

# EN3J6-30 Modes of Reading

**24/25**

**Department**

English and Comparative Literary Studies

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 3

**Module leader**

Myka Tucker-Abramson

**Credit value**

30

**Module duration**

20 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

---

## Description

### Introductory description

This module offers an introduction to the practices of criticism. Form, genre and literary inheritance will be among the topics addressed. The module aims to enable students to work with a variety of critical approaches, and to develop an informed awareness of the possibilities available to them as readers and critics. Thematically organised lectures provide a frame of cultural reference on which the students will draw in their close readings in seminars. The module is taught in four units of four lectures each

[Module web page](#)

### Module aims

This module offers an introduction to the practices of criticism. Form, genre and literary inheritance will be among the topics addressed. The module aims to enable students to work with a variety of critical approaches, and to develop an informed awareness of the possibilities available to them as readers and critics. Thematically organised lectures provide a frame of cultural reference on which the students will draw in their close readings in seminars. The module is taught in four units of four lectures each

### Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Term 1 Week 1: Introduction to the course

Unit I: Narrative \*\*\* Text to read over the summer for this unit, Chris Kraus I Love Dick (1997)

Week 2: Viktor Shklovsky, "Art, as Device" (1917) and Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics (1916; trans. Roy Harris): 'Introduction. Chapter 3. The Object of Study.' (pp. 9-19) and 'Part One. General Principles. Chapter 1. Nature of the Linguistic Sign' (pp.75-91)

Week 3: Karl Marx, excerpt from The German Ideology (1845)

Week 4: Sigmund Freud "The Method of Interpreting Dreams: An Analysis of a Specimen Dream" (1899) and Louis Althusser "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" (1970)

Week 5: Helene Cixous, "Laugh of the Medusa" (1976)

Unit II: Poetics Week 7 Comparative Poetry: Mahmood Darwish "Sonnet V"; W.B. Yeats "No Second Troy"; Lorna Goodison "Mother, the Great Stones Got To Move" Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, "Poetry as a Way of Saying" Understanding Poetry (1938)

Week 8 Comparative Poetics: Adonis, "Poetics and Modernity" in An Introduction to Arab Poetics (1984); Édouard Glissant "For Opacity" (1990); Audre Lorde "Poetry is Not a Luxury" (1984)

Week 9 Contemporary Poetics I: M. NourbeSe Philip, Zong plus the "Notanda" (Wesleyan Press, 2008) Evie Shockley, "Is 'Zong!' conceptual poetry? Yes, it isn't." (2013)

Week 10 Contemporary Poetics II: Janelle Monae, The ArchAndroid (2010) Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto" (1985)

Term 2 Unit III: Performance \*\*\* Text to be read alongside material for weeks 1-3: Saadallah Wannous, Soiree for the 5th of June (1967)

Week 1: Ric Knowles, excerpts from How Theatre Means (2014)

Week 2: Antonin Artaud "The Theatre of Cruelty: First Manifesto" in The Theatre and Its Double (1938)

Week 3: Augusto Boal, "Preface to the 1974 Edition" and "Poetics of the Oppressed" in Theatre of the Oppressed (1970)

Week 4: To read: Judith Butler "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory" Theatre Journal (1988) and Sylvia Federici "Wages Against Housework" (1975) To watch: Martha Rosler Semiotics of the Kitchen (1975)

Week 5: To listen to: Childish Gambino "This is America" (2018) To view: selected artworks by Carrie Mae Weems and Kara Walker To read: Frantz Fanon "The Fact of Blackness" Black Skin White Masks (1952)

Unit IV: Image Week 7 Photography: Julio Cortazar "Blow Up" (1959) Roland Barthes Camera Lucida (excerpts, 1980) and Susan Sontag "On Photography" (1977)

Week 8 Spectacle: To watch: Xin Xin "Faxconn.tv" (excerpt, 2015) and ipod ads and ipod ads culturejammed To read: Guy Debord "Separation Perfected" Society of the Spectacle (1967)

Week 9 Graphic: Alison Bechdel, Fun Home (2006) Eve Kosovsky Sedgwick, "Queer and Now" Tendencies (1993)

Week 10 Digital: To watch: Andrew Norman Wilson "Workers leaving the Lumiere Factory/Workers Leaving the Googleplex" (2014) To read: Lisa Nakamura "Indigenous Circuits: Navajo Women and the Racialization of Early Electronic Manufacture" (2014)

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- By the end of the module students should be able to: - discuss a particular work of literature in relation to a variety of theoretical questions and optics
- further their critical analysis skills through the incorporation of new theoretical frameworks
- situate their own work in relation to the existing theoretical / interpretative optics within the field
- show knowledge of how contemporary (post-1973) historical developments have shaped the development of literature and literary theory
- show a critical understanding of the relationship between literature, literary theory, and the politics of various intellectual/political movements (feminism, critical race theory, postcolonial studies, gender studies)
- participate in discussions regarding the role of literature in society, questions of institutional authority and contemporary cultural debates

### **Indicative reading list**

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*  
 Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory*  
 Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author"  
 Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*  
 Andrew Bennett, *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism, and Theory*  
 David Crystal, *The English Language*  
 J. A. Cuddon (ed.) *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*  
 Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A very short introduction*  
 Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory*  
 Terry Eagleton, *How to Read Literature*  
 Frantz Fanon, "The Negro and Language"  
 Michel Foucault, "What is an Author"  
 Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society"  
 David Lodge and Nigel Wood, *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*  
 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*  
 Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale*  
 Julie Rivkin, *Literary Theory: An Anthology*  
 Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*  
 Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*  
 Slavoj Žižek, "Avatar: Return of the Natives", *New Statesman*

### **Subject specific skills**

Analyse how contemporary (post-1973) historical developments have shaped the development of literature and literary theory, and think such developments in a comparative, global context  
 Use their understanding of the relationship between literature, literary theory, and the politics of various intellectual/political movements (feminism, critical race theory, postcolonial studies, gender studies) to generate narratives of theoretical paradigm shifts in the contemporary period

### **Transferable skills**

Discuss a particular work of literature in relation to a variety of theoretical questions  
Understand the terms literary theory and literary criticism and explain the emergence of both fields as a discipline of study  
Further their skills in critical analysis through the incorporation and critical analysis of new theoretical frameworks  
Position their work within the theoretical field and intervene critically in debates over competing interpretative optics.  
Participate in discussions regarding the role of literature in society, questions of institutional authority and contemporary cultural debates

---

## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	19 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	18 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	263 hours (88%)
Total	300 hours

### Private study description

Private library research detailed in seminars; guidance from other modules in the department on academic writing and use of library resources.

## Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

---

## Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

### Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time
Assessed essay 3500 word essay	50%	
Assessed essay	50%	

## Weighting

## Study time

3500 word essay

### Feedback on assessment

Office hours provide space for feedback; comments and grades delivered via our internal marking cover sheet, uploaded onto Tabula for students to download.

---

## Availability

### Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 3 of UENA-QP36 Undergraduate English Literature and Creative Writing
- Year 4 of UENA-QP37 Undergraduate English Literature and Creative Writing with Intercalated Year
- Year 3 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- UENA-VQ33 Undergraduate English and History (with Intercalated year)
  - Year 4 of VQ33 English and History (with Intercalated year)
  - Year 4 of VQ33 English and History (with Intercalated year)
- Year 4 of UENA-QW35 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of UFIA-QW25 Undergraduate Film and Literature
- Year 4 of UFIA-QW26 Undergraduate Film and Literature (with Study Abroad)

This module is Core option list C for:

- Year 4 of UCXA-QQ38 Undergraduate Classics and English (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 3 of UCXA-QQ37 Undergraduate Classics and English
- Year 3 of UFIA-QW25 Undergraduate Film and Literature

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 3 of UTHA-QW34 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 3 of UPHA-VQ72 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature