The Discipline of Literary Studies
English 600.S01
Professor Jeffrey Santa Ana
Office: 1094 Humanities
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:00 – 4:00pm, and by appointment
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The class meets in 2094 Humanities on Thursdays at 1:00 - 3:50pm.

Course description:

This seminar introduces new Stony Brook doctoral students in English to the profession of literary studies. Topics include textual analysis, scholarly methodology and bibliography, critical theory and practice, and current trends and debates in scholarship and criticism. The seminar will be divided between discussions of weekly readings, practica on research techniques and on the main genres of academic writing, and in-class talks and readings by guest faculty. A couple of the semester’s classes may be held at libraries on campus.

Please note: in the first week of the semester, seminar members will choose one primary text (a play, novel, volume of poetry, or prose work) about which they will give a presentation and write a series papers. All seminar members will read and prepare each member’s selected text for discussion on the day of its presentation in class.

Required texts:
*The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald
*The Woman Warrior*, Maxine Hong Kingston
*Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*, Jonathan Culler
Selected texts from seminar members

The books are available at the Stony Brook University Bookstore.
Articles and essays available in PDF format in course website on Blackboard

Course website in Blackboard:
I will post the syllabus and reading materials (articles, essays, and book chapters) in our course website on Blackboard.
The website for this class is located at: http://www.stonybrook.edu/~blackboard

Requirements.

Participation and leading class discussion with a posted question in our course website:
In the first half of the semester (up to Week 9), we will include in seminar meetings a question presented by one member of the class. On the evening or morning before we begin each seminar, a seminar member will formulate a question about the readings. We will use the question to initiate and lead discussion. Be sure that your question refers to specific passages in
the readings. In your question, you are required to comment on the reading in a way that
expresses your analysis of it in relation to the topics in our class. You can pose a question that
will lead the seminar to examine closely the language in the reading or compare it to other
critical materials in the seminar. Your question can also express what you find most intense,
meaningful, or puzzling about the reading.

Post your question in the course website on Blackboard in advance of the seminar meeting. I
will screen your question in seminar on the day you are to present it. You may post more than
one question, if you like. However, be sure to pose specific and detailed questions that will
allow us to examine the readings closely.

**Oral presentation (20-25 minutes) and written copy of notes/outline (3-4 pages):**
You will give one oral presentation of an argument (thesis) about your selected text. I will pass
around a sign-up sheet for you to select a text for the seminar to read in preparation for your
presentation.

In your presentation, you must provide a close reading of at least one or two passages in the text
that shows how it both supports your argument and generates it. Also, it is important that you
include, as part of your argument and analysis, some topics and concepts with respect to one of
the approaches we have considered in the seminar; see instructions for OPEN TOPIC essay
below. As part of your analysis, you may also provide any background elements that will
enhance our understanding of the text (e.g., genre, author’s gender, historical period,
biographical information about the author; and where you situate the book in theory and
criticism). You will conclude your presentation with one strong question for the class that will
allow us to discuss your text in relation to your presentation. You may include supplemental
visual materials or audio recordings to enhance your argument and analysis. However, be sure
not to let these supplemental materials make you lose focus on analyzing your text.

After your presentation, you will turn in a written (typed and double-spaced) copy of it. The
written copy may be either an outline or a coherent narrative (like an essay). However, when
you give your presentation in class do not just read it from your written copy. Instead, give it as
a discussion while looking at and talking directly to everyone in the seminar.

**Essay assignments:**
Please submit each of your essays to everyone in our class (i.e., give a copy to me and each
person in the seminar; you can submit your essay as a pdf document via email). Your papers
should follow MLA style (including parenthetical citations in the text, informational notes where
necessary, and a list of “Works Cited”). List all materials used in the preparation of your essays
so that your reader may benefit not only from the content but also from your research techniques.
Although you will convey a significant amount of information in these essays as the result of
your research, make sure to take a position. That is, make sure to select and present your
material in strategic ways. The essay lengths are firm. It should be useful for you to work
within the demands of an assigned length and to get the feel for the problems of short essays of
somewhat different lengths.
Select one text (a single-authored novel, play, volume of prose or poetry) in any historical or cultural period, genre and/or research area that most interests you. However, your text should be fairly canonical with a moderate degree of publication history and criticism for you to complete the essay assignments.

1. EDITION
Examine the editions of your work from two points of view, answering these questions: a) which edition of your work would you use if you were teaching it, and why? b) which edition would you use if you were writing your dissertation on it, and why?
   4 pages; due Week 4, Sept. 20

2. PRODUCTION AND PUBLICATION
Write a production and publication history of your selected text, explaining why you think this history did or did not play a significant role in shaping the work. How was your text made and marketed? Who was the text made for?
   5 pages; due Week 7; October 11

3. RECEPTION
Write a history of the critical reception of your work.
   6 pages; due Week 9; October 25

4. CRITICAL FOCUS
Identify what you think is the text’s most important “critical crux” and explain why.
   7 pages; due Week 11; November 8

5. OPEN TOPIC
Write an essay exploring an aspect of your selected text or an issue raised by the text. The specific topic is up to you. You might wish to examine your text with respect to one of the approaches we have considered in the seminar: formal construction, gender, historical approach, literary style, class, ethnicity, uses of the notion of literary meaning. This paper may jump off from or extend the explorations of some parts of your oral presentation. You are to refer to critical materials (i.e., articles, essays, book chapters, etc.) to support your analysis of your chosen text. In other words, you will draw to some extent on outside readings and secondary sources to support your analysis of the text. These readings may include those we read in the seminar as well as supplemental sources you find on your own.
   8-10 pages; due Week 14, November 29

DSS assistance:
If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services at (631) 632-6748 or http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/dss/. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information go to the following website: http://www.sunysb.edu/ehs/fire/disabilities.shtml
Tentative class schedule:

* The reading is available for you to download and print in PDF format in the course website on Blackboard. Look for “Articles, Essays, and Book Chapters in PDF Format” in the course website.

(R): Recommended reading only  
* CTT: Critical Theory Today  
* PQ: A seminar member will post a question on Blackboard about the readings for discussion.

Be ready to discuss all readings on the days they are listed below. If we fall behind, I will cut some of the readings. I will let the seminar know ahead of time if we need to cut any of the readings.

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### Week 1

**Th, 8/30**  
Introduction: The Work We Do and Why We Do It  
Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (pp. 18-34)  
“What Is Literature and Does It Matter?”

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### Week 2

**Th, 9/6**  
Bring to seminar your selected text  
**Literary Studies and the English Department: Then and Now**  
* PQ Gerald Graff, *Professing Literature* (pp. 1-15, 195-225, and 247-262)*  
John Guillory, *Cultural Capital* (pp.3-82)*  
Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (pp.1-53)*  
Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (pp. 1-54)

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### Week 3

**Th, 9/13**  
**Manuscript and Publication**  
* PQ Jerome McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (1-49)*  
Hershel Parker, “The Determinacy of the Creative Process and the Authority of the Author’s Belated Textual Decisions,” from *Flawed Texts and Verbal Icons* (17-52)*  
Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (pp. 55-81)

**Case Study 1: F. Scott Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby**  
*The Great Gatsby* (up to chapter IV)

(R) These texts are on reserve at Melville Library, Main Stacks, Second Floor, Reserve Desk:

The Great Gatsby: *A Facsimile of the Manuscript*, edited by Matthew J. Bruccoli (pp. 1-302)  
“Writing The Great Gatsby,” from *F. Scott Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby: A Literary Reference*, edited by Matthew J. Bruccoli (pp. 53-171)

Week 4
Edition essay due (4 pages; have emailed a copy of your paper to everyone in class.)

Th, 9/20
Faculty guest: Assistant Professor Douglas Pfeiffer: the mechanics of locating, applying to use, and making efficient use of archives

Biography and Edition
PQ Wikipedia entry on F. Scott Fitzgerald:
Sara Mayfield, “Ash Heaps and Millionaires,” from Exiles from Paradise (pp. 85-90)*
Hershel Parker, “The Authority of the Editor and His Formula,” from Flawed Texts and Verbal Icons (53-83)*

The Great Gatsby (have finished the book)

Week 5

Th, 9/27
A) 1:00 - 2:30. Meet in Melville Library Special Collections and University Archives (Second Floor of Melville Library, Room E-2320) for consultation of some rare books and manuscripts and for introduction to the collections by Kristen J. Nyitray, Head of Special Collections and University Archives, and Jason Torre, University Archivist.

B) Return to 2094 Humanities for the second half of our seminar.

Historical Context and Some Recent Cultural Critique of The Great Gatsby

PQ Lois Tyson, “Everything you wanted to know about critical theory but were afraid to ask” (pp. 1-10) in CTT
“Psychoanalytic criticism” (pp. 11-52), “Marxist criticism” (pp. 53-79), “Feminist criticism” (pp. 83-130) in CTT

Ronald Berman, “The Great Gatsby and the Twenties” (pp. 79-94)*
Kirk Curnutt, “Fitzgerald’s Consumer World” (pp. 85-128)*
(R) Meredith Goldsmith, “White Skin, White Mask: Passing, Posing, and Performing in The Great Gatsby” (pp. 443-468)*
(R) Greg Forter, “Against Melancholia: Contemporary Mourning Theory, Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby, and the Politics of Unfinished Grief” (134-170)*
(R) Frances Kerr “Feeling ‘Half-Feminine’: Modernism and the Politics of Emotion in The Great Gatsby” (pp. 405-431)*
**Week 6**

**Th, 10/4**  
Faculty guest: Assistant Professor Michael Rubenstein

**Case Study 3: Literary Theory and Narrative Theory**

**PQ** *Jonathan Culler, Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (pp. 82-107)  
“New Criticism” (pp. 135-164) in *CTT*  
Mikhail Bakhtin, “Discourse in the Novel” from *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (pp. 259-366)*

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**Week 7**

**Production and Publication essay due** (5 pages; have emailed a copy of your paper to everyone in class.)

**Th, 10/11**  
Faculty guest: Associate Professor Andrew Newman and Brandi So: preparing and submitting an article for publication. Have read materials available in Blackboard.

**PQ** Continued: Mikhail Bakhtin, “Discourse in the Novel” from *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (pp. 366-422)*

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**Week 8**

**Th, 10/18**  
Faculty guest: Assistant Professor Michael Tondre

**PQ** “Reader-response criticism” (pp. 169-202) in *CTT*

**Case Study 3: Maxine Hong Kingston’s The Woman Warrior**

Wikipedia entry on Maxine Hong Kingston:  
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maxine_Hong_Kingston

*The Woman Warrior* (have read the book)  
(R) “Susan Brownmiler Talks with Maxine Hong Kingston, Author of *The Woman Warrior*” (pp. 173-179)*

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**Week 9**

**Reception essay due** (6 pages; have emailed a copy of your paper to everyone in class.)

**Th, 10/25**  
Faculty guest: Associate Professor Celia Marshik: preparing the conference paper

**Some Critical Cruxes in *The Woman Warrior***

**PQ** Frank Chin, “The Most Popular Book in China” (pp. 23-28)*  
Sau-ling C. Wong, “Autobiography as Guided Chinatown Tour: Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior* and the Chinese American Autobiographical Controversy” (pp. 29-53)*  
Sidonie Smith, “Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior*: Filiality and Woman’s Autobiographical Storytelling” (pp. 57-83)*  
King-Kok Cheung, “The Woman Warrior Versus the Chinaman Pacific: Must a Chinese American Critic Choose between Feminism and Heroism?” (pp. 113-133)*
Jeehyum Lim, “Cutting the Tongue: Language and the Body in Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior*” (pp. 49-65)*

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<th>Week 10</th>
<th>Faculty guest: Assistant Professor Justin Johnson</th>
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<tr>
<td>Th, 11/1</td>
<td>“Structuralist criticism” (pp. 209-245) and “Deconstructive criticism” (pp. 249-279) in <em>CTT</em></td>
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**Selected Texts and Oral Presentations from Seminar Members**

 Selected Text

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<th>Week 11</th>
<th>Critical Focus essay due (7 pages; have emailed a copy of your paper to everyone in class.)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Th, 11/8</td>
<td>“New Historical and Cultural criticism” (281-311) and “Lesbian, Gay, and Queer criticism” (317-354) in <em>CTT</em></td>
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 Selected Text

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<th>Week 12</th>
<th>Discussion of Critical Focus essays</th>
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<td>Th, 11/15</td>
<td>“African American criticism” (pp. 359-409), “Postcolonial criticism” (pp. 417-445), and “Gaining an overview” (pp. 451-456) in <em>CTT</em></td>
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 Selected Text

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<th>Week 13</th>
<th>No class. Thanksgiving.</th>
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<th>Week 14</th>
<th>Open Topic essay due (8-9 pages; have emailed a copy of your paper to everyone in class.)</th>
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<td>Th, 11/29</td>
<td>Selected Text</td>
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<th>Week 15</th>
<th>Discussion of Open Topic essays</th>
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<td>Th, 12/6</td>
<td>Selected Text</td>
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 Selected Text
M, 12/10  Meet at the New York Public Library (Fifth Avenue at 42nd Street, New York, NY 10018) for tour and session in rare books at The Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature. Meet in front of the Berg Collection in the Schwarzman Building at 3:45pm. Dinner and drinks at a local café/pub afterward.