

Literary Theory Ancient to Modern
CLST 3508/ENGL 0540/COML 0540
Professor Rita Copeland

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Texts: Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism 3rd edition; some readings as pdfs to be provided

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1

Introduction

Week 2

Plato, Republic (all selections in Norton Anthology)
Plato, Phaedrus (pdf on Canvas)

Week 3

Phaedrus, finish; Derrida, "Father of Logos" (in Norton pp. 1613-21)
Aristotle, Poetics

Week 4

Aristotle, Poetics, finish
Horace, Art of Poetry

End of week 4 *analytical paper 1 due (3 pages)* as doc., please, to my email

Week 5

"Longinus," On Sublimity
Plotinus, Fifth Ennead (pdf on Canvas)

Week 6

Macrobius, from Commentary on the Dream of Scipio (pdf on Canvas)
Augustine, from On Christian Teaching

Week 7

Al-Farabi, The Canons of Poetry (pdf on Canvas)
Aquinas, from Summa Theologica question 1 (articles 9 and 10)

End of week 7 *analytical paper 2 due*

SPRING BREAK

Week 8

Boccaccio, from Genealogy of the Gentile Gods
Vico, from The New Science

Week 9

Kant, from Critique of Judgment
Kant, Critique of Judgment continued

Week 10

Hegel, from Lectures on Fine Art; look at selection from Phenomenology of Spirit
Marx, from Economic and Political Manuscripts of 1844, from The German Ideology,
and from Capital vol. 1 (all in Norton)

End of week 10 *analytical paper 3 due*

Week 11

Continue Marx, Capital
Nietzsche, “On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense”

Week 12

Freud, from The Interpretation of Dreams and “The Uncanny”
Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility”

Week 13

Fanon, “The Fact of Blackness,” “On National Culture”
Foucault, “What is an Author?”

End of week 13 *analytical paper 4 due*

Week 14

Said, from Orientalism
Sedgwick, from Between Men and from Epistemology of the Closet

Week 15

Wrap up

FINAL PAPER (approximately 10 PAGES) DUE APPROX 10 DAYS AFTER LAST CLASS

Analytical papers defined: These should not be cast as “opinions” or “reactions,” but as pointed, very focused analyses of the treatments of a theoretical problem in two or three texts. The papers should aim to reveal how an author’s argument works by considering implicit as well as explicit aspects of the argument; the papers should **not** be framed in terms of a “right” or “wrong” theory. The papers should be comparative (using the readings from the course), because comparison of one theoretical argument with another helps to illuminate the terms of either argument. As we progress through the term, the repertoire of materials you have available for comparison will increase. You can move among texts from all periods (for example, comparing an ancient to a modern theorist), as long as the grounds for comparison are valid, and you make explicit the value or necessity of the comparison. **Each paper is to be short, no more than three pages double spaced, 12-point font, normal margins (or about 950 words). This length restriction is important to your argument’s construction.** The key is not to waste precious words with introductory generalities, but to get right down to your thesis and deliver it in precise prose. Analytical papers: 60% of grade.

PLEASE SEND THESE TO MY EMAIL AS WORD DOCS, NOT AS PDFS OR GOOGLE DOCS.

The final paper can take one of several tracks: 1) working through a single text that we have read in class, reading the entire text (or a very substantial portion) if we have read only an extract, and illuminating your discussion with research on that work and author that leads you to a truly satisfying understanding of the theoretical argument; 2) developing an extended and substantive comparative account of several works read over the semester; 3) writing on a text or texts that we have not read in class, and placing it/them in the context of discussions of texts that we have read. Final paper: 40% of grade.

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It is critical that you attend class regularly and that you do the readings (and review the outlines on Canvas) before class.