



Literary Criticism and Theory: English 490 Fall 2007—3 hrs credit

Instructor: Robert Donahoo, Professor of English
 Location: Evans 351
 Class Meets: Noon to 12:50 MWF

Contacting the Instructor:
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Required Textbooks:

The books every student will need for this course are:

Malpass & Wake, The Routledge Companion to Literary Theory, ISBN: 0415332966

Tyson, Critical Theory Today 2nd edition, ISBN: 0415974100

Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby, ISBN: 0743273567

Gibaldi and Franklin, MLA Handbook, 6th edition, ISBN: 0873529863

There will be several electronic reserve readings throughout the term. These will be noted in the daily class schedule below. However, the password for entering electronic reserves for this class is **frankfurt**. In addition, if you are unfamiliar with electronic reserve, a link for reaching it is provided on blackboard for this course.

Finally, books highly useful for this course are on normal library reserve for this course. They are:

Stephen Lynn's, Texts and Contexts. This book provides simplified explanations for some of the theories we will cover in this course as well as sample essays that are often useful models for student writing.



The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism. This massive tome gives great insight in relatively brief form to theories and the terms and individuals connected to them.

Michael Spikes, Understanding Contemporary American Literary Theory. Though more narrow than the topic of this course, students may well find this readable book useful.

Terry Eagleton, Literary Theory, An Introduction. 2nd Edition. Though this classic is a slightly dated and carries Eagleton's Marxist bias, it is so clearly written that anyone who doesn't check it out will miss important insights.

Vincent B. Leitch's American Literary Criticism from the 30s to the 80s. Again, this is narrow in its American focus, but it offers insights not to be found elsewhere and makes students aware of specific critics.

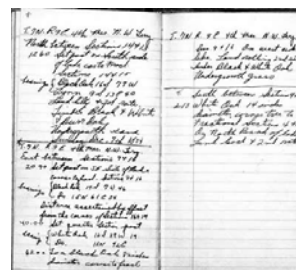
The Critical Tradition: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends. 2nd Edition. This anthology along with the The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism are invaluable—but expensive to buy—compilations a major theoretical statements. They are always useful to consult.



Course Description:

How is a work of literature understood? What does “understanding” a work of literature even mean? What IS a work of literature?

These are questions most readers skip, but the further a person progresses in the study of literature the more pressing these questions become. After all, in a society that increasingly pursues utilitarian values, the struggle to find what literature is, why it matters, and how it is to be dealt with cannot be ignored. If literature is indefinable, has no consequence in the world, or cannot be reasonably understood, it can be dismissed as a distraction from the important issues of making a living, achieving psychic health and stability, and preserving conditions for human existence on this—or some other—planet. This course will help students form answers to these questions, as it makes them aware of the major traditions and theories others use and have used to seek their answers. It will also enable students to become aware of how to apply these different theories to expand their own insight into literary texts.



Given this general description it will be assumed that students enter this course with a broad, general knowledge of literature works and with basic writing skills. For this reason, the course has a prerequisite of 15 hours of English study. The specific courses may vary from student to student, but every student must have a strong educational experience with literary and writing studies in his or her background.

The approach of the course begins by establishing a common literary text for every student: the Great Gatsby—a short novel, written in an approachable style and having significant depth for study. It will not be the only literary reading we'll do for the course, but it will provide a fertile starting point. Once this is read, we will begin to look at a variety of literary theories and approaches including: textual criticism, New Criticism, psychological criticism, Marxist criticism, reader-response criticism, feminist and gender criticism, structural and deconstruction criticism, historical and new historical criticism, and selected post-structural criticisms. With each type of criticism, we will begin with a general lecture on basic principles of that theory, read and discuss some theoretical and some practical writings about the

theory, and then begin to practice the theory as a class. Most of the homework students will have will be reading assignments and some library research for examples of criticism. These will also be essay exams applying theoretical principles to literary works, a major paper using one theory to analyze a literary work, and a class presentation centered on that paper.

Course Objectives: As Elizabeth Barrett Browning might say, let me count the objectives:

1. To gain familiarity with a broad list of literary theories used to criticize and analyze literature.
2. To read both theoretical and applied materials about the criticism of literature.
3. To practice using various theories to analyze works of literature.
4. To focus on one theory to produce an in-depth analysis of a work of literature.

I would like to add such things as to become more creative in reading literature and to make literature more interactive with all of our lives, but these are things no course can guarantee. Still, students need to know that such thoughts lurk in the back of my mind and will guide much of my approach to the material of the course and to our time in the classroom. It also may be useful to remember the words of Meric Casaubon, a 17th century scholar, that are found in the box below:

"the best method to learning ... is indefatigable (soe farr as the bodie will beare) industrie, and assiduitie, in reading good authors, such as have had the approbation of all learned ages."

Grading Plan: Putting aside quotes and graphics, the key question for many students is: how will my grade be determined in this course. I try to keep things fairly simple so that the final calculations don't overtax my literary brain. Here are the specifics:

- 25 % of the course grade will come from five exams throughout the course. Generally each exam will come after we study two different theories of criticism. Consequently, they will not be massive in their focus, but they will require students to apply the theories named for that exam. For each exam, the response will be an essay only.
- 25% of the course grade will come from the final exam given at the time scheduled by the university for the final exam in this course. This exam will be comprehensive for the semester and will include both short answers and essay responses. One factor that students can use to aid their grade on this exam is attendance. Every student who attends 90% or more of all class sessions will earn **10 extra credit points** to be added to their exam grade. Every student who attends between 80% and 89% of all class sessions will earn **five extra credit points** to be added to their exam grade. Students who attend less than 80% of all class sessions will receive no extra credit for the final exam.



- 25% of the course grade will come from the major paper assigned for the course. This paper will involve analyzing a work of literature from a particular theoretical perspective, and it will involve research into a theory and, to a lesser degree, the literary work being analyzed. Students will work closely with the instructor in selecting the topic for this paper, and all topics must be approved before the paper is completed. For a detailed look at this assignment, see the section of this syllabus titled, “Major Paper Assignment.”
- 25% of the course grade will come from the class presentation assigned for this course. This presentation will focus on the same literary work as the major paper, but it will deal with several literary theories. For a detailed look at this assignment, see the section of this syllabus titled, “Class Presentation Assignment.”

This arrangement necessitates that much of each student’s grade will be determined until late in the semester; however, grades on early exams should give students an idea of their performance in the course. By working closely with the instructor they can strengthen the likelihood of positive grades on the paper, presentation, and final exam.

Policy for Exams, Papers, and Presentations:

Exam dates are clearly stated on the daily calendar section of this syllabus. If for any reason a student must miss an exam, a make-up exam can be scheduled if either of the following conditions are met:

- the student speaks with the instructor prior to the scheduled exam and obtains permission to take a make-up exam.
- the student contracts the dean of students office and that office verifies medical, legal, or personal reasons that require a make-up exam to be given.

As mentioned above, the exams during the semester will all require essay responses only and will focus on two or three theories only. The final exam will be comprehensive and feature both short answer and essay responses.

The specific date for a student’s class presentation will not be determined until after the semester begins, though the general time for all class presentations is noted on the syllabus. A student who needs to change her or his assigned presentation time must follow the same two criteria required for make-up exams.

The specific date for the major paper for this course is noted on the daily calendar section of this syllabus and named in the paper assignment section of this syllabus. No late papers are acceptable without specific and prior permission from the instructor. This will be given only in extraordinary circumstances.

Attendance Policy: Simply, I expect students to attend class—every class. Missing class sessions deprives other students of your insights and you of theirs. It also means missing



opportunities to practice applying theory and being criticized, without grade damage, for your applications. At the same time, circumstances may arise that make missing class a necessity. No one wants a vomiting, leaking, or contagious student sharing the classroom. Plus, life circumstances may interfere. No one should miss a parent's funeral, for instance, to attend a lecture. As junior and senior students, I expect individuals in this course to be able to make decisions about attending class without conferring with me. If you miss class, I will assume you had a good reason for doing so; you need not contact me or offer an explanation—unless the absence involves missing an exam or presentation (see above for such instances). My general philosophy, revealed in the section of this syllabus discussing grades, is to reward attendance. However, I do follow the University policy (Academic Policy Statement 800401) which states, "a student may be penalized for more than three hours of absence." This means that in this course a student may miss **four** classes without any penalty (assuming on exams or presentations are involved). Beginning with the fifth absence, however, a student's course grade will be lowered one letter grade for each additional absence.

Academic Dishonesty: All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. Plagiarism—the use of another person's writing without proper documentation (a full, technical definition and detailed discussion of plagiarism—both intentional and unintentional—are found in the MLA Handbook, 6th ed, pages 66-75). Any work found to be plagiarized earns the grade of "F." If you have questions about plagiarism, ask me and check the MLA Handbook.

Americans with Disabilities Act: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

Religious Holidays: Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. Students should notify the instructor prior to the holiday of the desire to observe the holiday.

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.



Visitors in the Classroom: Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

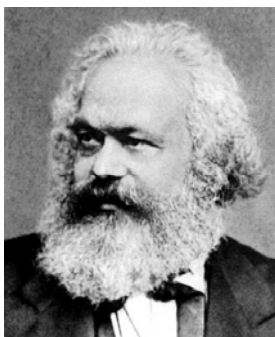
Instructor Evaluations: Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester. As these evaluations may effect the University's academic standing, the frequency of a course being offered, and the instructor's income, students are encouraged to participate in this evaluation process and give serious attention to their responses.

Classroom Rules of Conduct: The Code of Student Conduct and Discipline is found at the following link: <https://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html>. Section 5.2.22 defines classroom disturbances. My major concern is that students treat each other and me with respect and courtesy. Though some instructors have strong feelings about cell phones in classrooms, I do not. At times, you or I may need to be reachable via our cell phones. However, I would ask that text messaging not take place during class, and that, should your cell phone ring, you exit the room if you need to answer it.

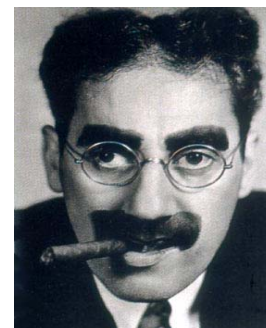
Study Tips: Literary theory and criticism can seem a complex and foreign topic for some students. Therefore, students are strongly encouraged to talk among themselves, set up a discussion board on Blackboard, and meet with the instructor for help with any quandaries or questions. We all learn best by helping each other—especially in sharing knowledge of resources. Also, students are strongly encouraged to begin regularly reading an academic literary journal such as PMLA, American Literature, American Literary History, Cultural Critique, Milton Studies, or Studies in the Novel. You could be truly radical and check out the library shelves on literary theory! For help with writing, think about dropping by the



web



writing center. Its hours can be found on the
at <http://www.shsu.edu/~wctr/>



ON YOUR MARX:

A Class Calendar and Daily Schedule of Assignments

Aug. 20 MONDAY	Welcome to Criticism and Theory; or How do You Read & Why It Matters
Aug. 22 WEDNESDAY	<u>The Great Gatsby</u> TOPIC: Textual Criticism
Aug. 24 FRIDAY	<u>The Great Gatsby</u> : class discussion
Aug. 27 MONDAY	TOPIC: Textual Criticism Tanselle, "Textual Scholarship" (electronic reserve) Donahoo, "Adapting Flannery O'Connor: Horton Foote's 'Displaced Person'" (available on Blackboard, class documents) Last day to register and process schedule changes.
Aug. 29 WEDNESDAY	TOPIC: Formalism/New Criticism Tyson, chapter 5 Brooks: "Keats's Sylvan Historian" (e-reserve) Wimsatt and Beardsly: "The Intentional Fallacy" http://faculty.smu.edu/nschwartz/seminar/Fallacy.htm
Aug. 31 FRIDAY	TOPIC: New Criticism Booth: "Point of View and the Control of Distance in <u>Emma</u> " (available through jstor) Auerbach, "Odysseus' Scar" http://www.westmont.edu/~fisk/Articles/OdysseusScar.html
Sept. 3 MONDAY	University Holiday – Labor Day.
Sept. 5 WEDNESDAY	Practicing Textual Scholarship and Formalism Last day to drop w/o a "Q".
Sept. 7 FRIDAY	Exam One
Sept. 10 MONDAY	TOPIC: Marxist Criticism Tyson, chapter 3 Daly, "Marxism" (in <u>Routledge</u>) Hall, "Marxist and Materialist Analysis" (e-reserve)

Sept. 12 WEDNESDAY	<p>TOPIC: Marxist Criticism</p> <p>Lukács, "The Ideology of Marxism" (e-reserve)</p> <p>Wilson, "Marxism and Literature" (e-reserve)</p> <p>Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"</p> <p>http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm</p> <p>Robbins, "'They Don't Much Count, Do They?': The Unfinished History of <u>The Turn of the Screw</u>" (e-reserve)</p>
Sept. 14 FRIDAY	<p>Practicing Marxist Criticism</p> <p>Last day for dropping half-semester courses without a grade of "F".</p>
Sept. 17 MONDAY	<p>TOPIC: Feminist Criticism</p> <p>Tyson, chapter 4</p> <p>Hekman, "Feminism" (in Routledge)</p> <p>Fetterley, Introduction to The Resisting Reader (e-reserve)</p>
Sept. 19 WEDNESDAY	<p>TOPIC: Feminist Criticism</p> <p>Woolf, "A Room of Her Own" (handout)</p> <p>Showalter, "The Female Tradition" (e-reserve)</p> <p>Tompkins, "Sentimental Power: Uncle Tom's Cabin and the Politics of Literary History" http://web.princeton.edu/sites/english/NEH/TOMPKINS.HTM</p> <p>Donahoo, "O'Connor and The Feminine Mystique" (see Blackboard Course Documents)</p>
Sept. 21 FRIDAY	Practicing Feminist Criticism
Sept. 24 MONDAY	Exam Two
Sept. 26 WEDNESDAY	<p>TOPIC: Psychological Criticism</p> <p>Tyson, chapter 2</p> <p>Lapsley, "Psychoanalytic Criticism" (in Routledge)</p> <p>Freud: "Creative Writers and Daydreaming" (e-reserve)</p>
Sept. 28 FRIDAY	<p>TOPIC: Psychological Criticism</p> <p>Freud, "The Uncanny"</p> <p>http://people.emich.edu/acoykenda/uncanny1.htm (be sure to get all three parts using links on this site)</p> <p>Jung, "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry"</p> <p>http://studiocleo.com/librarie/jung/essay.html</p> <p>Tritt, "'Young Goodman Brown' and the Psychology of Projection" (e-reserve)</p> <p>Kahn, "The Absent Mother in King Lear" (e-reserve)</p>

Oct. 1 MONDAY	<p>TOPIC: Psychological Criticism</p> <p>Bloom, "Poetic Origins and Final Phrases" (electronic reserve)</p> <p>Brooks, "Freud's Masterplot" (available through jstor)</p> <p>Lacan, "The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious" (e-reserve)</p>
Oct. 3 WEDNESDAY	Practicing Psychological Criticism
Oct. 5 FRIDAY	<p>TOPIC: Reader-Response/Affective Criticism</p> <p>Tyson, chapter 6</p> <p>Tompkins, "An Introduction to Reader-Response Criticism" (e-reserve)</p> <p>Holland, "The question: Who Reads What How?" (e-reserve)</p>
Oct. 8 MONDAY	<p>TOPIC: Reader-Response/Affective Criticism</p> <p>Iser, "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach" (available through jstor)</p> <p>Fish, "Interpreting the <u>Variorum</u>" (e-reserve)</p> <p>Rabinowitz, excerpt from <u>Before Reading</u> (e-reserve)</p>
Oct. 10 WEDNESDAY	<p>TOPIC: Reader-Response/Affective Criticism</p> <p>Donahoo, "Implicating the Reader: <u>Dirty Work</u> and the Burdens of Southern History (see Blackboard, Course Documents)</p> <p>Rabinowitz, "'A Symbol of Something': Interpretive Vertigo in 'The Dead'" (e-reserve)</p> <p>Radway, "Women Read the Romance" (available through Jstor)</p> <p>Last day to drop Fall Term courses without a grade of "F". Last day to resign without receiving W.</p>
Oct. 12 FRIDAY	Practicing Reader-Response/Affective Criticism
Oct. 15 MONDAY	Exam Three
Oct. 17 WEDNESDAY	<p>TOPIC: Structuralism</p> <p>Tyson, chapter 7</p> <p>McGowan, "Structuralism and Semiotics" (in <u>Routledge</u>)</p> <p>Hall, "Structuralism and Semiotic Analysis" (e-reserve)</p>
Oct. 19 FRIDAY	<p>TOPIC: Structuralism</p> <p>Saussure, "Nature of the Linguistic Sign" (e-reserve)</p> <p>Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth" (e-reserve)</p> <p>Barthes, "The Death of the Author"</p> <p>http://evans-experientialism.freewebspace.com/barthes06.htm</p>
Oct. 22 MONDAY	<p>TOPIC: Structuralism</p> <p>Eco, "The Myth of Superman" (available through jstor)</p> <p>Todorov, "The Typology of Detective Fiction" (e-reserve)</p>
Oct. 24 WEDNESDAY	Practicing Structuralism

Oct. 26 FRIDAY	No Class due to Horton Foote Conference
Oct. 29 MONDAY	TOPIC: Deconstruction Tyson, chapter 8 Benjamin, "Deconstruction" (in Routledge)
Oct. 31 WEDNESDAY	TOPIC: Deconstruction De Man, "Semiology and Rhetoric" (available through jstor) Derrida, "The Exorbitant. Question of Method" (e-reserve) Miller, " Heart of Darkness Revisited " (e-reserve)
Nov. 2 FRIDAY	TOPIC: Deconstruction Johnson, "Melville's Fist: The Execution of Billy Budd " (e-reserve) Practicing Deconstruction
Nov. 5 MONDAY	Exam Four
Nov. 7 WEDNESDAY	TOPIC: Historicism and New Historicism Tyson, chapter 9 Malpas, "Historicism" (in Routledge) Foucault, " Las Meninas " (e-reserve)
Nov. 9 FRIDAY	TOPIC: Historicism and New Historicism Greenblatt, "The Circulation of Social Energy" (e-reserve) Greenblatt, " King Lear and Harsnett's 'Devil Fiction'" (handout) Thomas, "Perserving and Keeping Order by Killing Time in Heart of Darkness " (e-reserve) Brodhead, "Starting Out in the 1860s: Alcott, Authorship and the Postbellum Literary Field" (e-reserve)
Nov. 12 MONDAY	Practicing Historical/New Historicism
Nov. 14 WEDNESDAY	TOPIC: Ethnic and Post-Colonial Criticism Tyson, chapters 11 and 12 Amoko, "Race and Postcoloniality" (in Routledge)
Nov. 16 FRIDAY	Achebe, "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness (e-reserve) Said, Introduction to Orientalism (e-reserve) Walker, "Beyond the Peacock" (e-reserve) Morrison, "Unspeakable Things Unspoken" (e-reserve) Last day for resignations.
Nov. 19 MONDAY	Practicing Ethnic and Post-Colonial Criticism
Nov. 21 WEDNESDAY	Thanksgiving holiday

Nov. 23 FRIDAY	Thanksgiving holiday
Nov. 26 MONDAY	Exam Five
Nov. 28 WEDNESDAY	Major Paper Due
Nov. 30 FRIDAY	Student Presentations
Dec. 3 MONDAY	Student Presentations
Dec. 5 WEDNESDAY	Student Presentations
Dec. 7 FRIDAY	No Class--Final Exam Study Day.
Dec. 10 MONDAY	FINAL EXAM at 2-4 p.m. or at time scheduled by the university



"Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention."—Sir Francis Bacon, "Of Studies"

Major Paper Assignment

One of the major benefits of literary theory is that it allows us to write about literature in a number of new ways. While, ideally, students would write complete papers using every literary theory, practically that can't happen in a semester. However, students can write one solid and substantial paper using literary theory, and that's what this assignment asks you to do.

Students should begin this assignment by selecting one literary work to be the focus of their research and paper. If possible, students should select a work that they researched for a previous class or one they are writing about for another course (with the approval of the instructor for that course). However, if neither of these options is possible, I encourage students to select one of the works listed below:

- "Big Boy Leaves Home" by Richard Wright
- "Parker's Back" by Flannery O'Connor
- "Wild Swans at Coole" by W. B. Yeats
- "Red Leaves" or "A Justice" by William Faulkner
- "He" by Katherine Anne Porter
- "Crusoe in England" by Elizabeth Bishop
- "Stop all the Clocks, Cut Off the Telephone" by W.H. Auden

Whatever work a student selects, he or she should discuss it with me as soon as possible.

The second step for this assignment is to decide what literary theory to use to write about the work. Only one theory that we discuss in class is not acceptable for this paper, and that is New Criticism. I can accept other forms of Formalism, but the standard New Critical approach is one students tend to know before they take this class and therefore not something they need to work with. Again, students should confer with me in making this selection. More importantly, **I require that these two steps be completed by October 1.** Failure to do so will penalize the final grade of the paper.

As soon as the literary work and theoretical approach are chosen, students should begin doing research both on the work and on the theory. In particular, they should aim for finding one facet of a literary theory and, possibly, one theorist, to guide their approach. In any case, the final paper **MUST** show evidence of both theory and literary criticism research. In the end, you want a paper whose thesis asserts that a theory enabled you to find a new insight about the literary work you have chosen.

Once research is done and a thesis is derived, students should schedule a time to meet with me to go over their plan for writing. **This meeting should take place before Wednesday, November 14, but**

it is up to each student to schedule a meeting. Failure to do so will penalize the final grade of the paper.

I will gladly look over drafts and offer advice after November 14, but all drafts should come to me no later than a week before the paper is due.

In mechanical terms, here are the factors that will play the major role in determining the grade earned by this paper:

- Use of MLA format and bibliographic style. Use the [MLA Handbook](#).
- Careful editing for grammatical and stylistic correctness.
- Paragraphs that explain the theoretical approach being used in the paper and reasons for using it.
- Paragraphs that describe the critical consensus and trends in previous scholarly writing on your selected work.
- A length of approximately 10 pages (plus bibliographic material).
- Submission for final evaluation no later than **Wednesday, November 28**.

Good luck!



I suppose half of writing is
overcoming the revulsion
you feel when you sit down
to it. – Flannery O’Connor

Student Presentation Assignment

For the major paper assignment, each student will do a great deal of work, and since I don't want only the student and the instructor to benefit from that work, I've incorporated this presentation assignment. The presentations will take place late in the term and will last no longer than 10 minutes each. Each presentation must accomplish the following goals:

- Clearly present the thesis the student derived for his or her major paper.
- Explain the specific theory ideas/theorists used in the paper and justify their use. This should be the meat of the presentation, and each student should have a one or two page handout to highlight the theory ideas. This handout should include bibliographic sources other students could use to do similar research in the future. However, **DO NOT** read the handout in the presentation.
- Speculate intelligently about insights **two** other theoretical approaches might have discovered and why these approaches would be valid alternatives to the choice you made for the paper.
- Additional information each student feels would be useful to her or his peers in the class.

Students may use whatever methods they desire for the presentations—everything from reading a paper to doing a skit—but the ideas must be clear. Creativity is impressive, but it is less impressive than clarity. My goal is that these presentations should be professional times of sharing knowledge—something central to the humanities. They should also serve to “review” the class before the final exam.

The specific dates for each student's presentation cannot be decided until the course roster is complete and we know how many people must present each day, but I will let you know as soon as possible.

