ENG 2205-002: Introduction to literary studies

Jad Smith
Eastern Illinois University

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SYLLABUS FOR ENGLISH 2205: INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY STUDIES, SPRING 2008, SECTION 002

Required Texts and Materials
Behn, Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave, ed. Catherine Gallagher, Bedford Cultural Edition
Gay, The Beggar's Opera, Dover Thrift Edition
Gibaldi, MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 6th ed. (consider buying it)
Richter, Falling into Theory, 2nd ed.
Rivkin and Ryan, Literary Theory: An Anthology, 2nd ed.
Stoker, Dracula, ed. Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal, Norton Critical Edition
Additional readings and handouts to be provided by the professor

Course Description
This course is designed to introduce students of English to fundamental issues in the discipline. While we will begin with close readings of primary texts from the genres of poetry and fiction, we will focus much of our attention on 1) critical responses to those texts and 2) the theories and methodologies informing those responses. Our forays into criticism will lead us to encounters with formalism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, and historicism, among other interpretive practices. Along the way, we will not only learn strategies for reading texts but also raise and answer questions about formulating a research topic, conducting research, and documenting sources. The course requires careful preparation of challenging readings; measured contributions to class discussions; and engaged critical thought.

Writing Intensive Course
You should consider submitting an essay written for this class to the Electronic Writing Portfolio or EWP. Please visit the following web address for information on the submission process: <www.eiu.edu/~assess/electronic_writing_portfolio1.htm>. The course deadline for EWP submissions is Thursday, April 24, 2008.

Description of Assignments
Group Analysis Presentation: in a group of three, you will use close reading to analyze a poem; then, you will present your interpretation to the class.
Review: you will write a paper (750-1000 words) explaining the argument of Stephen Arata's scholarly essay "The Occidental Tourist: Dracula and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization."
Mid-term and Final Examinations: these examinations will test your knowledge of course readings and discussions through a variety of question formats, including identification, short answer, and essay.
Producible Interpretation Presentation: in a group of four or five, you will generate a "producible interpretation" of a scene from The Beggar's Opera.
Proposal/Annotated Bibliography: you will propose a topic for the contribution essay (650-800 words) and begin your research by compiling an annotated bibliography.
Contribution Essay and Presentation: you will write a research paper (2000 words) in which you contribute to the critical understanding of a work of literature and then present the results of your research to the class.

Daily Assignments
Daily assignments include quizzes, journal entries, in-class writing, and other work assigned on a day-to-day basis. If our discussions lag, I will increase the number of daily assignments, for instance, by giving pop quizzes or requiring additional journal entries. Each daily assignment will be worth ten points, except for the peer review, which will be worth fifty. At the end of the semester, I will divide earned daily assignment points by the total possible to arrive at a grade.

Policies
Attendance: If you accumulate more than three unexcused absences this semester, you will forfeit your participation grade. Absences will be excused only in the case of a documented illness or emergency, or of documented participation in an official university activity. For your absence to be excused, you must provide me with a legible photocopy of your documentation prior to the absence or immediately upon your return to class. Avoid chronic tardiness. Two instances of tardiness may count as an absence. Missing a mandatory conference will count as an absence.
Late work: Daily assignments will not be accepted late, and missed peer reviews cannot be made up. Presentations must be given on the dates for which you have scheduled them, except under the most extenuating of circumstances. All written assignments are due at the start of class on the final due date. If you want an extension on a written assignment, you must seek the extension two full days in advance of the class period during which the assignment is due and cite compelling reasons for the request; otherwise, you will be penalized one letter grade for not turning in the paper on time and an additional letter grade for every twelve hours thereafter. After forty-eight hours, the assignment will not be accepted, and you will receive a zero on it. Only in the case of a properly documented absence may an examination be taken before or after the scheduled date. The rescheduled examination may cover different material than the original.

Grading Scale: 100 to 90 = A, 89.99 to 80 = B, 79.99 to 70 = C, 69.99 to 60 = D, 59.99 and below F

Grading Percentages:
- Group Analysis Presentation: 5%
- Review: 10%
- Mid-term Examination: 20%
- Producible Interpretation Presentation: 5%
- Proposal / Annotated Bibliography: 5%
- Contribution Essay: 20%
- Final Examination: 20%
- Daily Assignments: 5%
- Participation: 10%

Assessment: You must turn in the Group Analysis Presentation, Review, Producible Interpretation Presentation, Proposal / Annotated Bibliography, and Contribution Essay to pass the class. For these assignments, I will provide formal assignment sheets. Your grade for a given assignment will be determined by how well your work fulfills the requirements outlined in the assignment sheet. You will receive written or verbal descriptions of daily assignments. Your participation grade will be based on your attendance, the regularity and quality of your contributions to class discussion, and your level of engagement during group work and class activities.

Academic Dishonesty: According to the MLA Style Manual, the word “plagiarism” has its origin in the Latin term for “kidnapper”; plagiarists kidnap other writers’ sentences, phrases, or ideas and present them as their own. The Random House Dictionary defines “plagiarism” as “The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work.” As these sources suggest, plagiarism often results from faulty documentation or careless note taking. Always place quoted materials in quotation marks, and always cite quoted and/or paraphrased sources, even in rough drafts of papers or presentations. Respect for the intellectual work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources. Inexcusable acts of plagiarism include downloading or buying a paper from the internet; copying and pasting phrases or passages from electronic sources into your paper without citing them; submitting a paper written by another student as your own; borrowing the language and content of a website verbatim and using it as an “original” presentation; and so on. The penalty for academic dishonesty is failure in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

The Office of Disability Services: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE

(Please note: each reading should be completed before class on the day it is listed.)

Week One
T Jan 8 Introduction to the course
Begin reading Dracula (9-327)
R Jan 10 “Disliking Books at an Early Age,” Gerald Graff (Falling Into Theory, 41)
“The Rise of English,” Terry Eagleton (Falling Into Theory, 49)
Continue reading Dracula (9-327); finish by T Feb 5

Week Two
T Jan 15 Unit I: Close Reading: Critical Perspectives
“Introduction: Formalisms,” Rivkin and Ryan (Literary Theory 3-6, hereafter abbreviated LT)
Russian Formalism: “Art as Technique,” Viktor Shklovsky (LT 15-21)
“Dulce et Decorum est,” Wilfred Owen (provided)
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| **R Jan 17** | **New Criticism:** "The Language of Paradox," Cleanth Brooks (LT 28-38)  
"The Canonization," John Donne (LT 38-9)  
"Those Winter Sundays," Robert Hayden (provided)  
Group Analysis Presentation: assigned  
Continue reading *Dracula* (9-327); finish by T Feb 5 |
| **Week Three** | **Marxism and The Matrix**  
"The Factory," from *Capital*, Karl Marx (provided 544-53)  
"Hegemony," Antonio Gramsci (LT 673)  
Group Analysis: choose poem, form groups, begin close reading |
| **R Jan 24** | Finish close reading; plan all aspects of presentation  
Continue reading *Dracula* (9-327); finish by T Feb 5 |
| **Week Four** | **Unit II: Case Study of Dracula**  
"The Uncanny," Sigmund Freud (LT 418-30)  
Continue reading *Dracula* (9-327); finish by T Feb 5 |
| **R Jan 31** | Due: Group Analysis Presentations  
Due: Group Analysis Presentations  
**Unit II: Case Study of Dracula** |
| **Week Five** | **Initial discussion of Dracula**  
Intro to Gothic, "Gothic Excess and Transgression," Fred Botting (provided)  
*Dracula, Gender, and Sexuality*  
"Fictional Conventions and Sexuality in Dracula," Carrol Fry (35-8; provided)  |
| **R Feb 7** | **Week Six**  
"‘Your Girls that You All Love Are Mine’: Dracula and the Victorian Male Sexual Imagination," Gail Griffin (137-48; provided)  
Review: assigned  
"‘A Wilde Desire Took Me’: The Homoerotic History of Dracula," Talia Schaffer (in Norton *Dracula* 470-82)  
*Dracula, Race, and Imperialism*  
"Count Dracula and the Martians," R. J. Dingley (13-24; provided) |
| **R Feb 14** | **Week Seven**  
Clip from film *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*  
R Feb 21  
Overview of mid-term examination  
First draft due: Review; peer review |
| **Week Eight** | Conferences  
Conferences |
| **Week Nine** | Mid-term examination  
Final draft due: Review  
Contribution Essay: assigned  
Research, compiling bibliography, writing proposal and annotations, MLA documentation |
| **Spring Break** | Mar 10-14  
No classes |
| **Week Ten** | **Unit III: Interpreting Drama**  
*The Beggar’s Opera*, Gay (1-58)  
Excerpts from *Producible Interpretation*, Milhous and Hume  
Producible Interpretation Presentation: assigned, form groups |
| **T Mar 18** | **T Mar 4**  
Mid-term examination  
Final draft due: Review  
Contribution Essay: assigned  
Research, compiling bibliography, writing proposal and annotations, MLA documentation  
No classes  
**T Mar 18**  
**Unit III: Interpreting Drama**  
*The Beggar’s Opera*, Gay (1-58)  
Excerpts from *Producible Interpretation*, Milhous and Hume  
Producible Interpretation Presentation: assigned, form groups |
Week Eleven  
R Mar 20 The Beggar's Opera continued
Group meeting, work on producible interpretation

Week Twelve  
T Mar 25 Due: Producing Interpretation Presentations
R Mar 27 Unit IV: Historicizing Oroonoko
Literary and Cultural Encounters: read first section of Oroonoko (from 34 to 62)
Excerpts from The Masque of Blackness, Ben Jonson; Robinson Crusoe, Daniel Defoe; “On Cannibals,” Michel de Montaigne
Due: Contribution Proposal / Annotated Bibliography

Week Thirteen  
T Apr 1 Read second section of Oroonoko (from 62 to 85; hereafter abbreviated O)
From Groans of the Plantations, Edward Littleton (376-7; 423-7 in O)
From Interesting Narrative of the Life, Olaudah Equiano (391-2 in O)
“A Small Place,” Jamaica Kincaid (LT 1224-29)
R Apr 3 Read final section of Oroonoko (from 85 to 100)
From Oroonoko, a Tragedy, Thomas Southerne (107-31 in O)

Week Fourteen  
T Apr 8 Unit V: Filmic Encounters
Excerpt from Aliens
R Apr 10 “Fembo: Aliens’ Intentions,” Greenberg (provided)

Week Fifteen  
T Apr 22 Presentations
R Apr 24 Presentations
Final Draft Due: Contribution Essay; deadline for EWP

Final Exam Thursday, May 1, 10:15 am-12:15 pm

GROUP ASSIGNMENTS

GROUP ANALYSIS PRESENTATION, English 2205, Prof. J. Smith
* Due on T Jan 29 or R Jan 31 (8-10 minutes)

In groups of three, analyze a poem 1) using close reading, and 2) making use of formalist terminology and reading practices discussed in class. Think of the text as an “objective structure” with a “verbal design” revealed through point of view, tone, imagery, rhyme, syntax, metaphor, diction, theme and/or other literary devices. If possible, incorporate formalist concepts such as defamiliarization, ambiguity, paradox, irony, and/or wonder into your analysis.

Step One: form a group of three (or perhaps four, depending on the number of people in class), and choose a poem from the options provided. (No two groups may pick the same poem.) Consider exchanging e-mail addresses or phone numbers with group members. Sign up for a presentation date.

Step Two: begin your close reading of the poem on T Jan 22.

Step Three: on R Jan 24, finish close reading; plan all aspects of presentation (e.g., divide up speaking and other responsibilities); practice. If you want, plan to use the multimedia presentation system at the front of the classroom or to produce a handout or other visual aid (skits count). Consider meeting outside of class or corresponding with one another by e-mail in order to discuss and organize the presentation.

Step Four: On T Jan 29 or R Jan 31, give your presentation and field questions afterward. If you need to use the multimedia system, arrive early to test the equipment.
Guidelines for the Group Analysis
1) The presentation offers a developed close reading of the poem, giving careful attention to its language and formal characteristics. You cite sufficient evidence from the poem to support your reading.

2) Your close reading of the poem evinces critical thought and employs appropriate formalist terminology in discussing the design and theme of the poem.

3) Your presentation is well organized and clearly communicates your group's main ideas to the audience.

4) Your group works together well and divides speaking responsibilities evenly.

5) Your group turns in a brief outline of the presentation on the due date.

6) Your outline cites any sources used in constructing the presentation.

REVIEW, English 2205, Prof. J. Smith
* First draft due on R Feb 21; complete draft required for the peer review (minimum of 750 words)
* Conference on T Feb 26 or R Feb 28
* Final draft due on R Mar 6

Read and reread Stephen Arata's critical essay "The Occidental Tourist: Dracula and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization" (Norton Critical Edition of Dracula 462-79). In no less than three pages (750 words), review Arata's argument.

Do not mistake this task for a simple one. Reviewing an argument requires more than summary, or a mere parroting back of what a critic said. A review carefully explains an argument and its component parts to a reader, asking such questions as: what central idea organizes the critic's argument? What claims does the critic make? Does the critic's evidence support those claims? Is the critic's account persuasive? Why or why not? Does the critic adopt a particular approach or methodology? A reviewer digests an argument for readers, putting the critic's argument in his or her own words, and evaluates the quality of the critic's scholarship.

Guidelines for the Review
1) Your introduction orients readers by offering specific details (for instance, the title of Arata's essay); defining key terms or concepts; identifying the main or overarching idea of Arata's essay; and/or beginning to indicate the value of Arata's scholarship.

2) You avoid generic comments (i.e., "Different critics make different arguments about Dracula") in the introduction and conclusion.

3) Your body paragraphs expound upon Arata's argument, explaining it in detail through close reading and specific examples. You support your reading of Arata's essay with paraphrase and direct quotation of the article. You introduce quotations, incorporate them smoothly, and explicate them adequately.

4) Throughout your essay, you go beyond mere paraphrase and summary of claims to achieve a thoughtful review of Arata's argument. Your review shows evidence of critical thinking and demonstrates a competent understanding of Arata's argument.

5) You offer a sufficiently developed and internally consistent account of Arata's argument. In particular, you explain important implications of his argument. For instance, what exactly does Arata mean when he claims: "Dracula suggests two equations in relation to English-Irish politics: not just, Dracula is to England as Ireland is to England, but, Dracula is to England as England is to Ireland" (469). Readers need your help.

6) You document your sources according to MLA style, using parenthetical references where appropriate and submitting a Works Cited page with each draft of the paper.

7) You revise and edit your paper as necessary. Revision may involve reorganizing or redrafting sections of the paper. As you edit the final draft, eliminate fused sentences, comma splices, fragments, mixed constructions, ambiguous or vague pronoun reference, usage problems, and wordiness, in particular.
PRODUCIBLE INTERPRETATION PRESENTATION, English 2205, Prof. J. Smith
* Due on T Mar 25 (8-10 minutes)

Quotations from Judith Milhous and Robert Hume's *Producible Interpretation*

"Useful interpretation of... plays is best accomplished by methods that go beyond a close reading of texts. The new criticism of the last twenty-five years has made a substantial contribution to our understanding of... plays, but the limitations of such an approach have become increasingly evident" (ix).

"A playscript should be interpreted as what it is—a vehicle to be completed in performance—not as an aesthetic object complete in itself. Where a poem or a novel stands on its own, a play does not—an obvious fact, but one all too often ignored by recent critics" (ix).

"By 'producible interpretation' we mean a critical reading that a director could communicate to an audience in performance" (3).

"Production analysis. By this term we mean interpretation of the text specifically aimed at understanding it as a performance vehicle—reading 'reading with a directorial eye,' if you like" (10).

**The Assignment**

**Part I:** Engage in "production analysis" of a scene or scenes from *The Beggar's Opera*. Begin with close reading but move beyond it to consider how the scene(s) would be "completed in performance." Adopt the role of director, making decisions about casting and staging the scene. Choose actors living or dead whose past performances, in your view, qualify them for their roles. (Cast whomever you want, but make sure your decisions show measured thought.) What specific qualities would these actors bring to their characters? How would you direct the actors to play their characters and perform the scene(s)? How would you stage the scene(s) visually through blocking, costumes, scenery, props, and so on? If you want, modernize your interpretation of the scene. (For instance, could you adapt the play to the genre of the Italian gangster film and cast Marlon Brando as Peachum?) Spend 6 to 10 minutes explaining your "producible interpretation" of the scene.

**Part II (Optional):** Stage/perform the scene for the class in 5 minutes or less. Again, keep in mind the possibility of modernizing it (including rewriting dialogue in contemporary language).

**CONTRIBUTION ASSIGNMENT, English 2205, Prof. J. Smith**

**Topics**

You may focus on any work of literature you want for this assignment. When selecting a novel, short story, poem, etc., you should check the library for available sources, making sure that at least four recent pieces of criticism exist on the work (or author). If you prefer an assigned topic, write on Stoker's *Dracula*, Gay's *Beggar's Opera*, or Behn's *Oroonoko*.

**CONTRIBUTION PROPOSAL/ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**
* Due on R Mar 27

The contribution project proposal consists of two parts. **Part I**, a two-page document outlining your proposed project, should include three sections:

I. Proposed Topic and Approach: pick a literary work and explain the problem or issue you will address in your research on it. Broadly outline your proposed project, explaining your methodology or approach to the subject. (Brief example: "I will approach John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* from a historicist perspective, focusing on its depiction of the gentleman highwayman. Criminal biographies of the period often romanticize the gentleman highwayman, treating him as a cultural hero, but I suspect that Gay's Macheath serves a very different purpose in the play.")

II. Critical Review: pick a recent, important piece of criticism on the work with an approach similar to or related to yours. Explain its argument in one highly developed paragraph. (This piece of criticism will also appear on the annotated bibliography.)

III. Proposed Argument: state the purpose of your research. How will you contribute to scholarship or current debates in this research area? What argument will you make about the literary work in question? (Brief example:
“I will contribute to scholarship on Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera* by demonstrating that his portrayal of Macheath poses a challenge to the romanticized view of the gentleman highwayman as a cultural hero.”

Part II, an annotated bibliography of criticism on your literary work or topic, should:

* in MLA style, list 4 or more scholarly sources written after 1980. These sources must come from outside the course reading.
* provide a concise summary (2-4 sentences) of the approach and main idea of each source.

How to Annotate Sources for the Annotated Bibliography

A good annotation makes a summary statement about a critic’s or theorist’s methodology, purpose, and argument (especially the conclusions reached). However, it also goes beyond mere summary to address the quality of a scholarly or theoretical text. Is the critic’s or theorist’s work useful? How? Does the critic or theorist contribute new or original ideas to debates about the topic?

An MLA-Style Bibliographic Entry (see the *MLA Handbook* for more information)


A Poor Annotation of Senf

The scholarly article, “The Comedy of Class in Stoker’s *Dracula,*” was written by Carol Senf, a notable literary critic on *Dracula.* This talks about the language of class, which is its central argument. Aspects of Dracula’s vampirism are discussed in this context.

An Adequate Annotation of Senf

Combining Marxist analysis with close reading of the text, this essay takes the notion of Dracula as a bloated aristocrat to its logical extreme, reading Stoker’s novel as a metaphor for class relations. In Senf’s smart but poorly supported reading, Dracula is the supreme aristocrat and his feeding on blood symbolizes the way he saps the lower classes of their economic power. Specifically, she argues that his character is constructed in opposition to the interests of Victorian England’s growing middle class.

CONTRIBUTION ESSAY

* Complete first draft due for peer review T Apr 15
* Final draft of contribution essay due R Apr 24

Write an essay (minimum of 2000 words) that builds on the work of your research project proposal. In it, put forward an argument that:

* offers close reading and analysis of primary and secondary texts;
* engages with recent criticism or theories relevant to study of your research topic;
* shows some understanding of the literary and cultural contexts in which the literary work was produced;
* makes an interesting and perhaps even original contribution to discussion of the literary work.

Please write clearly and analytically, follow MLA style, and cite a minimum of three secondary sources in the final draft of your contribution essay.

Guidelines for the Contribution Essay

1) Your introduction captures the attention of readers; orients them by defining key terms or concepts (or by providing other useful information); and explains the main or overarching idea of your essay.

2) You avoid generic or hollow comments throughout your paper (i.e., “Different critics make different arguments about *Dracula*”).

3) Before critiquing or challenging a critic’s argument, you explain it adequately, providing the necessary context your audience requires to understand your critique or challenge.
4) Your paragraphs (and your essay as a whole) sufficiently develop your ideas through various strategies, including close reading of primary and secondary texts; the incorporation of concrete and specific details; and careful citation of primary and secondary sources.

5) Your measured explanations and thoughtful responses to secondary sources show your ability to think critically about scholarly arguments.

6) Your conclusion emphasizes your contribution to our understanding of the literary work in question.

7) You follow MLA style with near flawless precision in the first and final drafts. Papers submitted without appropriate documentation will be returned to writers and considered late.

8) You cite a minimum of three scholarly sources in your final draft. You choose sources written after 1980.

9) You revise and edit your paper as necessary. Revision may involve reorganizing or redrafting sections of the paper. As you edit the final draft, you eliminate errors of grammar and writing style, in particular, fused sentences, comma splices, fragments, mixed constructions, ambiguous or vague pronoun reference, usage problems, weak verbs, and wordiness. Your prose is clear and concise.

10) You bring a complete draft for the peer review. Failure to do so will lower your final grade on the assignment by a letter.

PRESENTATION
Due on R Apr 17, T Apr 22, or R Apr 24, according to scheduling

On your scheduled presentation date, present the results of your contribution project to the class in a 4-6 minute presentation. During your presentation, briefly describe the initial aims and goals of your project. Then, move on to the results, explaining how your contribution essay developed over time and how you arrived at your main line of argument. What kind of critical thinking did you do about the topic? What conclusions did you reach through research and writing? Consider constructing a handout for the class and/or using audio/visual aids to illustrate key points. Be prepared to answer questions about your project.

Guidelines for the Contribution Presentation

1) In 4-6 minutes, you clearly explain the argument of your contribution essay.

2) You do not rely too heavily on audio/visual aids (for instance, read from a PowerPoint presentation).

3) You adequately answer questions about your argument/contribution.

* Failure to give the presentation will result in an “F” on the Contribution Essay. An excellent presentation will improve your grade on the written portion of the assignment, a weak presentation lower it.