



ENG 38001

Critical Theory and Reading

FINAL EXAM (30%, 300 points)

DUE: December 13, 2018 (11:59pm, EST)

GENERAL DIRECTIONS: This is a take-home exam, which means that you are permitted to discuss the topics with your peers, as well as use all course materials available to you. Choose a topic from each part (below). You have the option of combining your choices into one answer, but be sure to answer each topic fully—and the word count should be sufficient to address the the combined word counts of each part! To support your answers, you must cite the textbook, lecture notes, and for the third topic, at least two of the readings from the Reading Packet (in-text citations, no Works Cited needed), but *what is most important is that you demonstrate an ability to critique and theorize about literary criticism and theory (prove yourself to be a meta-theorist, a philosopher of philosophies about literature and language).*

PART ONE DIRECTIONS (100 points): This is (hopefully) the fun part. Choose one of the below topics with the understanding that I am giving you permission to get a little creative. Your answer should be 500-1000 words long.

1. You are planning an independent study (it doesn't matter who the instructor is). If you could choose to focus more upon any particular theory, which one would it be—or would it be a combination of theories? Explain why you have chosen this theory (or combination of theories). Explain what you would like to study. How might this focus help you in future literary studies?

2. You hate literary theory and criticism. That's okay! (We each have a right to be wrong in our values, sometimes.) Vent! Rage! Express yourself freely (but try to stay logical). Explain why you hate literary theory. Pick on one or two particular theoretical approaches—ones that really drive you crazy with uncontrollable rage. Explain why. What is wrong with the approach? (Hint: what I am evaluating is not your dislike but your ability to express your dislike with solid knowledge of what you are attacking.)

PART TWO DIRECTIONS (200 points): Choose one of the below topics. Your answer should be 1000-2000 words long.

1. You find yourself in the Space-time Continuum Bar (second star to the right and straight on 'til morning). People from all walks of life (all over the world) and from a wide variety of periods of time are there. It's a crowded bar. You order a glass of something non-alcoholic (because you *are* taking an exam right now) and sit in a corner where you can see and hear various groups talking. Suddenly, Karl Marx walks into that bar and finds several of his friends (people who were influenced by him in later times). Who is he with? Choose at least four people we have studied—three of these people must be from the 1950s or later. Describe the influences you see of Marx's thinking in their work. (In other words, compare/contrast Marx's thinking with the thinking of four other theorists.)
2. Choose one of the works from the Reading Packet and analyze it. Does the work imply just one theoretical approach, or does it seem to be merging ideas to generate a new approach? For example, does the work seem to have structuralist aspects, possibly Marxist influences? Given what you know (so far), what are you seeing in this work, historically? Be sure to discuss the influences of 3-5 approaches upon this work.
3. You find yourself in the Space-time Continuum Bar (second star to the right and straight on 'til morning). People from all walks of life (all over the world) and from a wide variety of periods of time are there. It's a crowded bar. You order a glass of something non-alcoholic (because you *are* taking an exam right now) and sit in a corner where you can see and hear various groups talking. Suddenly, either someone from the Classical Greek or Roman Period walks into that bar and finds several of his friends (people who were influenced by him in later times). Who is he with? Choose at least four people we have studied—three of these people must be from the 1950s or later. Describe the influences you see of that Greek or Roman person's thinking in their work. (In other words, compare/contrast his thinking with the thinking of four other theorists.)
4. How do pre-twentieth-century literary theoretical approaches anticipate any of the approaches of today? Choose two current approaches (Marxism, Feminism, Psychoanalytical, Reader-Response, Structuralism, Deconstructionism, Post-Structuralism, New Historicism, Post-colonialism, Queer Theory, Gender Studies, Disability Studies/Crip Theory, Eco-criticism, Critical Race Theory, or Neomedievalism) and discuss their theoretical origins.
5. You find yourself in the Space-time Continuum Bar (second star to the right and straight on 'til morning). People from all walks of life (all over the world) and from a wide variety of periods of time are there. It's a crowded bar. You order a glass of something non-alcoholic (because you *are* taking an exam right now) and sit in a corner where you can see and hear various groups talking. Suddenly, Immanuel Kant walks into that bar and finds several of his friends (people who were influenced by him in later times). Who is he with? Choose at least four people we have studied—three of these people must be from the 1950s or later. Describe the influences you see of Kant's thinking in their work. (In other words, compare/contrast Kant's thinking with the thinking of four other theorists.)

6. This is a three-part topic:
- What are the fundamental differences between Marxist and psychoanalytic theories? What are the fundamental differences between formalism, structuralism, deconstructionism, and post-structuralism? How are they similar? Describe five differences and two similarities.
 - What are the fundamental differences between formalism, structuralism, deconstructionism, and post-structuralism? How are they similar? Describe five differences and two similarities.
 - Choose one contemporary approach (from Week 13, Week 14, Week 15, or Week 16) and explain how any or all of the above approaches appear to be functioning in this approach.

7. You find yourself in the Space-time Continuum Bar (second star to the right and straight on 'til morning). People from all walks of life (all over the world) and from a wide variety of periods of time are there. It's a crowded bar. You order a glass of something non-alcoholic (because you *are* taking an exam right now) and sit in a corner where you can see and hear various groups talking. Tom Waits is crooning to everyone from his piano, singing:

The piano has been drinking, my necktie is asleep
 And the combo went back to New York, the jukebox has to take a leak
 And the carpet needs a haircut, and the spotlight looks like a prison break
 And the telephone's out of cigarettes, and the balcony is on the make
 And the piano has been drinking, the piano has been drinking

And the menus are all freezing, and the light man's blind in one eye
 And he can't see out of the other
 And the piano-tuner's got a hearing aid, and he showed up with his mother
 And the piano has been drinking, the piano has been drinking
 As the bouncer is a sumo wrestler cream-puff Casper milk-toast
 And the owner is a mental midget with the I.Q. of a fence post
 Cause the piano has been drinking, the piano has been drinking

And you can't find your waitress with a Geiger counter
 And she hates you and your friends and you just can't get served without her
 And the box-office is drooling, and the bar stools are on fire
 And the newspapers were fooling, and the ash-trays have retired
 Cause the piano has been drinking, the piano has been drinking
 The piano has been drinking, not me, not me, not me, not me, not me

“The Piano Has Been Drinking (Not Me)”

Choose five approaches (they do not have to be people) to analyzing these lyrics. At least three of those approaches must be from literary theory developed in the 1950s or later.

