You also must be able to do the following when writing these essays: 1. Introduce a theoretical term, define that term, further develop theoretical aspects of the concept under consideration, and provide examples of the concept in the literature you are studying, and finally hook this concept to the next one you are introducing for your readers. To help you prepare for your formal assignments, I will ask you to post online responses to questions on the readings we will encounter throughout the semester. Each student is expected to post thoughtful considered responses by the assigned due date (15% of your grade).

--**Reading and writing assignments** should be completed **before** our class discussion. This enables forethought before class. Students generate thoughts, form opinions, and become empowered by the process. Students who do not read their assignments before class or bring their books to class will lose credit toward their final grade. If this pattern is repeated, they will be asked to drop the class.

--**Mode of Study:** typically, I do not hand out essays in class. We have an email site where I post materials for download. At this site you will find the following materials for study: 1. essays to be printed by each of you; 2. PowerPoint Presentations with audio narration; 3. Virtual Audio Lectures due before our class meets; 4. All three of these resources used to help you write a paper as well. This site functions as a class within a class: that means there are virtual lectures and assignments located at this virtual class site. Many of these assignments are due before we meet again in a physical domain.

--**Class attendance** and class participation are crucial to achieving an understanding of the material. You need to bring your books, attend classes and prepare for class meetings. Class attendance and class participation count as 15% of your grade. Before each class, an attendance sheet will circulate. After the class, I will post online an attendance sheet for each class. (1) In a course that meets twice a week, students are allowed 3 absences without penalty. If you miss 4 classes, I will ask you to drop the course or you will receive an F for your final grade. If you

miss no classes, you will be rewarded for your effort. That said, I will review, on a case by case basis, attendance for a student who is ill for some duration, keeps me informed, and presents me with a doctor's note in a timely fashion.

-- **Books in the Classroom:** You must bring your books and essays to class; if you don't bring these materials, I have the option to count each instance wherein you don't do so as a ½ class missed. I will not do this if you occasionally forget your work, but if you don't bring your materials to class on a regular basis, then I will start by counting that instance as a ½ of class missed. If this occurs on a continual basis, I will ask you to drop the class.

--**lateness:** (1) Each class that you attend late or leave early equals **1/2 class missed**. Students are asked to **arrive on time** and to leave class **after it concludes**. (2) Each day a paper is late, I will deduct 5 points from your grade for that paper. For instance, if you hand in a paper two days late and receive an "80" for that paper, I will deduct 10 additional points from your grade; your grade will be reduced to a "70."

--**Scholastic Honesty:** Please avoid any instances of academic misconduct, including the following: 1. Using improperly acquired material for the purpose of writing a paper or making a presentation in class. 2. Substituting material written by another individual or individuals for your own. 3. Making false claims of performance by submitting the work of another student for your own.

SYLLABUS FOR ENGLISH 202

I. WHY THEORY

Week 1: Monday 1/25

TOPIC/INTRODUCTION TO THE SYLLABUS

LECTURE: Introduction to Syllabus

Thursday 1/28

TOPIC/ WHY THEORY?

MUSIC VIDEO: Gang of Four, "Why Theory"

THEORY: Jeffrey Nealon & Susan Searls Giroux, "Why Theory?" (1-8)

THEORY: bell hooks, "Theory as Liberatory Practice," (59-75)

Week 2: Monday 2/1

TOPIC/ WHY THEORY?

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION: Introducing a Concept

THEORY: bell hooks, "Language," (59-75)

VIDEO: "Cultural Criticism & Transformation"

HANDOUT: "Cultural Criticism & Transformation"

II. INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL STUDIES

Thursday 2/4

TOPIC/ THE PEDAGOGY OF MULTICULTURAL STUDIES

STUDENT EXAMPLES: Introducing a Concept

THEORY: bell hooks, "Engaged Pedagogy," (6 pages with questions to answer)

THEORY: Ziauddin Sardar, Introducing Cultural Studies, (3-24)

Week 3: Monday 2/8

TOPIC/ WHAT IS CULTURAL STUDIES?

THEORY: "Columbia College, "What is Cultural Studies,"

HANDOUT: Shattering the Silence

VIDEO: Shattering the Silence (a video on Multicultural Studies in the United States)

****PARAGRAPH DUE: INTRODUCING A CONCEPT****

Thursday 2/11

TOPIC: WHAT IS CULTURAL STUDIES?

VIDEO: Shattering the Silence (a video on Multicultural Studies in the United States)

HANDOUT: Shattering the Silence

THEORY: Cary Nelson, Paula Treichler, and Lawrence Grossberg, Cultural Studies: An Introduction (1-7)

Week 4: Monday 2/15

TOPIC: MULTICULTURAL FICTION

FICTION: Sandra Cisneros, "Eleven," (6-9)

FICTION: Sandra Cisneros, "Never Marry a Mexican," (68-83)

THEORY: Joan W. Scott, "Multiculturalism and the Politics of Identity" (3-11)

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION: Defining a Concept

Thursday 2/18

TOPIC: MULTICULTURAL FICTION

FICTION: Sandra Cisneros, The House on Mango Street
Jeffrey Nealon & Susan Searls Giroux, "Authority" (9-14)

STUDENT EXAMPLES: Defining a Concept

III. CULTURAL STUDIES AND STRUCTURALISM

TOPIC/STRUCTURALISM AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MEANING

Week 5: Monday 2/22

VIDEO: Representation and the Media, a segment

THEORY: Stuart Hall, "Representation, Meaning and Language," (15-19)

THEORY: Donald Hall, "Structuralism and Semiotic Analysis," (135-138)

HANDOUT: The Object

HANDOUT: The Sign

****PARAGRAPH DUE: DEFINING A CONCEPT****

Thursday 2/25

TOPIC/STRUCTURALISM AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MEANING

VIDEO: Representation and the Media, a segment

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION: Developing a Concept, (1)

THEORY: Stuart Hall, "Representation, Meaning and Language," (19-24)

HANDOUT: The Object Referent

MUSIC VIDEO: Queen Latifah, "U.N.I.T.Y."

MUSIC VIDEO: Meredith Brooks, "Bitch"

THEORY: Entries in the Encyclopedie and the Encyclopaedia Britannica

Week 6: Monday 3/1

TOPIC/STRUCTURALISM AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MEANING

VIDEO: Representation and the Media, a segment

FILM: The Game

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION: Developing a Concept (2)

THEORY: Donald Hall, "Structuralism and Semiotic Analysis," (138-142)

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION: The Game, (1 of 2)

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION: The Game, (2 of 2)

Thursday 3/4

TOPIC/THE SIGNS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

FICTION: F. Scott Fitzgerald: The Great Gatsby

STUDENT EXAMPLES: Developing a Concept

ESSAY: Stuart Hall, "Saussure's Legacy," (30-36)

HANDOUT: The Signified

HANDOUT: The Signifier

Week 7: Monday 3/8

TOPIC/THE SIGNS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

VIDEO: Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (view at home before this class)

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION: Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (1)

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION: Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (2)

****PARAGRAPH DUE: DEVELOPING A CONCEPT****

Thursday 3/11

TOPIC/THE STRUCTURAL MATRIX AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SUBJECT

VIDEO: The Matrix (see this film at home)

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION: Providing an Example

HANDOUT: The Matrix (1 & 2)

ESSAY: The Allegory of the Cave"

THEORY: Jean Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulations," (380-385)

MUSIC: Nine Inch Nails, "Right Where it Belongs"

Week 8: Monday 3/15 – Thursday 3/18

Spring Break: College Closed

IV. PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SELF AND SUBJECT

Week 9: Monday 3/22

TOPIC/THE PROCESS OF IDENTIFICATION

THEORY: Peter Barry, "Psychoanalytic Criticism," (96-101)

ESSAY: John Berger, "Ways of Seeing," (7-16)

ESSAY: J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Identification," (205-206)

ESSAY: Dylan Evans, "Identification," (80-82)

****PARAGRAPH DUE: PROVIDING AN EXAMPLE****

Thursday 3/25

TOPIC/PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE SELF-CONSTRUCTION

ESSAY: Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," (1-3)

HANDOUT: Mirror Phase Handout #1

ESSAY: "Definition of Mirror Phase," (bottom of 114-115)

MUSIC VIDEO: Incubus, "Drive"

Week 10: Monday 3/29

TOPIC/THE BODY OF BITS AND PIECES

ESSAY: Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," (3-5)

ESSAY: Comic Book, "The Mirror Stage," (18-29)

MUSIC VIDEO: The Cure, "Disintegration"

LYRICS: The Cure, "Disintegration"

MUSIC VIDEO: Tori Amos, "A Sort of Fairytale"

FICTION: Virginia Woolf, "The New Dress," (56-65)

Thursday 4/1

TOPIC/SELF-CONSTRUCTION IN THE MIRROR

IN CLASS VIDEO: Woody Allen, Zelig

ESSAY: Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," (5-7)

HANDOUT: Color Handout on Mirror Stage

HANDOUT: Further Thoughts on Identification (1 to Review of Identification on page 2)

MUSIC: 3 Doors Down, "It's Not Me"

Week 11: Monday 4/5

TOPIC/THE DOUBLE IN THE MIRROR

FICTION: Oscar Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray

THEORY: Jonathan Culler, "Identity, Identification, and the Subject," a segment (104-106)

****5 TO 7 PAGE ESSAY DUE 4/10****

V. POSTCOLONIAL SUBJECTIVITY

Thursday 4/8

TOPIC/CONSTRUCTING THE SUBJECT

THEORY: Jeffrey Nealon & Susan Searls Giroux, "Postcolonialism," (140-145 only)

THEORY: Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, "Colonialism," (45-51)

THEORY: W. E. B. Du Bois, "Of Our Spiritual Strivings," 3-5

Week 12: Monday 4/12

TOPIC/CONSTRUCTING THE POSTCOLONIAL SUBJECT

ESSAY: Donald Hall, "Race, Ethnicity, and Post-Colonial Analysis," (265-267)

THEORY: Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, "Neocolonialism," (162-163)

HANDOUT: Neocolonial Imagery in 2009

ESSAY: Franz Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness," (323-326)

ESSAY: June Jones, "How Come Nobody Invited Me to the Lynching," (LCT 265-274)

STUDENT VIDEO: "How Come Nobody Invited Me to the Lynching"

Thursday 4/15

TOPIC/A SLAVE NARRATIVE IN THE EXPANDED FIELD

FICTION: Octavia E. Butler, Kindred (1st half of novel)

ESSAY: Donald Hall, "Race, Ethnicity, and Post-Colonial Analysis," (265-267)

ESSAY: Norman Bryson, "The Gaze in the Expanded Field," (87-90)

VI. THE IDEOLOGICAL SUBJECT

Week 13: Monday 4/19

TOPIC/IDEOLOGY AND THE COLONIAL ZED SUBJECTIVITY

FICTION: Octavia E. Butler, Kindred (2nd half of novel)

THEORY: Jeffrey Nealon & Susan Searls Giroux, "Subjectivity," (34-41)

MUSIC VIDEO: The Advent of a Subcultural Subject Position: The Rolling Stones (in class video)

VIDEO: Ethnic Notions (in class video)

Thursday 4/22

THEORY: Jeffrey Nealon & Susan Searls Giroux, "Ideology," (83-85)

ESSAY: Dick Hebdige, "From Culture to Hegemony," (362-365)

MUSIC VIDEO: Seether, "Fine Again" [constructing ego identity tags]

ESSAY: Louis Althusser, "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatus," (127-136)

Week 14: Monday 4/26

TOPIC/THE ISSUE OF DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS

THEORY: Jeffrey Nealon & Susan Searls Giroux, "Ideology," (85-90)

ESSAY: Louis Althusser, "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatus," (137-148)

FICTION: Brother's Grimm, "Rumpelstiltskin,"

Thursday 4/29

TOPIC/ALTHUSSER'S IDEOLOGICAL INTERPELLATION

FICTION: George Orwell, Animal Farm

ESSAY: Dick Hebdige, "From Culture to Hegemony," (365-367)

ESSAY: Louis Althusser, "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatus," (162-170)

Week 15: Monday 5/3

TOPIC/THE ISSUE OF DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS

VIDEO: The Devil Wears Prada

ESSAY: Louis Althusser, "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatus," (170-177)

Thursday 5/6

TOPIC/THE ISSUE OF DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS

ESSAY: Raymond Williams on Hegemony

HANDOUT: James Lull on Hegemony

****8 TO 10 PAGE ESSAY DUE 5/8****