



HL2024

Approaches to Literature

Semester 1, 2021/22

This introductory literary theory course aims to develop a greater self-awareness in the understanding of the reading process and of critical practice. Students will be introduced to fundamental theoretical and critical concepts central to the study of English Literature. By focussing on a specific theoretical context each week, the module aims to develop fluency and confidence towards being critical readers of literature, as well as to develop an awareness of the environments in which literary texts are produced.

Key texts:

- Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*, 4th edition
- John Keats's 1819 Odes **[text provided]**
- William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
- Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Lectures:

Week 1: National Holiday (Aug 9)

Week 2: Introduction: Liberal Humanism (Aug 16)

Peter Barry, 'Liberal Humanism'

Week 3: New Criticism and Formalist Criticism (Aug 23)

Donald E. Hall, 'The New Criticism and Formalist Analysis';

Peter Barry, 'Stylistics'

Week 4: Reader Response (Aug 30)

Donald E. Hall, 'The New Criticism and Formalist Analysis';

Jane P. Tompkins, 'An Introduction to Reader-Response Criticism'

Week 5: Narrative and Narratology (Sep 6)

Peter Barry, 'Narratology'

Week 6: Structuralism and Post-structuralism (Sep 13)

Peter Barry, 'Structuralism'; 'Post-structuralism and Deconstruction'

Week 7: Postmodernism (Sep 20)

Peter Barry, 'Postmodernism'



Week 8: Recess (Sep 27)

Week 9: New Historicism and Cultural Materialism (Oct 4)

Peter Barry, 'New Historicism and Cultural Materialism'

Week 10: Psychoanalytic Criticism (Oct 11)

Peter Barry, 'Psychoanalytic Criticism'

Week 11: Marxist Criticism (Oct 18)

Peter Barry, 'Marxist Criticism'

Week 12: Feminist and Queer Criticism (Oct 25)

Peter Barry, 'Feminist Criticism'; 'Lesbian/gay Criticism'

Week 13: Postcolonial Criticism (Nov 1)

Peter Barry, 'Postcolonial Criticism'

Week 14: Ecocriticism (Nov 8)

Peter Barry, 'Ecocriticism'



Format:

Weekly lectures (2 hours)

Weekly tutorials (1 hour)

Assessment:

Mid-term essay (due end of Week 7, Sep 24): 20%

Second essay (due end of Week 12, Oct 29): 30%

Final exam (Nov 19): 50%

Late submissions received within twenty-four hours of the deadline will be given a reduced grade; submissions received thereafter will not be accepted without a documented reason.

For any enquiries, please contact: **Jonathan Hui**

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Below is a list of suggested secondary reading. It's by no means exhaustive, and while it isn't required reading either, you might find some of the entries to be useful supplements to Barry.

Introductions to Literary Criticism and Theory

Belsey, Catherine, *Critical Practice*, 2nd edition (London: Routledge, 2002)

Bennett, Andrew, and Nicholas Royle, *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*, 5th edition (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).

Culler, Jonathan, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Eagleton, Terry, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, 3rd edition, (University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

Tyson, Lois, *Using Critical Theory: how to read and write about literature*, 3rd edition (Abingdon: Routledge, 2021).

Webster, Roger, *Studying Literary Theory: An Introduction* (USA: Bloomsbury, 2009).

Literary, Critical and Theoretical Dictionaries and Encyclopaedias

Abrams, M.H., *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Boston: Thomson-Wadsworth, 2005).

Baldick, Chris, *The Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Gray, Martin, *Dictionary of Literary Terms* (London: York University Press, 1992).

Malpas, Simon, and Paul Wake, *The Routledge Companion to Critical Theory* (London: Routledge, 2006).

Waugh, Patricia, *Literary Theory and Criticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Anthologies

Leitch, Vincent B., William E. Cain, Laurie A. Finke, Barbara E. Johnson, and John McGowan, eds, *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 2nd edition (New York: WW Norton, 2010).

Lentricchia, Frank, and Thomas McLaughlin, eds., *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Lodge, David, ed., *20th Century Literary Criticism: A Reader* (Harlow: Pearson, 1972).

Rivkin, Julie, and Michael Ryan, eds, *Literary Theory: An Anthology* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).