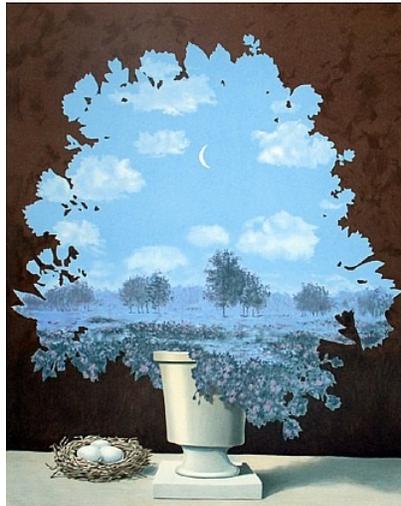


Dr. Shari Goldberg
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Office: Keiper 304
Office hours: TR, 12:30-1:30 and by appointment

English 315, Spring 2017
TR, 2:15-3:35
Keiper 100

Literary



Theory

Course description

The word *theory* refers, via its etymology, to the act of seeing. All literary theories are thus ways of seeing: of seeing texts and of seeing the world. Our primary goal will be to see *with* theories that have been influential to the study of literature—to learn where they focus, how they interpret, and what they offer. We will examine the mind and the economy, art and language and advertising, narrative and sex and nation and gender and tradition. Because the theories we study will be challenging rather than intuitive, we will have to rethink our assumptions and beliefs, and, often, to unsettle them. We will do so not merely to be contrary, but to open ourselves to seeing *more*.

Required books

Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (FSG, ISBN 9780809071944)

Maurice Blanchot and Jacques Derrida, *The Instant of My Death and Demeure* (Stanford, ISBN 9780804733267)

Ann Carson, *Float* (Knopf, ISBN 978-101946848)

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1.* (Vintage, ISBN 9780679724698)

Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (Norton, ISBN 9780871401182)

Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark* (Vintage, ISBN 9780679745426)

Core expectations

1. Come to each class session prepared to thoughtfully discuss the assigned text. Being prepared means: you have read carefully by annotating the text (annotations include underlining, margin remarks, and/or written notes), you have thought about questions the text raises or you would like to raise about it, and you have composed a generous and serious mindset. Bring your book to every class; if we are reading a handout via Canvas, bring a printed, annotated copy.
2. Use writing assignments as opportunities to refine your understanding of texts we read. Write with care, deliberation, and a sincere desire to understand your ideas fully and to present them clearly. Make an appointment at the writing center or come to my office hours for help with this process.
3. Act respectfully toward me, toward your classmates, and toward our readings. Do not come to class late; do not use your phone during class; do not interrupt. Do listen attentively; do try to figure out what is valuable in what you hear and read; do bring concerns or confusions to the table. Do your own work and do it on time.
4. Visit me, during office hours, if you have questions about texts, discussions, assignments, grades, or policies.

Evaluation criteria

Contribution	15%
4 Analytic responses	40% (10% each)
2 Presentations	20% (10% each)
1 Mythology	10%
1 Final paper	15%

Policies

Attendance: I expect you to attend all class sessions. More than two absences will result in your semester grade being lowered (three points per additional session missed). In case of family emergency or serious illness, have your dean issue a short-term leave. When you are absent, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate to find out what you missed.

Technology: In general, books, papers, and pens or pencils will be our preferred classroom technologies. I will let you know if others are permitted for a certain session.

Accommodations: Bring me documentation from the Office of Disability Services within the first two weeks of the semester if you need extra time or other support to complete the work of the course.

Academic Citation: Assignments containing plagiarism will be sent to the Office of the Dean of the College and may result in failure of the course.

Communication: Feel free to email me with questions or concerns. You may expect a reply within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 on weekends. I will post announcements and handouts on Canvas.

Schedule of assignments, due on the date listed

All readings are in the required books unless marked with [C], in which case they may be found in Canvas. Assignments followed by an asterisk indicate that an analytic response is due.

I. Thinking with Signs

- T 1/17 Introduction
R 1/19 Jonathan Edwards, "letter on spiders" [C]
Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown" [C]

II. Signs from the Unconscious

- T 1/24 Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*: Lectures 1-4
R 1/26 Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*: Lectures 5-7 */group 1
T 1/31 Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*: Lectures 16-20

III. Signs from the Material

- R 2/2 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, excerpt [C]
Marx, *Capital*: Part I, Chapter 1, Sections 1-2 [C]
T 2/7 Marx, *Capital*: Part I, Chapter 1, Sections 3-4 [C] */group 2

Media interlude

- R 2/9 Presentations on *In Treatment*: Season 2, Episodes 4 & 9, and *In Time*
T 2/14 Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Technological Reproducibility" [C]

IV. Signs from Other Signs

- R 2/16 Ferdinand de Saussure, "Course in General Linguistics" [C]
T 2/21 Ferdinand de Saussure, "Course in General Linguistics" [C] */group 1

V. Signs from Culture

- R 2/23 Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*: Prefaces, "The World of Wrestling," "The Romans in Films," "The 'Blue Blood' Cruise," "Soap-Powders and Detergents," "Operation Margarine," "Toys," "The Face of Garbo"

T 2/28 Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*: "Wine and Milk," "Steak and Chips," "Ornamental Cookery," "The New Citroen," "Photography and Electoral Appeal," *The Lost Continent*, "Plastic"

R 3/2 *Mythologies* update for 2017

VI. Signs from Texts

T 3/7 Maurice Blanchot, "The Instant of My Death"; Jacques Derrida, *Demeure*, pp. 51-76

R 3/9 Derrida, *Demeure*, pp. 76-103 ***/group 2**

[Spring Break]

VII. Signs from Discourse

T 3/21 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, "We 'Other Victorians'"; "The Incitement to Discourse"

R 3/23 Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, "The Perverse Implantation" ***/group 1**

T 3/28 Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" [C] ***/group 2**

Media interlude

R 3/30 Presentations on Ann Carson, *Float*

T 4/4 Presentations on Ann Carson, *Float*

VIII. Signs from Bodies

R 4/6 Helene Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" [C] ***/group 1**

T 4/11 Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, excerpt [C]

Recommended: J. L. Austin, "Performative Utterances" [C]

R 4/13 Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, excerpt [C]

T 4/18 Hortense Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book" [C] ***/group 2**

IX. Texts from Signs

R 4/20 Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, chapters 1-2

T 4/25 Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, chapter 3 ***/extra**

R 4/27 Paper workshop